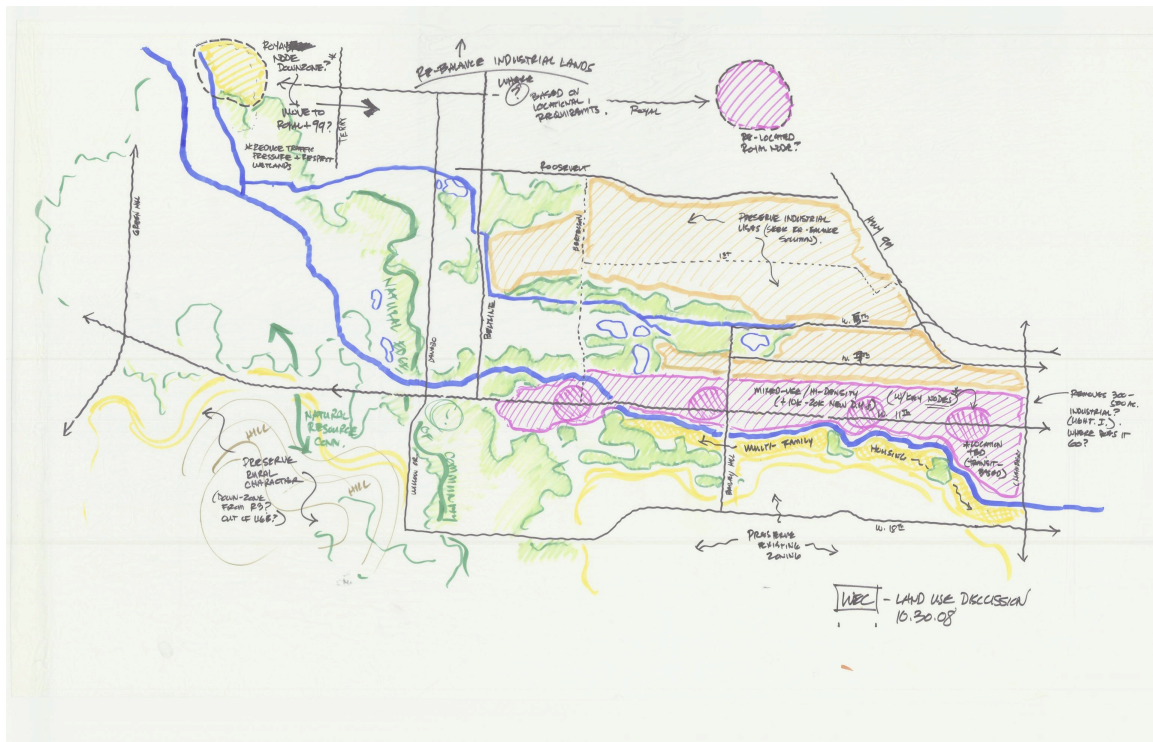


# A New Vision for West Eugene



WEC Land Use Discussion 10/30/08

March 2009  
West Eugene Collaborative

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In early 2007, with the aid of the Oregon Consensus Program, an ad hoc group encompassing a broad variety of viewpoints, including political and governmental leaders, business leaders, leaders of neighborhood groups, leaders of nonprofit organizations and leaders within the environmental community, came together to form the West Eugene Collaborative (WEC).

From the outset, the WEC's purpose has been to "develop an integrated land use and transportation solution, supported by stakeholders, that will facilitate movement of people and commerce from/through/to west Eugene and west of Eugene while enhancing community, business and the environment."

The WEC's thinking developed over time to more than addressing its original goal. It evolved into a future vision of west Eugene that would move traffic smoothly, encourage the use of many forms of transportation, create inviting and safe places for people to walk, new housing opportunities, and a transformation of the Amazon into a beautiful community asset.

The analysis and recommendations in the WEC final report represent the group's consensus on the best ways to address longstanding deficiencies with West 11th Avenue/ Highway 126 and related problems. In some cases the WEC merely points to ideas that were suggested that need to be examined more closely for their feasibility. The recommendations should be viewed not as a detailed blueprint but a general course that seems to have potential for addressing concerns in the west Eugene area.

The WEC's recommendations cover a large *area of interest*, extending roughly from downtown Eugene and Interstate-5 to the east to Veneta to the west, and from the South Hills ridgeline to the south to Clear Lake Road and the Eugene Airport to the north. A smaller *area of focus* extends roughly from Chambers Street to the east to Green Hill Road to the west, and from 18th Avenue to the south to Barger Drive to the north.

The WEC's recommendations for achieving short, medium, and long-range improvements for west Eugene are the culmination of two years of discussion, analysis, and finally consensus. As a step toward developing specific recommendations, the WEC established a framework of eight broad principles:

1. Improve Efficiency of the Transportation Network
2. Increase Public Transit
3. Enhance Pedestrian Paths and Bikeways
4. Intensify Development Appropriately
5. Relocate Some Land Uses
6. Enhance Open Space/Natural Resources
7. Enhance Natural Watershed
8. Enhance Appreciation and Connections to Natural Resources

The recommendations are broken out into three sections that identify quantifiable, on-ground achievements to be reached within the timeframes of five, ten, or twenty years. Of course, further study and vetting will be required for most of the environmental and transportation recommendations to pass technical muster and achieve broad political support prior to implementation. Hence, all of these recommendations are intended to promote further public input, discussion, and consideration, not serve as a substitute for them.

It is also important to note that the WEC discussed and analyzed numerous options in addition to the recommendations it adopted. Explicit WEC recommendations by consensus are noted in the report in bold type, while those ideas that the WEC discussed, but did not achieve consensus around, are not in bold type and are simply noted as items the WEC discussed. Not every idea that was discussed by the group was included in the report, but an effort was made to include a number of concepts that received substantial discussion and support from some, but not all, of the WEC members.

Short-term solutions include quick fixes that could improve the traffic situation immediately and undertake enhancements of the natural resources in west Eugene, while at the same time laying the groundwork for a final vision. The medium and long-term solutions phase in land use and additional transportation and environmental components to achieve the integrated vision.

In particular, as part of its medium and long-term transportation solution, the WEC proposes consideration of converting West 11th into a multiway boulevard that will accommodate multiple modes of transportation including through-going traffic lanes, dedicated transit lanes, and a pedestrian realm that supports walking, bicycling, and parking along access lanes. The WEC understands that considerable public input must be received, particularly from residents, businesses, and property owners along the West 11th corridor, before such a recommendation would be considered, much less acted upon.

A summary of these short, medium, and long-term solutions follows:

### **SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS (by the end of 5 years)**

#### ***Transportation***

To achieve traffic congestion relief on West 11th Avenue in the short-term, the WEC recommends way-finding and intersection upgrades to encourage higher use of two local alternative routes:

- An “inner” alternative route connecting from Highway 99 near the Big Y, east and west along 5th and 7th, and via Bailey Hill to West 11th Avenue, and
- An “outer” alternative route connecting from Highway 99, east and west along Roosevelt Boulevard, and via Beltline to West 11th Avenue.

- Enhancement of these two routes would be accomplished primarily within their existing right of ways.

The WEC also recommends the following studies:

- Develop and implement a community design process to test the multiway boulevard vision for west Eugene.
- Complete a Highway 126 safety and mobility study (as proposed by Senator Prozanski and Representative Holvey).

The WEC recommends the following along West 11th Avenue:

- Enhance public transit service.
- Improve traffic signalization.

The WEC recommends actions to be taken to improve the safety and efficiency of alternative modes of transportation, which include:

- Construct safety improvements to sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle paths throughout the corridor with particular focus on safe connections and improved signage to and from the Fern Ridge Path.
- Add striped bicycle lanes along 5th Avenue and 7th Place as part of alternative route development.
- Construct significant crossing improvements at Oak Patch and City View on the Fern Ridge Path such as bicycle underpasses or other appropriate improvements.
- Increase the number of bikes that LTD vehicles can carry to further facilitate the bike/transit interface in the short term.

### ***Land Use***

The WEC recommends the following actions:

- Undertake the City of Eugene's Comprehensive Lands Assessment (ECLA).

### ***Environment***

The WEC recommends the following:

- Rezone publicly owned and private conservation areas, such as those lands owned by the Nature Conservancy, to a natural resources designation.
- Implement currently-planned Metro Waterways enhancements to Amazon Creek.
- Undertake an assessment of west Eugene habitat connections needed by wildlife moving between wetlands, wet prairie, oak savannah and/or forest.
- Support the construction and operation of the Environmental Education Center.
- Act to improve Amazon Creek water quality.

- Undertake a feasibility study of re-establishing cutthroat trout passage between Amazon Creek and Coyote Creek. It is suggested that a collaborative partnership be used to implement this study that includes the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Land Management, the City of Eugene, and Lane County.

## **MEDIUM TERM RECOMMENDATIONS (by the end of 10 years)**

### ***Transportation***

The WEC recommends the following actions:

- Construct the first segments of a multiway boulevard on West 11th Avenue, potentially between Chambers and Garfield.
- Continue incremental development of multiway boulevard components such as medians and pedestrian realm components.
- Construct capital improvements for West 5th Avenue, West 7th Place and Bailey Hill Road, as identified by traffic studies, to complete an “inner” alternative east-west route between Highway 99 and West 11th Avenue.
- Improve Beltline and Roosevelt Boulevard within current right of way to complete an “outer” alternative east-west route between Highway 99 and West 11th Avenue.
- Construct appropriate major transit improvements in the West 11th Avenue corridor.
- Ensure further ease of bicycle and pedestrian transportation interface with rapid transit.
- Take steps/actions and adopt code amendments to support achievement of the West 11th Avenue area mixed use, redevelopment, and multiway boulevard vision.

### ***Pedestrian and Bikeways***

- Provide a bicycle and pedestrian connection between the north and south section of Buck Street, across the Amazon Channel, connecting to the Fern Ridge Path.

### ***Land Use***

The WEC recommends the following action:

- Build the first creek-side and multiway boulevard-connected mixed-use development somewhere along the corridor.

## ***Environment***

The WEC recommends the following actions:

- Define and protect key habitat corridors in west Eugene area, including additional wetlands, adjoining wet prairie, and connections with oak savannah and forest. The West Eugene Wetlands Plan, with its provisions for protection, restoration, and development of particular areas serves as a model for planning west Eugene habitat corridors collaboratively by various levels of government, conservation entities, and businesses.
- Continue improvement of Amazon Creek water quality.
- Complete the feasibility study for re-establishing cutthroat trout passage between Coyote Creek and Amazon Creek, and contingent on feasibility, take steps to implement the plan.

## **LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS (by the end of 20 years)**

### ***Transportation***

The WEC recommends the following actions dependent on analysis results:

- Construct remaining transportation infrastructure to complete successive segments of a multiway boulevard from around Chambers to around Beltline.

### ***Land Use***

The WEC recommends the following actions:

- Complete land redevelopment to multi-story mixed-use along West 11th Avenue multiway boulevard.
- Continue building mixed use developments between West 11th Avenue and Amazon Creek.

### ***Environment***

The WEC recommends the following environmental actions:

- Complete restoration of fish passage between Coyote Creek and Amazon Creek (contingent upon a finding of feasibility, see above).
- Continue improvement of Amazon Creek water quality.

## INTRODUCTION

The West Eugene Collaborative (WEC) presents this report to the community and its leaders in the hope that its recommendations will lead to positive solutions for the traffic problems in and around west Eugene.

A group of concerned citizens representing a wide range of community perspectives, known as the Eugene Roundtable Group, discussed the future of west Eugene for most of a year. In early 2007, with the addition of several members and the aid of the Oregon Consensus Program, the WEC convened as an ad hoc group.



The WEC has sought to encompass as many points of view as possible in its work, including west Eugene business owners, community business leaders, leaders of neighborhood groups, and leaders within the environmental community. The group includes a doctor who practices in Veneta, as well as residents of Elmira, Pleasant Hill, and Cottage Grove. The group has experts in transportation and land use planning, development, real estate, construction, and

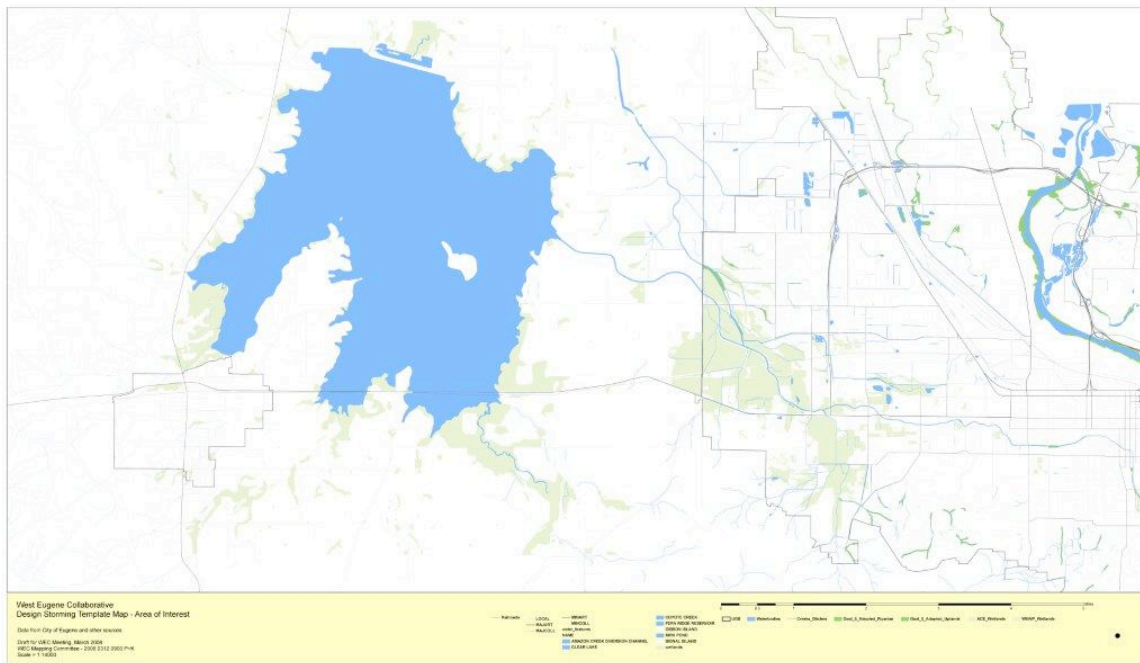
wetlands. The WEC also incorporates elected officials and staff from Eugene, Veneta, Lane County, Lane Transit District, Lane Council of Governments, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

From the outset, the WEC's purpose has been to “develop an integrated land use and transportation solution, supported by stakeholders, that will facilitate movement of people and commerce from/through/to west Eugene and west of Eugene while enhancing community, business and the environment.”

Members of the collaborative include people from all sides of the political spectrum. Early on, the members of the WEC discovered that they shared many values, and they agreed that whether or not the West Eugene Parkway had been built, significant problems would have remained to be solved. Over time, the collaborative developed a shared understanding of the issues around west Eugene and an approach for addressing these.

The WEC's recommendations cover a large *area of interest*, extending roughly from downtown Eugene and I-5 to the east to Veneta to the west, and from the South Hills ridgeline to the south to Clear Lake Road and the Eugene Airport to the north. A smaller



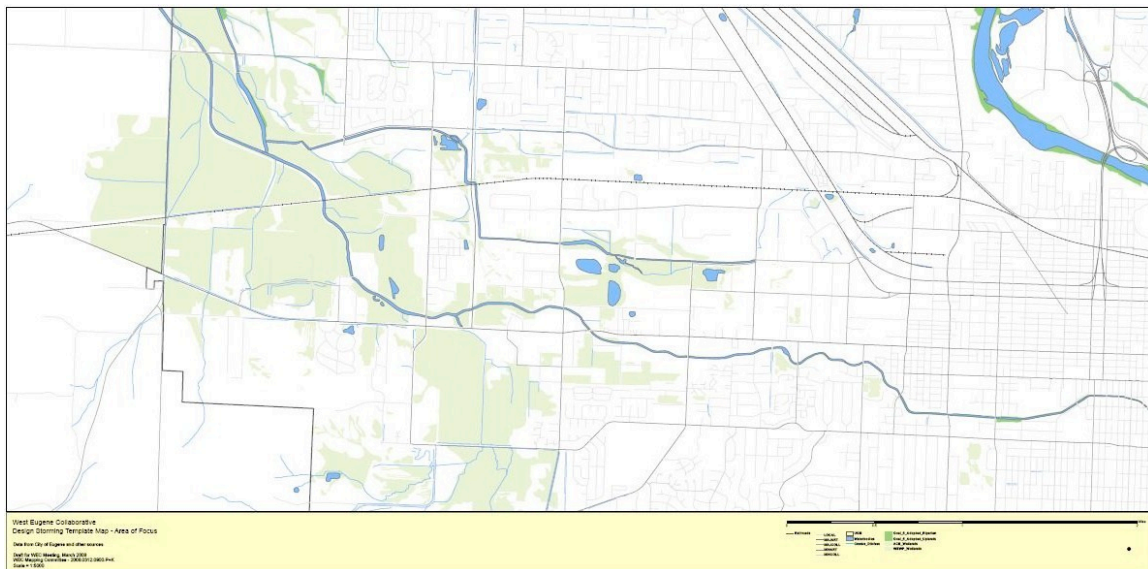


*area of focus* extends roughly from Chambers Street to the east to Green Hill Road to the west, and from 18th Avenue to the south to Barger Drive to the north.

The analysis and recommendations that follow represent the WEC's consensus on the best ways to address longstanding deficiencies with West 11th Avenue/Highway 126 and related problems. In some cases the WEC merely points to ideas that were suggested that need to be examined more closely for their feasibility. The recommendations should be viewed not as a detailed blueprint but a general course that seems to have potential for addressing concerns in the west Eugene area.

One major conclusion stemming from this two-year effort is that no proposed solution to traffic problems can be implemented without broad support.

The members of the WEC invite you to read their recommendations.



# A HISTORY OF CHALLENGES... AND OPPORTUNITIES

## The Current Situation

West Eugene today is characterized in the eyes of many by traffic congestion and continuing conflicts between development and natural resources. The current condition is based in the history of the area.

The WEC spent two years analyzing the current conditions, thinking about solutions, and finally reaching consensus on a package of integrated solutions. The integrated package of solutions and mechanisms offered has been informed by the following set of baseline conditions in west Eugene, and more specifically, along West 11th Avenue.

Traffic congestion is only a symptom of underlying transportation, land use, and environmental problems. Viable solutions require one to step back and examine the problem in all its complexity and interconnected aspects.

## Transportation

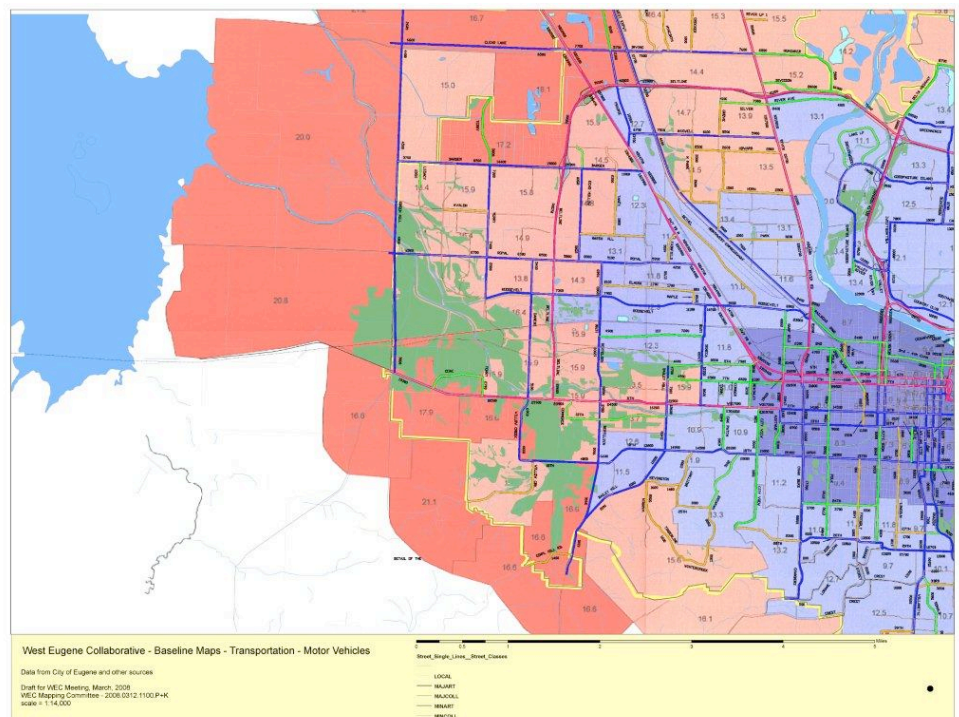
During peak travel times, traffic along West 11th Avenue in Eugene can be slow for car and truck drivers. West 11th Avenue is also challenging for riders on Lane Transit District buses, as well as bicyclists and pedestrians wanting to access destinations along West 11th Avenue. Moreover, while the volume of traffic along Highway 126 west of Eugene is not yet as great, safety concerns are becoming more pronounced.

### *Car and Truck Drivers*

On a typical day, nearly 25,000 cars and trucks travel West 11th Avenue past Bertelsen, and traffic can be congested during peak travel times. Vehicles entering and exiting West 11th businesses add to traffic trying to get to points east and west.

West 11th Avenue is congested, in part, because it is the major transportation corridor from the west to the southern Willamette

*WEC Baseline Map: Transportation*



Valley. In addition, West 11th is congested because the large amount of commercial and retail trade draws people from all over the region.

The pattern of land uses has largely determined the volume and type of traffic.

Segregating different types of uses—residential, commercial and industrial—tends to



increase the length and number of trips. The desire for more affordable homes also leads some to live in outlying communities such as Veneta, increasing commuter trips along Highway 126/West 11th Avenue.

West 11th Avenue was not designed to handle the traffic it is currently carrying. Frequent signals and intersections slow down the smooth flow of traffic. And numerous driveways in and out of business along West 11th

Avenue result in stop and go traffic in the outside lanes whenever a vehicle leaves or enters along a driveway.

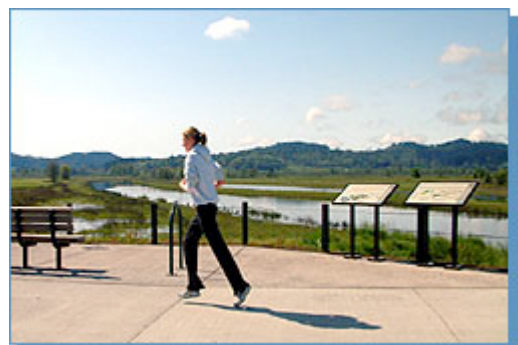
There are few practical alternatives to using West 11th Avenue. Between Roosevelt Boulevard to the north and West 18th Avenue to the south, no streets span the entire distance West 11th Avenue spans.

In contrast several streets span the entire distance between downtown Eugene and Garfield Street, including West 6th/7th, West 11th/13th, West 18th Avenue, West 8th, Broadway (9th), 10th and 12th.

Traffic concerns continue west of Eugene along Highway 126. The City of Veneta has expressed concern for years about the condition of Highway 126, the lack of shoulders or a bike lane for cyclists, the growth in traffic volume and accidents, and the increasing unreliability in travel time between Veneta and Eugene-Springfield. A single accident can close the road for hours, requiring lengthy detours and snarling traffic at both ends of this designated Priority 2 emergency route.

### ***Transit***

According to LTD, delays for public transit along West 11th Avenue are two-fold, resulting in poor service for bus riders and higher costs for the Lane Transit District. First, traffic along West 11th Avenue slows down buses, resulting in slower service. Second, the longer it takes a bus to



*Jogger on the Fern Ridge Path. Photo Courtesy of City of Eugene*



complete an entire route, the more buses LTD must run in order to maintain a desired frequency of service, thus increasing LTD costs.

### ***Bicyclists and Pedestrians***

The Fern Ridge Path is one of the jewels of the extensive Eugene-Springfield area bicycle system. Bicyclists use it to commute to and from work or school and for recreation. While the Fern Ridge Path serves as a fast and pleasant bypass around the traffic congestion along West 11th Avenue, access to businesses on West 11th Avenue can be difficult and even dangerous.

For pedestrians, including riders getting on or off buses, West 11th Avenue is similarly forbidding. Sidewalks are narrow in spots, leaving a pedestrian caught between fast traffic on one side and buildings built close to the street on the other. In other spots, sidewalks are adequate but are separated from stores and other business by expansive parking lots. Additionally, there are no sidewalks at all along some sections of West 11th Avenue, which is not in compliance with ADA standards.

In brief, all modes of travel have issues with the West 11th Avenue/Highway 126 corridor from Eugene west.

### **Land Use**

West Eugene is a patchwork of commercial, industrial, residential, agricultural, and open space, while West 11th Avenue comprises mostly commercial businesses and retail outlets. The pattern of land uses that exist today is the result of decades of development consistent with adopted plans and zoning.



*Business along West 11th*

The area north of West 11th Avenue encompasses the west Eugene industrial area, home to many of Eugene's longstanding industrial businesses and an important part of the community's manufacturing job base.



The area south of West 11th Avenue is mostly residential developments, including a mix of single-family homes and multi-unit residences.

Farther west, to Green Hill Road, the area takes on a more rural character, with scattered development in otherwise open spaces. Additionally, much of the land that is west of Beltline and adjacent to West 11th Avenue is federally protected and

administered by the BLM.

Aerial photos of west Eugene reveal a large amount of parking space and undeveloped land around existing buildings.

The pattern of development along West 11th Avenue, dominated by strip commercial development, extensive parking lots, and numerous driveway entrances, is typical of suburban state highways. Business owners want to locate where there is traffic. West 11th Avenue is the place to be in west Eugene, but calls for coordination with all modes of transportation.

The area has developed according to adopted zoning rules of the time. As far back as the 1950s, a bypass highway around West 11th Avenue has periodically been proposed, including the Amazon Parkway, Roosevelt Freeway, the 6th/7th Extension and the West Eugene Parkway. However, the West Eugene Collaborative believes the existing conditions of West 11th Avenue provide an opportunity to improve capacity and integrate *all* modes of travel along the corridor, without building a bypass road.

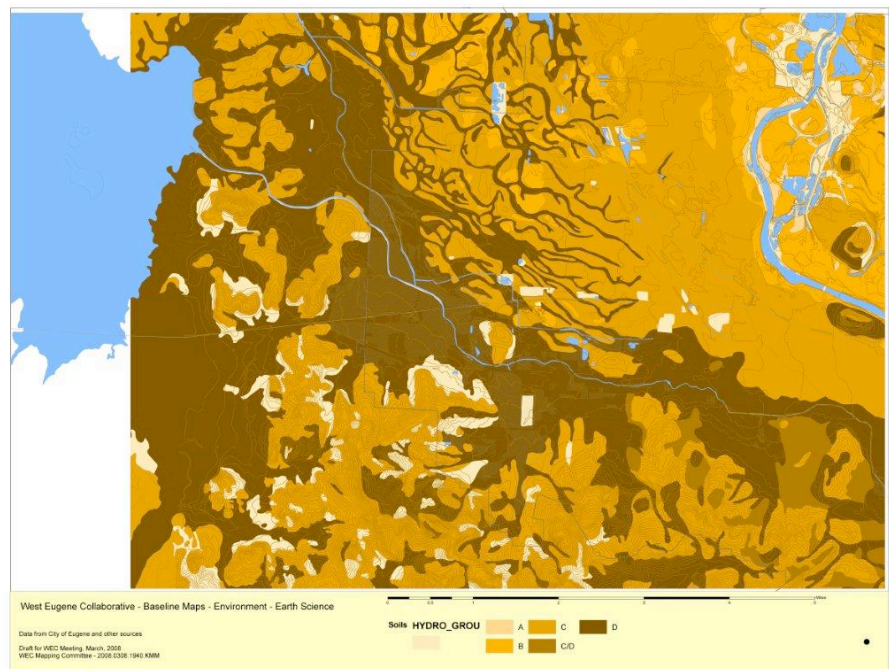
## Environment

West Eugene is home to many diverse and unique environments.

The health and well-being of the community of Eugene depend on fertile land, unpolluted water, and clean air. Eugene's natural and unique environments provide close-by opportunities for recreation, relaxation, and sustainable business. However, the native vegetation and wildlife of Eugene's natural environments require adequate space and interconnected habitats in order to remain viable in west Eugene.

### *Land*

The Willamette Valley typically receives an abundance of rain during the winter months. Much of the Willamette Valley floor is dense clay soils where water accumulates, forming perched wetlands. Because the wetlands are tied to the underlying soils, they can't be relocated with



*WEC Baseline Map: Soil Permeability*

ease. Wetlands filter water that downstream users consume and help minimize flooding during heavy rains.



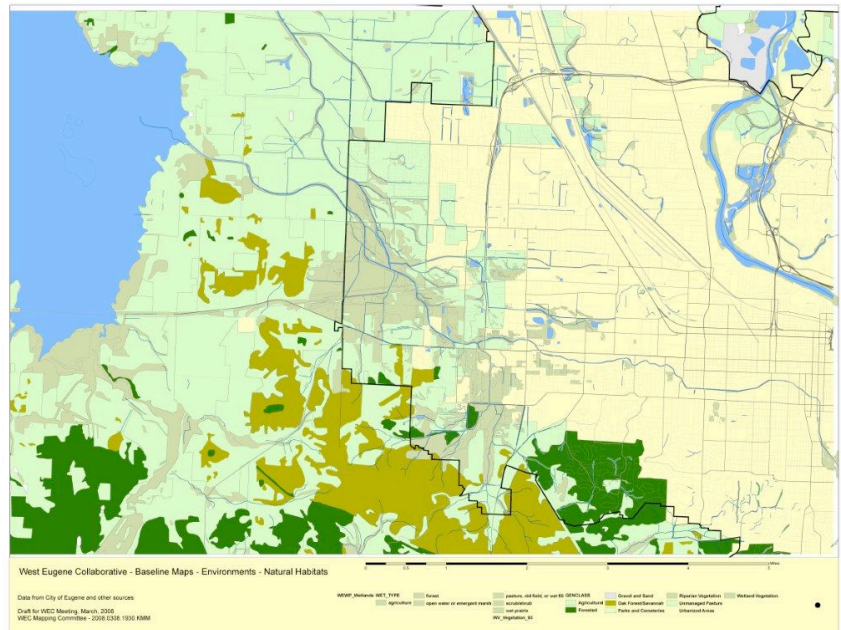
*Amazon Creek flooding, 2006. Photo courtesy WREN*

Eugene is also nationally recognized for its West Eugene Wetlands Partnership, a cooperative effort of nine public and non-profit organizations. Currently, some parcels zoned for industrial development are publicly-owned wetlands protected from development. These areas need to be re-zoned to accurately reflect their current land use. The West Eugene Wetlands Plan provides a mechanism for protecting sensitive areas parcel by parcel.

Historically, 90% of the Willamette Valley floor was wetlands intermingled with slightly-elevated “upland prairies.” Two centuries ago, Native Americans in west Eugene would find fingers of seasonal wetlands among upland prairies surrounded by oak savannah (grassy oak stands). Today, due to wetland drainage projects and stream and river modifications, only a fraction of these three habitats remain. Additionally, Eugene is home to four species that are federally listed as endangered or threatened with extinction. They include the Fender’s blue butterfly, Kincaid’s lupine (on which Fender’s blue butterfly lays its eggs), Bradshaw’s lomatium, and Willamette daisy.

Some west Eugene species need to move between habitat patches in order to maintain genetic diversity or complete their life cycles. For example, individual Fender’s blue butterflies south of West 11th Avenue in Eugene must navigate across West 11th if they are to mate with, and maintain genetic diversity with Fender’s blue butterflies north of West 11th. Similarly, pond turtles that spend their summer in the West Eugene Wetlands must hike upslope, toward the dry soil and open grasslands of the oak savannah, to lay their eggs. It is vital that these connections are maintained or, in some cases, restored.

Development in west Eugene that acknowledges the needs of wildlife and maintains their habitat and connections between habitat patches is not exclusive of successful



*WEC Baseline Map: Environments/Natural Habitats*



development or quality of livelihood.

### Water

Storm runoff flows into numerous waterways that wind through west Eugene, joining the Long Tom River and eventually the Willamette River. At one time, some of these waterways within the Eugene city limits were home to native fish species such as cutthroat trout.

The development of homes, businesses, and transportation routes need to be developed with an eye to where such pollutants as sediment, oil, pesticides, and fertilizers will end up. Similarly, the maintenance and restoration of waterway connections are increasingly a focus in urban development and planning

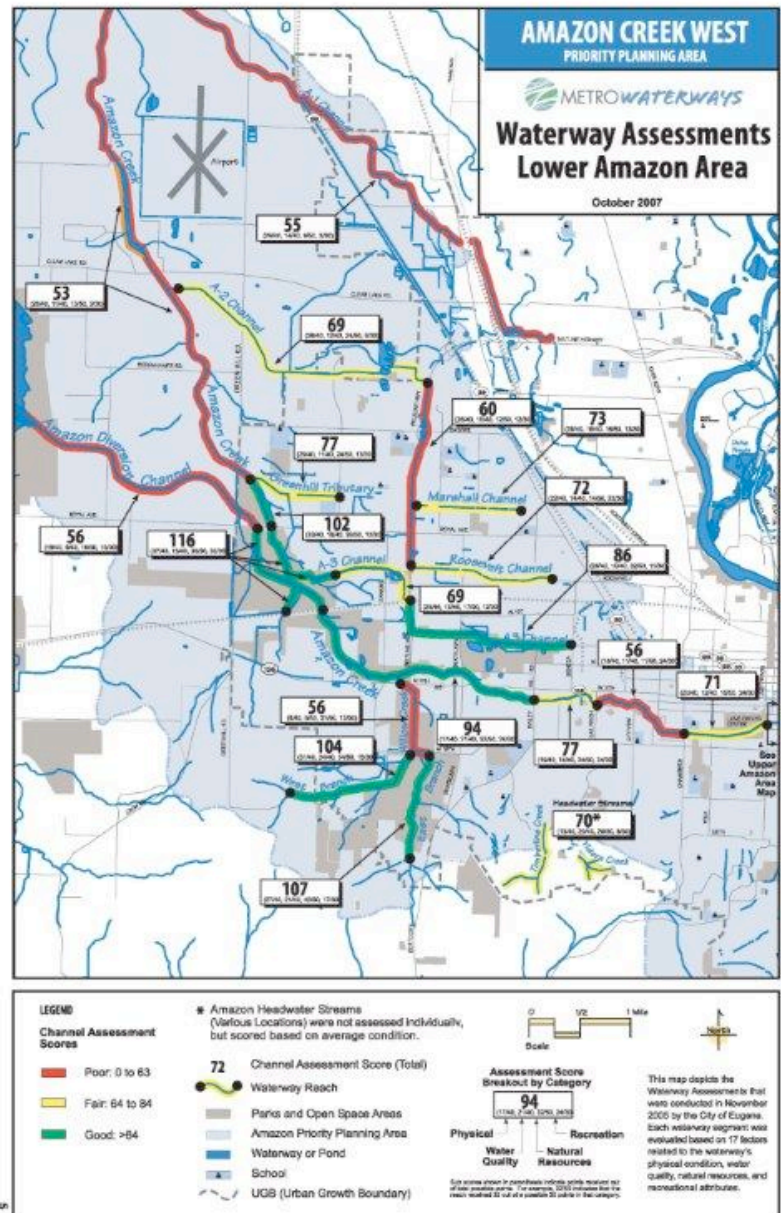
### Air

In terms of traditional air pollutants, the southern Willamette Valley does not stand out as a “hotspot.” Yet people are increasingly concerned about the emission of greenhouse gases that many scientists link to climate change.

While some remain skeptical about the causes or consequences of climate change, nearly everyone has had to deal with the instability of gasoline prices. Most agree it makes sense to reduce our dependence on oil.

## Opportunities for Cooperation

Today, as in decades past, different government agencies are responsible for different areas and/or for different concerns.



*Metro Waterways. Map Courtesy of LCOG*

The West Eugene Collaborative has provided a forum where representatives of different government agencies can discuss problems occurring along the West 11th Avenue/ Highway 126 corridor.

The West Eugene Collaborative has regarded transportation, land use, and the environment as integral parts of the solutions. The needs of drivers, bus riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians have all been discussed all in the same forum.

Continuation of this approach will provide agencies and the community opportunities to implement solutions not only in west Eugene, but throughout the region.

## **Conclusion**

The multifaceted nature of the problems offers an opportunity to think outside the box and to find complementary approaches to complex and interrelated problems.



## STEP BY STEP: SOLUTIONS OVER TIME



*WEC Design Storming Map (March 2008)*

## Introduction

The key to the WEC recommendations is that they are based on a long-term vision of an integrated land use and transportation plan that is phased in over time. The WEC has a vision of West 11th Avenue becoming a modern arterial that serves to integrate all facets of transportation including through and local traffic, rapid transit, and bicycle and pedestrian modes safely and efficiently. This vision encourages high-density development and a livable and walkable community. The vision also increases the viability and community enjoyment of west Eugene natural resources.

The WEC's short, medium, and long-range recommendations for achieving short, medium, and long-range improvements for west Eugene are the culmination of two years of discussion, analysis, and finally consensus. As a step toward developing specific recommendations, the WEC established a framework of eight broad principles.

## Guiding Principles for West Eugene

West Eugene Collaborative members engaged in a large-scale “design storming” exercise as part of their two-year discussion. This effort generated hundreds of ideas about how to potentially solve west Eugene transportation problems. These ideas were subsequently

synthesized in a set of eight core principles that form the backbone of the proposed final solution set:

### ***Improve Efficiency of the Transportation Network***

Traffic congestion on West 11th Avenue can be attributed in part to gaps in the transportation network in west Eugene. These inefficiencies include, for example, a general lack of street connectivity, weak signage for use of alternate routes, and extensive curb cuts on West 11th Avenue, with associated turning movements causing interruptions in traffic flow. Carefully selected and appropriate improvements to the transportation network are a basic part of the WEC vision.

### ***Increase Public Transit***

Public transit is a key component of the WEC's recommendations. The WEC has been dedicated to a more sustainable, long-term transportation solution for the area. The WEC sees an efficient and rapid transit system as an essential component of any solution set.

### ***Enhance Pedestrian Paths and Bikeways***

Increasing pedestrian and bicycle travel and accessibility should be a key component of future plans. The Fern Ridge Path already provides good general access into and through part of west Eugene, but access to specific local destination points can nonetheless be poor. The WEC found that any design proposal or recommendation for west Eugene should include excellent pedestrian and bicycle transportation facilities.

### ***Intensify Development Appropriately***

There are many opportunities for redevelopment in west Eugene, as the area contains many undeveloped properties, others that are being used differently than they were originally intended, and more still that are designated for uses that are in conflict with natural resource designation and protection laws. Land use designations should reflect which areas cannot be developed at all and which areas can be developed at a higher density than their current designation.

### ***Relocate Some Land Uses***

As our economic, business, and commerce paradigms change over time, some land uses in the focus area may no longer be appropriate and could make way for other land uses. The WEC recommendations call for industrial-zoned lots adjacent to West 11th Avenue to be gradually displaced by mixed-use commercial/residential development over time. A re-assessment of current and future industrial land use needs, and mechanisms to facilitate appropriate relocations and redevelopment, are both important to long-term success of this vision.

### ***Enhance Open Space/Natural Resources***

Open space and natural resource areas are essential components of the west Eugene landscape. These areas provide a wide range of benefits, and they include remnants of formerly widespread, now-rare habitats that support federally protected threatened and endangered plant and animal species. The WEC agrees that any successful land use and transportation solutions must not only include preservation but ongoing enhancement of these existing natural areas.

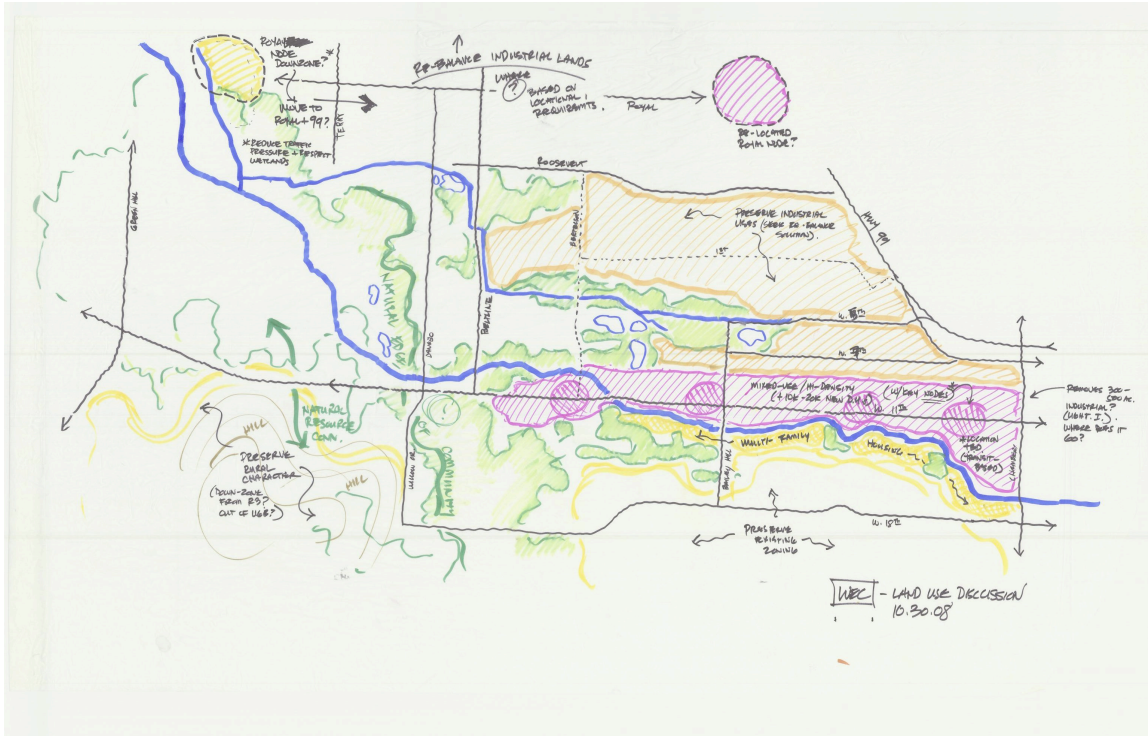
### ***Enhance Natural Watershed***

The focus area contains Amazon Creek and its various tributaries, of which Willow Creek is the largest. These waterways handle storm water, act as wildlife corridors, feed wetlands, and provide rich habitat. They take the brunt of pollution from the built environment including erosion, toxic run off, and high surface water volumes. Successful redevelopment solutions in west Eugene should include watershed reconstruction and enhancement, and storm water management to protect both built and natural resources in the long run.

### ***Enhance Appreciation and Connections to Natural Resources***

In addition to preserving and enhancing natural resources themselves, the WEC finds that it is vital to enhance the relationship between people and human infrastructure, and our natural resource areas. A key component of the WEC recommendations is to support engagement, both active and passive, with the existing natural resources in west Eugene. People need green open places to go to; when they are close by they use them. Green spaces, properly addressed, will also provide an extremely valuable asset to appropriate development.

## The Solution Set: Short, Medium, and Long Range Solutions



*WEC Land Use Discussion 10/30/08*

The solution set is broken out into three sections that identify quantifiable, on-ground achievements to be reached within the timeframes of five, ten or twenty years. These items are followed in the “Getting There” chapter by complementary policy and planning efforts that would be necessary for the same time periods. However, further study and vetting will be required for most of the environmental and transportation recommendations to pass technical muster and achieve broad political support prior to implementation.

Short-term solutions include quick fixes that could improve the traffic situation immediately and undertake enhancements of the natural resources in west Eugene, while at the same time laying the groundwork for a final vision. The medium and long-term solutions phase in land use and additional transportation and environmental components to achieve the integrated vision of a multiway boulevard design.

The multiway boulevard design consists of three distinct areas or “realms” separated by medians: pedestrian, transit, and through going. The model the WEC has been using would provide a large pedestrian realm that consists of a sidewalk, trees, and a local access lane that also serves as a bicycle lane and as store-front, on-street parking. The transit realm provides a dedicated right-of-way adjacent to the pedestrian realm for rapid transit. The through-going realm provides a mid- to higher-speed thoroughfare with

minimum access. Access to businesses would be provided by access streets parallel to the through-going realm at major intersections.

It is important to note that the WEC discussed and analyzed numerous options. Explicit WEC recommendations by consensus are noted in **bold**, while those ideas that the WEC discussed (to varying depths), but did not achieve consensus around, are noted with “The WEC discussed.”

## Short-term Recommendations (by the end of 5 years)

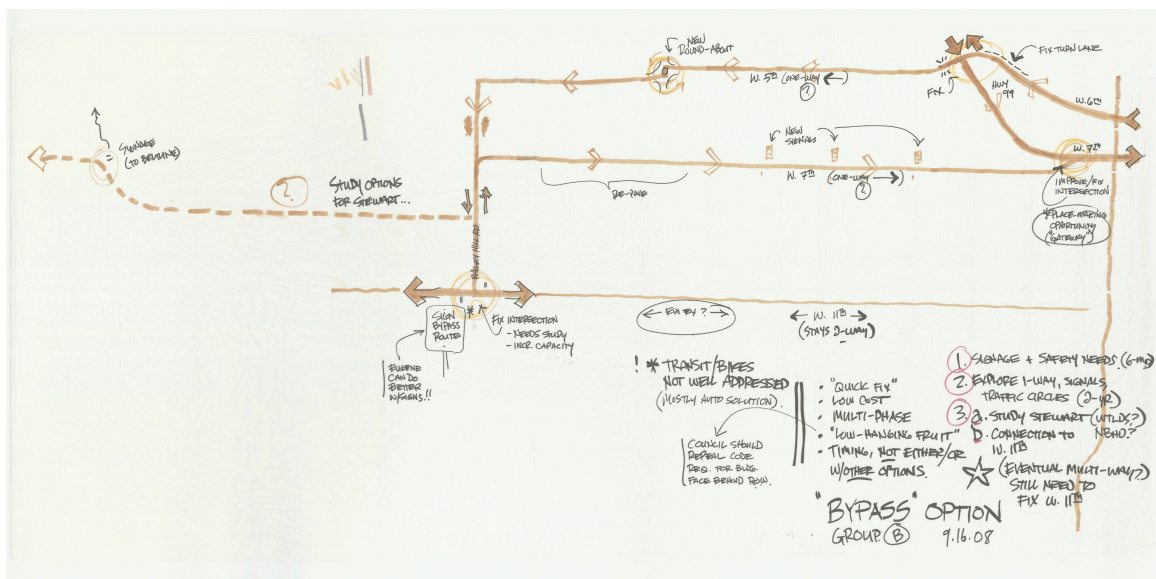
These solutions focus primarily on achievable transportation related improvements.

### Transportation

To achieve traffic congestion relief on West 11th Avenue in the short-term, **the WEC recommends way-finding and intersection upgrades to encourage higher use of two local alternative routes:**

- An “inner” alternative route connecting from Highway 99 near the Big Y, east and west along 5th and 7th, and via Bailey Hill to West 11th Avenue, and
- An “outer” alternative route connecting from Highway 99, east and west along Roosevelt Boulevard, and via Beltline to West 11th Avenue.

Enhancement of these two routes would be accomplished primarily within their existing right of ways.



Small group alternative routes map 9/16/08

The WEC also recommends the following studies:

- Develop and implement a community design process to test the multiway boulevard vision for west Eugene.



- **Complete a Highway 126 safety and mobility study (as proposed by Senator Prozanski and Representative Holvey).**

**The WEC recommends the following along West 11th Avenue:**

- **Enhance public transit service.**
- **Improve traffic signalization.**

The WEC discussed methods of managing access along West 11th Avenue to improve safety and mobility along the corridor. Such methods might include:

- Closure or consolidation of select driveways.
- Center median installations in key locations.

Additionally, the WEC discussed the following:

- Realign and re-space intersections or signals to allow for more efficient signal timing and improved safety of travel along the corridor in general.
- Restripe and add dedicated right or left turn lanes.
- Once a multiway boulevard plan is adopted plant trees where possible.
- Adopt a plan to address redevelopment strategies adjacent to the multiway boulevard.

The results of the City of Eugene's West 11th Avenue Corridor study and LTD's Bus Rapid Transit study for the area may inform the specifics of these recommendations.

**The WEC Recommends actions to be taken to improve the safety and efficiency of alternative modes of transportation which includes:**

- **Construct safety improvements to sidewalks, crosswalks and bicycle paths throughout the corridor with particular focus on safe connections and improved signage to and from the Fern Ridge Path.**
- **Add striped bicycle lanes along 5th and 7th Avenues as part of alternative route development.**
- **Construct significant crossing improvements at Oak Patch and City View on the Fern Ridge Path such as bicycle underpasses or other appropriate improvements.**
- **Increase the number of bikes that LTD vehicles can carry to further facilitate the bike/transit interface in the short term.**

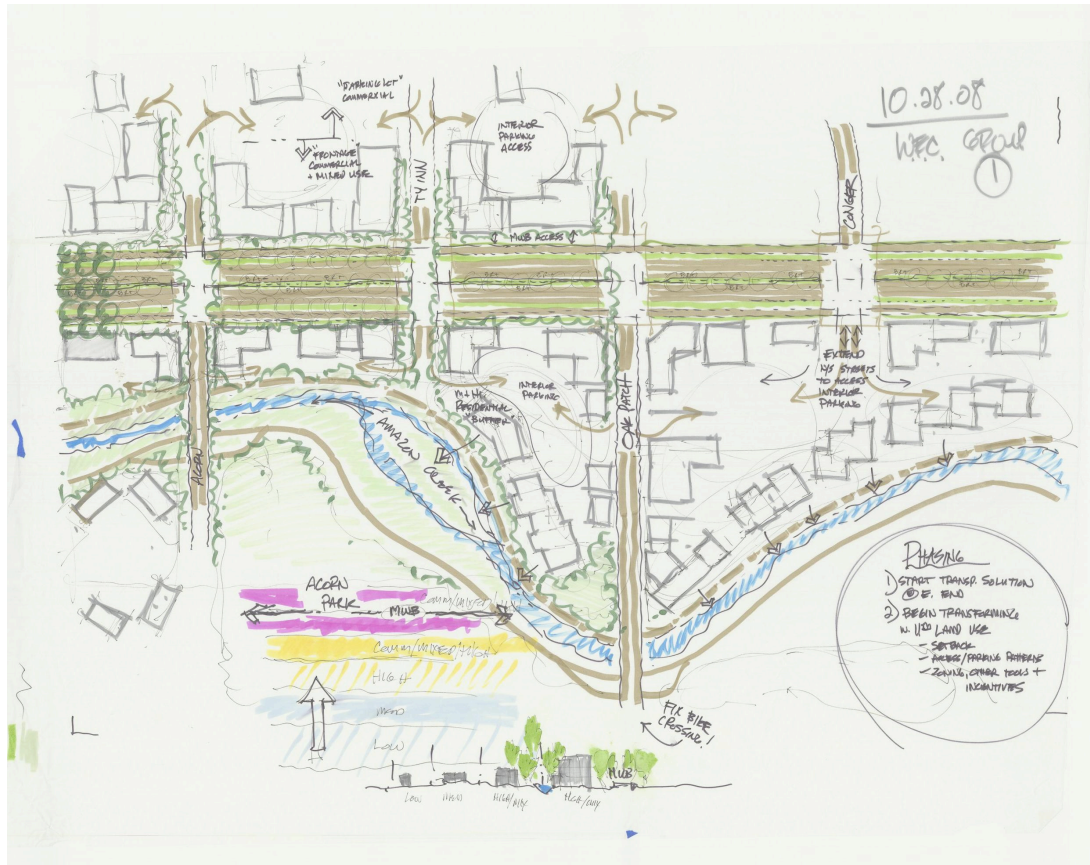
### ***Land Use***

**The WEC recommends the following actions:**

- **Undertake the Eugene Comprehensive Lands Assessment (ECLA).**

In addition, the WEC discussed the following action:

Apply an overlay zone, similar to the “Southwest Whiteaker Special Zone,” to certain industrial areas in west Eugene, especially near West 11th Avenue and between West 5th Avenue and West 7th Place.



WEC small group map 10/28/08

## Environment

The WEC recommends the following:

- Rezone publicly-owned and private conservation areas, such as those lands owned by the Nature Conservancy, to a natural resources designation.
- Implement currently-planned Metro Waterways enhancements to Amazon Creek.
- Undertake an assessment of west Eugene habitat connections needed by wildlife moving between wetlands, wet prairie, oak savannah and/or forest.
- Support the construction and operation of the Environmental Education Center.
- Act to improve Amazon Creek water quality.

- **Undertake a feasibility study of re-establishing cutthroat trout passage between Amazon Creek and Coyote Creek. It is suggested that a collaborative partnership be used to implement this study that includes the Army Corps of Engineers, BLM, City of Eugene, and Lane County.**

## **Medium-term Recommendations (by the end of 10 years)**

These solution proposals begin to implement land use changes and redevelopment along with additional transportation system improvements.

### ***Transportation***

**The WEC recommends the following actions:**

- **Construct the first segments of a multiway boulevard on West 11th Avenue, potentially between Chambers and Garfield.**
- **Continue incremental development of multiway boulevard components such as medians and pedestrian realm components.**
- **Construct capital improvements for West 5th Avenue, West 7th Place and Bailey Hill Road, as identified by traffic studies, to complete an "inner" alternative east-west route between Highway 99 and West 11th Avenue.**
- **Improve Beltline and Roosevelt within current right of way to complete an "outer" alternative east-west route between Highway 99 and West 11th Avenue.**
- **Construct appropriate major transit improvements in the West 11th Avenue corridor.**

The WEC discussed the following actions:

- Replace traffic signal at West 11th Avenue/Hwy 126 and Greenhill Road with a roundabout providing a gateway as well as a safety enhancement.
- Explore connectivity enhancements of riparian habitat at the intersections of 5th and 7th Avenue and Bailey Hill Road.

The WEC also discussed but did not take a position on other options to potentially add street connectivity in the area including:

- Extend 13th Avenue from Bailey Hill Road west to Commerce Street.
- Explore connecting West 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue with Highway 99.

### ***Pedestrian and Bikeways***

**The WEC recommends the following actions:**



- **Ensure further ease of bicycle and pedestrian transportation interface with rapid transit. Take steps/actions and adopt code amendments to support achievement of the West 11th Avenue area mixed-use, redevelopment, and multiway boulevard vision.**
- **Provide a bicycle and pedestrian connection between the north and south section of Buck Street across the Amazon Channel connecting to the Fern Ridge Path.**

The WEC also discussed the following actions:

- Construct a continuous and safe bike facility north of and roughly parallel to West 11th Avenue.

### ***Land Use***

**The WEC recommends the following action:**

- **Build the first creek-side and multiway boulevard-connected mixed-use development somewhere along the corridor.**

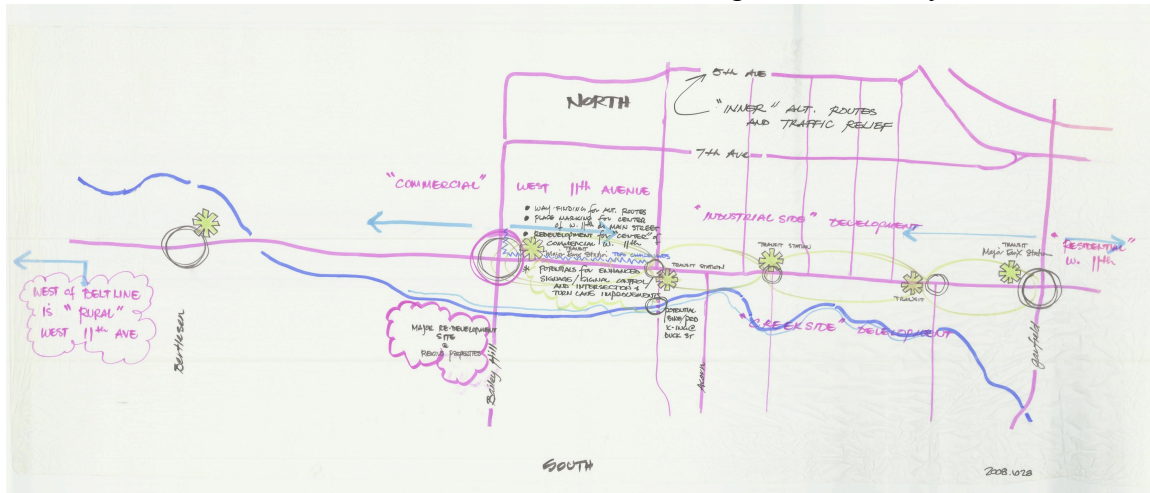
### ***Environment***

**The WEC recommends the following actions:**

- **Define and protect key habitat corridors in west Eugene area, including additional wetlands, adjoining wet prairie, and connections with oak savannah and forest. The West Eugene Wetlands Plan, with its provisions for protection, restoration, and development of particular areas serves as a model for planning west Eugene habitat corridors collaboratively by various levels of government, conservation entities, and businesses.**
- **Continue improvement of Amazon Creek water quality.**
- **Complete the feasibility study for re-establishing cutthroat trout passage between Coyote Creek and Amazon Creek and, contingent on feasibility, take steps to implement the plan.**

## Long-term Recommendations (by the end of 20 years)

These proposals implement final steps for both land use and transportation to fulfill the broader vision of a more livable and sustainable west Eugene community.



WEC small group map 10/28/08

## Transportation

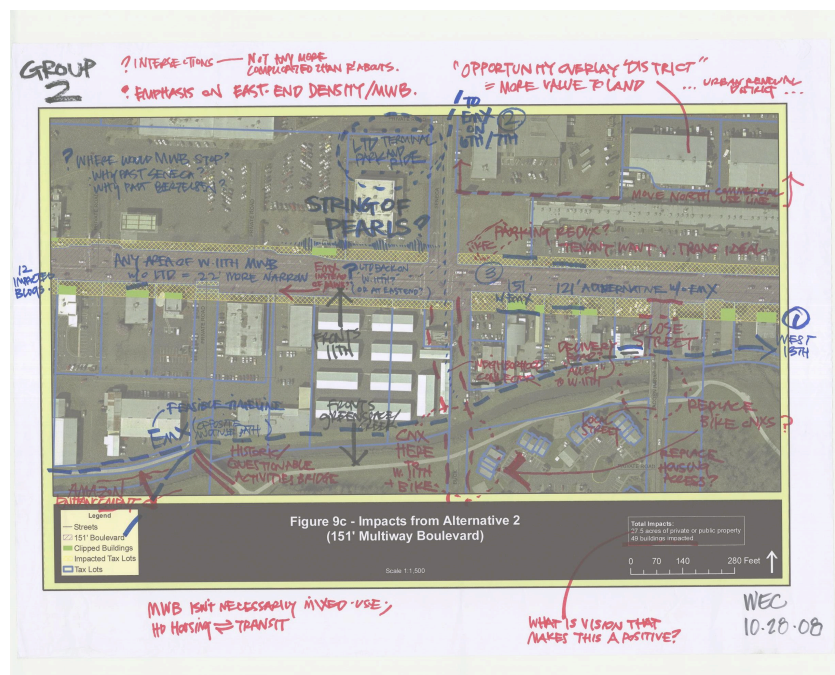
The WEC recommends the following actions dependent on analysis results:

- Construct remaining transportation infrastructure to complete successive segments of a multiway boulevard from around Chambers to around Beltline.

## Land Use

The WEC recommends the following actions:

- Complete land redevelopment to multi-story mixed-use along West 11th Avenue multiway boulevard.
- Continue building mixed-use developments between West 11th Avenue and Amazon Creek.



WEC small group map 10/28/08

## ***Environment***

The WEC recommends the following environmental actions:

- **Complete restoration of fish passage between Coyote Creek and Amazon Creek (contingent upon a finding of feasibility, see above).**
- **Continue improvement of Amazon Creek water quality.**

## A Roadmap for the Future: The Vision of the West Eugene Collaborative



*Cross section of a typical multiway boulevard*

An example of a final vision: West 11th Avenue in west Eugene is a fully functioning and developed multiway boulevard. This through-traffic-carrying street has two lanes in each direction, including rapid transit service, with landscaped and tree-lined public sidewalks between the street and the local access way and parking lane. Buildings are set up close to the pedestrian parking interface. These areas along the street between the through-going street and the building facades are places of activity—friendly, attractive, and walkable. The buildings are of an eye-catching, compact building design, two stories or more in height, with common walls except for mid-block pedestrian connections between the streets and areas behind the buildings.

West 11th Avenue has a series of rapid transit stops. These major transit stops are surrounded by high-density, mixed-use activity areas. In these mixed-use areas, the buildings house ground-floor retail including specialty stores, shops, cafes, and restaurants. The upper floors of buildings contain a variety of office employment uses and multi-family dwelling units, ranging from apartments of various sizes to owner-occupied condominiums. Private vehicle parking is in front along the parking/business access street or in secured parking to the rear of the buildings. The number of dwellings in this West 11th Avenue multiway mixed-use area number approximately 10,000 residential units.

In the areas between main transit stops, the land uses range in density and vary in the type of uses. For example, these in-between areas contain primarily high-density residential apartment developments, many having ground-floor live/work dwelling units facing out upon West 11th Avenue. Other areas have more standard apartment buildings, including elderly and retirement facilities, while other areas are a mix of low-rise office uses and row/townhouse housing developments.

Other areas, because of the location or because of close proximity to Amazon Creek and other open community resource areas, support neighborhood parks containing playgrounds, ballparks, community gardens, and connecting multi-use pathways providing easy access to the nearby open space, and parks and wetland natural conservation areas.

The area south of Amazon Creek, east of Bailey Hill, is presently a mix of medium-density residential and single-family houses. This land use remains essentially the same, both in character and density.

## Conclusion

The West Eugene Collaborative's solutions for today and vision for tomorrow in west Eugene are ultimately achievable in the long run, given broad community support.

*The following table represents the WEC's consensus recommendations and time frames:*

	<b><i>Short-Term</i></b> <i>(by end of 5 years)</i>	<b><i>Medium-Term</i></b> <i>(by end of 10 years)</i>	<b><i>Long-Term</i></b> <i>(by end of 20 years)</i>
<b><i>West 11th Ave.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve traffic signalization</li> <li>• Enhance public transit service</li> <li>• Develop and implement a community design process to test the multiway boulevard vision for west Eugene</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct appropriate major transit improvements in the West 11th Avenue corridor</li> <li>• Construct the first segments of a multiway boulevard on West 11th Avenue, potentially between Chambers and Garfield</li> <li>• Continue incremental development of multiway boulevard components such as medians and pedestrian realm components</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct remaining transportation infrastructure to complete successive segments of a multiway boulevard from around Chambers to around Beltline</li> </ul>

<p><b>“Inner” alternative route:</b> Hwy. 99 near the Big Y to West 11th Ave. via West 5th Ave., West 7th Pl. and Bailey Hill Rd.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Way-finding and intersection upgrades</li> <li>• Add striped bicycle lanes along 5th and 7th as part of alternative route development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct capital improvements for West 5th Avenue, West 7th Place and Bailey Hill Road, as identified by traffic studies, to complete an "inner" alternative east-west route between Highway 99 and West 11th Avenue</li> </ul>	
<p><b>“Outer” alternative route:</b> Hwy. 99 to West 11th Ave. via Roosevelt Blvd. and Belt Line Hwy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Way-finding and intersection upgrades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Beltline and Roosevelt within current right of way to complete an “outer” alternative east-west route between Highway 99 and West 11th Avenue</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Highway 126</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a Highway 126 safety and mobility study</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Bicycle / Pedestrian</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct safety improvements to sidewalks, crosswalks and bicycle paths throughout the corridor with particular focus on safe connections and improved signage to and from the Fern Ridge Path</li> <li>• Construct significant crossing improvements at Oak Patch and City View on the Fern Ridge Path such as bicycle underpasses or other appropriate improvements.</li> <li>• Increase the number of bikes that LTD vehicles can carry to further facilitate the bike/transit interface in the short term.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure further ease of bicycle and pedestrian transportation interface with rapid transit</li> <li>• Provide a bicycle and pedestrian connection between the north and south section of Buck Street across the Amazon Channel connecting to the Fern Ridge Path.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Land Use</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake the Eugene Comprehensive Lands Assessment (ECLA).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take steps/actions and adopt code amendments to support achievement of the West 11th Avenue area mixed use, redevelopment and multiway boulevard vision</li> <li>• Build the first creek-side and multiway boulevard-connected mixed-use development somewhere along the corridor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete land redevelopment to multi-story mixed use along West 11th Avenue multiway boulevard</li> <li>• Continue building mixed use developments between West 11th Avenue and Amazon Creek</li> </ul>

<b><i>Natural Areas; Habitat Corridors</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rezone publicly-owned and private conservation areas, such as those lands owned by the Nature Conservancy, to a natural resources designation</li> <li>• Undertake an assessment of west Eugene habitat connections needed by wildlife moving between wetlands, wet prairie, oak savannah and/or forest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define and protect key habitat corridors in west Eugene area, including additional wetlands, adjoining wet prairie, and connections with oak savannah and forest. The West Eugene Wetlands Plan, with its provisions for protection, restoration, and development of particular areas serves as a model for planning west Eugene habitat corridors collaboratively by various levels of government, conservation entities, and businesses</li> </ul>	
<b><i>Water Quality; Fish Passage</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act to improve Amazon Creek water quality</li> <li>• Implement currently-planned Metro Waterways enhancements to Amazon Creek</li> <li>• Undertake a feasibility study of re-establishing cutthroat trout passage between Amazon Creek and Coyote Creek. It is suggested that a collaborative partnership be used to implement this study that includes Army Corps of Engineers, BLM, City of Eugene, and Lane County</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue improvement of Amazon Creek water quality</li> <li>• Complete the feasibility study for re-establishing cutthroat trout passage between Coyote Creek and Amazon Creek and, contingent on feasibility, take steps to implement the plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue improvement of Amazon Creek water quality</li> <li>• Complete restoration of fish passage between Coyote Creek and Amazon Creek (contingent upon a finding of feasibility, see above)</li> </ul>
<b><i>Environmental Education Center</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the construction and operation of the Environmental Education Center</li> </ul>		

# GETTING THERE

## Steps for Getting There

The WEC's recommendations arrive at a time when several local and regional land use and transportation plans are being updated. In particular, in response to state requirements, Eugene needs to update its transportation system plan, *TransPlan*, to ensure that planned transportation facilities in west Eugene will be adequate to meet anticipated needs.

It is vital that decision makers update *TransPlan* and the Central Lane Regional Transportation Plan to include the consensus recommendations herein to begin the process of implementation. Some of these recommendations differ from current policies and may require adjustments of current planning paradigms by decision makers to successfully implement them. As such, the WEC and the community at large will need to shepherd the recommendations in this report forward to and through these public planning processes to be successfully realized and ultimately implemented.

## Phasing and Implementation

As noted in the solutions section, the WEC believes a priority for west Eugene is traffic relief within the near future. However, it is also imperative that the short-term fixes balance immediate needs with a long-term vision. To achieve this, immediate action should be taken by **The City of Eugene, Lane County, LCOG, and ODOT to update local planning documents to include these recommendations:**

- **City of Eugene Planning & Development Department work to limit further encroachment into needed right-of-way along West 11th Avenue.**
- **Develop a body/task force to coordinate between multiple agencies in order to transform how agencies work together.**
- **Complete the Eugene Comprehensive Lands Assessment (ECLA).**
- **City, County, and LTD work to enact policies that support community vision.**
- **City, County, and LTD work to remove policies that inhibit implementation of community vision.**
- **Update the Metro Plan Diagram and City of Eugene zoning map to accurately identify protected natural areas as well as existing and needed wildlife habitat corridors.**
- **Remove Natural Resource protected areas from the current inventory of industrial lands and seek suitable replacement industrial lands to help maintain an adequate inventory.**



### ***Multiway Boulevard***

While the WEC is interested in exploring a multiway boulevard vision, *how* the community would get to a multiway boulevard has not been fully vetted. The following is an example of considerations that could go into development of a multiway boulevard:

After initial planning and design of the multiway boulevard, a key, urgent, first regulatory step is to establish setbacks in code for new construction which position new building facades at the ultimate intended facade-to-facade width for the boulevard (150 to 160 foot width facade to facade). An interim setback distance can also be defined (approximately 130 foot total width).

The ultimate intended facade-to-facade width should be wide enough to support the ultimate boulevard configuration, even though it may (or may not) take decades for that to be fully realized.

The interim facade-to-facade width should be wide enough to support a basic boulevard configuration, to allow for incremental traffic improvements as the corridor gradually densifies and matures.

A five-lane, through-going realm (two main lanes each way plus center lane for left turns) can be constructed right away (with appropriate construction phasing) within the existing city-owned 80 foot right of way. At this phase, utilities should be undergrounded, and trees planted wherever possible, to set the vital tone of the long-term corridor urban design.

Where all the buildings on a side of a block are currently at or behind an interim functional setback distance, both the through-going and pedestrian realm with an access street for that side of the boulevard can be constructed.

Adjacent zoning should be updated to better protect natural resource areas, incentivize redevelopment, and incentivize or require multi-story commercial/residential mixed use. Some current uses will be made non-conforming, but those can remain until market forces drive higher-value redevelopment.

#### **As redevelopment occurs...**

Build new buildings with their front facades at the planned setback. When a given remnant block-side has redeveloped to the point that its buildings clear the full planned right-of-way, then the pedestrian realm and side access street can be added for the block side.

Over time, each block side that redevelops will add to the overall improving access management for traffic in the through-going realm.

#### **Transit support could evolve over time...**

Initial public transit can be BRT, with high-quality service provided by the combination of the clear traffic flow in the through-going realm, plus generous pedestrian-realm bus pullouts supported with appropriate signal timing.

In the initial condition, blocks with existing setback depth at an intermediate value (approximately 135' facade-to-facade) will allow for BRT pullout station locations.

As redevelopment progresses, and most blocks convert to deeper coordinated setbacks, then dedicated right-of-way for upgraded BRT can be accommodated.

### **Ultimately...**

When all blocks have been redeveloped to the full setback distance, the corridor will support Rapid Transit such as BRT, light rail, street cars, etc. in dedicated lanes in or adjacent to the pedestrian realm.

### **Partnerships**

Strengthening and solidifying multi-agency partnerships as well as public/private partnerships is a cornerstone of successful implementation of the WEC's vision. Due to the integrated nature of the recommendations, it will be necessary for existing partnerships to expand, and/or new partnerships to be established, to ensure efficient and effective coordination of resources. Like the nationally-recognized West Eugene Wetlands Partnership, a visionary partnership needs to be created for coordination of the implementation of these recommendations, as well as future planning and implementation measures. Logical partners would include the City of Eugene, Lane County, LTD, LCOG, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Authority (FTA), community/neighborhood groups, the Nature Conservancy, and the WEC itself, to name a few.

### **Public Trust**

This community must continue to strive for efficient and transparent public planning processes. Eugene has long been known for political debate and polarization between state and local agencies, politically-engaged citizens and agency staff, and among community members in general. Additional local community outreach and relationship-building around a common vision must occur at all levels for the WEC's recommendations to hold water and have a tenable future. In short, collaboration must continue to forge these lasting and durable relationships.

## Funding and Finance

### Possible Sources of Funding

The size and scope of just the transportation recommendations will require additional funding beyond the current City budget allocation for capital improvement projects. For example, in Fiscal Year 2009 the City has allocated only \$10.1M for transportation-related capital projects. The integrated nature of the recommendations allows the cost of these capital improvements to be absorbed by a variety of sources. For example, in 2008, the City of Eugene became conditionally certified to use its own processes to design, advertise, award and manage projects funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Additionally, the multitude of capital improvements within our recommendations could be eligible for financing by additional FHWA sources such as the Transportation, Community, and System Preservation (TCSP) Program.

For example, state funding from ODOT Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program is one of many options through which ODOT provides funds for the integration of land use and transportation planning projects. As these recommendations are not exclusively transportation-related, but include land use and natural resource ideas as well, the depth of potential grant funding is great.

Notably, Lane Transit District (LTD) is currently involved in the federally-mandated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process to identify a route for bus rapid transit (BRT) in west Eugene. Many of the proposals LTD has on the table for BRT require acquisition of additional right-of-way along West 11th Avenue. This could provide multi-agency partnering opportunities for this component of the project, including federal agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

### Financing Tools

The WEC's recommendations will require a number of creative financing mechanisms. **It is crucial that their implementation not negatively impact existing business and property owners in west Eugene, and especially along West 11th.** A number of actions could be implemented to lessen the impacts of cost on the City, property owners, and business owners.

One option the WEC discussed is to enact a mixed-use overlay on the current zoning along the West 11th corridor. This overlay zone must be intertwined with additional measures to raise capital as well as garner momentum for redevelopment such as developer incentives, urban renewal funds, enterprise zone incentives, tax incentives, grants, local improvement district, and/or extension of the Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption (MUPTE).

It will be necessary for the local agencies to work together as well as find revenue sources for these recommendations. These are the types of investments our community

needs to make to continue to make Eugene a livable and sustainable place to be over the long term.

## **Finance and Investment**

The transportation improvements outlined in the “Solutions” section will admittedly require a substantial investment of financial resources. In brief, we estimate that investments will range from \$180 million to \$250 million without adjusting for inflation. While this may come as sticker shock to many, in locally relative terms of the Beltline and I-5 interchange costing about \$214 million, the I-5 Willamette Bridge at \$180 million, and the new University of Oregon Basketball Arena costing about \$250 million, the proposed number seems reasonable.

The investment necessary to accomplish the small, near term (within five years) ideas would be in the range of \$15 million to \$20 million, or about 7% of the budget.

The medium term (within ten years) ideas are estimated in the range of \$45 million to \$65 million, or about 25% of the budget. Improvements to West 11th Avenue, from Terry St. to Greenhill Road, are being studied by the City and those improvements are currently budgeted at \$20 million.

The majority of the WEC’s proposed financial investment would be made along West 11th Avenue from Garfield to Beltline via the construction of a multiway boulevard (over a period of 15 to 35 years). Construction financing represents about 40% of the overall investment, and the remaining portion is divided into right-of-way acquisition (21%) and adjacent property impacts (39%).

These ideas will generate other investment needs as they will necessitate changes in City code and local planning documents which will need to be updated to satisfy the many State and regional requirements.

## **Next Steps**

The WEC understands that while a great deal of time, energy and knowledge has been invested in this process and the recommendations it has produced, there is more work to be done. That work should begin with testing or validating this vision with both the community in which the vision might take place, and with those who are in the best position to see it through to fruition. We must now begin that “test.”

We see this next process taking place on two levels: A more short-term or immediate level, and another level that looks much further into the future.

### ***Short-Term Considerations***

Part of what the WEC has recommended in the areas of transportation, land use, and the environment can and should be done through short-term planning processes using current city, county and ODOT expertise. These recommendations are relatively concrete, inexpensive and have a minimal amount of disruption, yet could provide immediate relief to the transportation bottleneck in west Eugene, and address some needed improvements to land uses and environmental conditions. Having said that, these ideas still must be vetted through the general public and specifically through those in the transportation, land use and environmental arenas, as well as local businesses, residents and general users. A number of WEC members fall into these categories and should be involved for continuity sake.

The land inventory information being developed through the Eugene Comprehensive Land Assessment process is crucial to better understanding the implications of land use changes. Great care should be taken to see that as that study is completed, and decisions are being made with respect to its findings, the WEC’s recommendations are fully integrated into those discussions. Of particular concern are the potentially displaced industrial lands and land-use designations to re-zone protected natural resources lands appropriately.

Additional processes currently underway that should strongly consider the WEC recommendations include the current Transplan and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) updates, and the West Eugene Corridor study and West Eugene EmX Extension EIS process, as well as other transportation, land use, and environmental planning and implementation projects, such as Opportunity Siting and Beltline Phase 3.

### ***Longer-Term Considerations***

From the outset, the WEC’s purpose has been to “develop an integrated land use and transportation solution, supported by stakeholders, that will facilitate movement of people and commerce from/through/to west Eugene and west of Eugene while enhancing community, business and the environment.” What emerged from our process was a shared vision of what west Eugene could be. A central component of that vision is a multiway

boulevard in the West 11th corridor. It also includes a restored Amazon Creek, better pedestrian and bike access, housing opportunities in new mixed use zones, and new ways to connect neighborhoods with enhanced natural areas.

Our next steps should be to develop and implement a larger community design process which includes design expertise, outreach expertise, transportation expertise, environmental expertise, etc. The goal of this process would be to better understand, test and refine this shared vision of a multiway boulevard, intelligent land use zoning, and permanently-protected natural areas that will redefine west Eugene.

*“Multiway boulevards don’t get built very often in the United States, so when a new one emerges it is a notable event for the transportation and city planning professions. A multiway boulevard handles large amounts of relatively fast-moving through-traffic as well as slower local traffic within the same right-of-way but on separate but closely connected roadways. The street design is novel because it goes against prevailing standards.”*  
Elizabeth MacDonald, Spring 2006.

The WEC recognizes that not only do multiway boulevards not get built very often, but to seriously consider such a thing, we need experts. The WEC recommends that as we embark on the community design process described above with Eugene citizens and agencies, in addition to environmental, transportation, land use, and community planning experts, we consult with recognized experts on multiway boulevards, such as Allan Jacobs or Elizabeth MacDonald.

In the end, a master plan should be developed that would include a comprehensive look at all facets of the multiway boulevard, appropriate land uses across the study area, and a long-range natural resource plan. The WEC has laid important ground work for this master plan, and certainly some members of the WEC would participate to provide a link from the work already done.

From such a master plan, a series of events can cascade, including actions of local and regional government agencies to support the implementation of the multiway boulevard. An effective master plan would become the guide to the long-term redevelopment of this area.

### ***Coming Together for a Better West Eugene***

The WEC recommends that the community conversation begun here continue in a manner robust enough to produce broad community consensus. The WEC believes that transportation, land use, and environment challenges represented by current conditions in West Eugene can be addressed, but only through integrated solutions engaging all segments of the community.

Finally, the majority of our work has been on our *area of focus*, which is around West 11th from Chambers to Greenhill Road, but it should not be assumed that our concern lies only within those boundaries. Our *area of interest* most certainly would extend west all the way to Veneta, and the WEC is fully supportive and recommends that efforts currently underway to enhance transportation, land use and the environment along that corridor be a top priority. To that end, the WEC has already supported an effort for funding a full analysis of that corridor and encourages the completion of that analysis.

## Conclusion

The WEC's package of recommendations centers on an overarching vision of an enhanced west Eugene community through a series of solutions that integrate land use and transportation policies. It is important to note that the keys to any successful solution are *integrated* land use and transportation policies that are comprehensive as well as flexible. Moreover, these policies must inform the decisions across jurisdictions and complement one another and the community planning process in general.

Given the complexity of the project and the challenges the community faces in implementing these recommendations, it is important that the community buys into the proposals and has the opportunity to continue as participants in the visioning process. Indeed, the WEC considers these recommendations as a framework that must spark community dialogue on these issues.

The WEC believes that within five years, traffic congestion on and along West 11th Avenue will be reduced if the short-term recommendations are implemented. And, within twenty years a large portion of West 11th Avenue between Chambers and Beltline could be built into a multiway boulevard with high density, multi-family residential and commercial mixed-use development.

The multiway boulevard will accommodate multiple modes of transportation including through-going traffic lanes, dedicated transit lanes, and a pedestrian realm that supports walking, bicycling, and parking along access lanes.

The WEC recognizes that these recommendations will only become reality with broad community support and the political will necessary to implement the actions. Moreover, the vision of the WEC can only be achieved with continued, expanded collaboration and partnerships between multiple agencies, the community, and businesses. Most importantly, this is a significant opportunity to alter the ongoing paradigm of community-wide mistrust and shepherd in a new era of collaborative planning.

A beautiful West 11th Avenue can be a new main street for west Eugene, and a proud gateway to Eugene and the southern Willamette Valley, while being a model of sustainability and forward thinking.

## **THE WEST EUGENE COLLABORATIVE PROCESS**

The West Eugene Collaborative commenced with a full burden of the concerns and expectations natural to planning for a sector of Eugene and its surroundings.

After defining our collective focus around an integrated approach to planning, and analyzing the current situation of west Eugene in terms of transportation, land use, culture, and environment, we pooled the many disparate elements of our diverse visions for the area in a process we called “design storming.”

We then cycled through a refinement process in which a committee of the collaborative analyzed and grouped these potential design elements, allowing clusters of mutually-supportive elements to float upwards. At the center of each cycle, the output of the Analysis Committee was discussed by the whole WEC, providing direction for the next iteration. Ultimately the whole WEC reached consensus on key elements of an integrated transportation, land use, and environmental solution to some of the key issues in west Eugene.

### **Getting Started**

In early 2004 a group of concerned citizens representing a wide range of community perspectives, known as the Eugene Roundtable Group, discussed the future of west Eugene for most of a year. In June 2005, the Eugene Roundtable Group concluded that “whether or not the West Eugene Parkway is built, there will continue to be significant transportation challenges affecting west Eugene and, in particular, West 11th Avenue.”

In May 2006, the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution published an assessment of the conflict over the West Eugene Parkway conducted by the Osprey Group. They concluded that “if the agencies and the community can rise to the challenge, the collaborative process, Option II, can best address the current challenge of ‘getting to a transportation solution for west Eugene that has widespread understanding and acceptability.’ ”

In December 2006, the Eugene Roundtable Group invited other community leaders to join in a discussion about west Eugene transportation and related issues. Calling themselves the “West Eugene Forum” (or “WE” for short), this informal group met seven times between December 2006 and March 2007 to develop an approach for addressing transportation problems in west Eugene. The group benefited from the facilitation assistance of the Oregon Consensus Program.

In April 2007, at the invitation of the informal “WE” group, roughly 30 citizens agreed to participate in the formal “West Eugene Collaborative.” The West Eugene Collaborative quickly adopted a purpose statement and operating agreements, raised seed money, and, working with the Oregon Consensus Program, selected the Osprey Group to serve as facilitator. The WEC, an unusual community-based, non-governmental planning association, was up and running.



## Working Through

After defining our collective focus around an integrated approach to planning, and analyzing the current situation of west Eugene in terms of transportation, land use, culture, and environment, the WEC analyzed, reviewed, and discussed the current conditions in west Eugene.

In March 2008, we pooled the many disparate elements of our diverse visions for the area using a non-evaluative charrette-like process we called “design storming” (like a focused, graphical version of brain storming). Our primary design storming work was done in breakout groups assisted by local design professionals working in pairs, and pro-bono, who we titled “design scribes”. Our small group work was always followed by review and discussion in the whole group.

We then cycled through a refinement process in which a committee of the collaborative analyzed and grouped these potential design elements, allowing clusters of mutually-supportive elements to float upwards.

Ultimately the WEC reached consensus on key elements of an integrated transportation, land use, and environmental solution to some of the key issues in west Eugene.

In July 2008, after many committee meetings, additional work in subcommittees, and further discussion and refinement, the Analysis Committee reported back to the whole WEC that the two or three hundred design storming elements could be effectively grouped into the following eight integrated clusters:

1. Improve efficiency of transportation network
2. Increase public transit
3. Enhance pedestrian and bikeways
4. Intensify development appropriately
5. Relocate some land uses
6. Enhance open space/natural resources
7. Enhance natural watershed
8. Enhance appreciation and connections to natural resources

For each of the design issue clusters, the members of the Analysis Committee developed a package of descriptive information, based on key parameters and rules of thumb, key questions, community design implications, implementation process comments, references, and external links.

While different WEC members had different perspectives on the supporting documentation for the clusters, which had been developed by the Analysis Committee the WEC reached consensus on the eight clusters as a valuable framework for moving forward with our collective community design process.

That conversation and agreement set the stage for the next process iteration, leading to presentation and discussion of some key options in the form of three scenario backbones:

1. Multiway Boulevard Scenario—“Multiway Boulevard”— Focused on concentrating activity around a West 11th progressively redeveloped into a dense, high-traffic-capacity Multiway Boulevard, from around Garfield out to around Beltline, tightly coordinated with public transit, bike/ped pathways, adjacent commercial/residential mixed-use, and natural resources. Intended to help West 11th congestion by handling increased traffic, improving land use, and improving alternative modes, rather than by diverting traffic.
2. Two-Way Alternative Route Scenario—aka “Bypass”— Intended to relieve traffic pressure from West 11th from around Garfield to somewhere west, by enhancing east-west alternative routes, using existing streets north of West 11th with two-way traffic both there and on West 11th.
3. One-Way Alternative Route Scenario—aka “Couplet”— Intended to relieve traffic pressure from West 11th from around Garfield to somewhere west, by enhancing east-west alternative routes, using existing streets north of West 11th with selected use of one-way traffic on the alternative route and on part of West 11th.

These three scenario backbones, in and of themselves, intentionally involved only a subset of issues the WEC was looking at — but the subset they involved was key. While many of the issues the WEC was looking at were independent of these backbones, in the whole WEC discussion and in the follow-up analysis in committee, these backbones emerged as distinguishing elements.

In September 2008, the WEC explored these three scenario backbones, working in charrette-style breakout groups, supported by volunteer professional design guides. Subsequent discussion in the whole group led to an emerging consensus around a hybrid of the multiway boulevard and two-way alternative route scenarios.

In October 2008, the emerging consensus was reviewed and refined. The culminating results of all these discussions, including those over the preceding two years, are the recommendations presented in this report.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This report and the success of the West Eugene Collaborative could not have come to be without the enormous dedication of the WEC membership, the donation of hundreds of hours of time from the membership as well as those from critical adjunct volunteers, facilitators and consultants. The WEC met for over two years to develop a vision for west Eugene. We could not have accomplished this without the remarkable assistance of the following parties.

### **Main Meeting and Overall Facilitation**

#### Oregon Consensus Program

Elaine Hallmark, Jamie Damon, Gail McEwen, and Tim McCabe

#### The Osprey Group

John Huyler and Dennis Donald

### **Breakout Group Facilitation**

Scott Bellows of Dispute Solutions, LLC; Nicole Holk and Sarah Altemus of the University of Oregon Masters Program in Conflict and Dispute Resolution; and Allan Kubler, Jennifer Knowlton, and Allegra Helfenstein of Community Mediation Services

### **Design Guides and Design Scribes**

Brian McCarthy, Cameron McCarthy Gilbert & Scheibe Landscape Architects LLP; Cathy Corlett, Habitats, Inc.; Dave Guadagni, Robertson Sherwood Architects, PC; Rex Redmon, Dougherty Landscape Architects, Inc.; Robin Hostick, City of Eugene Planning and Development; Lindsay Smith, Satre Associates, PC; Lorri Nelson and Kaarin Knudson, Rowell Brokaw Architects, PC

### **Financial Contributions**

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### **Other Contributions**

Artifice, Inc., The Ulum Group, and 1000 Friends of Oregon.

## **West Eugene Collaborative Membership**

The members of the West Eugene Collaborative are:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
John Allcott	Preferred Futures
Susan Ban	Shelter Care
Alan Buck	Churchill Area Neighbors
Rick Duncan	Eugene Planning Commission
Gerry Gaydos	Lane Transit District Board
Rob Inerfeld	City of Eugene Public Works
Patricia Johnston	West Eugene Wetlands Partnership, Bureau of Land Management
Don Kahle	at-large, American Institute of Architects
Kevin Matthews	Friends of Eugene
Aleta Miller	Active Bethel Citizens
Ed Moore	State of Oregon, Department of Land Conservation and Development
Deborah Noble	West Wind Forest Products
Mary O'Brien	at-large
Kitty Piercy	Mayor of Eugene
Emily Proudfoot	Eugene Public Works
Chris Pryor	Eugene City Council
Larry Reed	JRH, Transportation and Land Use Planners
Rusty Rexius	Rexius Inc.
Jack Roberts	Lane Metro Partnership
Tom Schwetz	Lane Transit District
Faye Stewart	Lane County Commissioner
Paul Thompson	Lane Council of Governments
Jim Welsh	Eugene Association of Realtors ®
Gary Wildish	Chambers Construction
Sue Wolling	GEARS Cycling Club
Jan Wostmann	Neighborhood Leaders Council
Rob Zako	1000 Friends of Oregon

## **Non-active Participants in the West Eugene Collaborative**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Rick Crinklaw	Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce
Ed Durkee	Goodwill Industries
Bill Fleenor	Lane County Commission
Lisa Gardner	City of Eugene Planning Department
Ric Ingham	City of Veneta

Anita Johnson	at-large
Mark Schoening	City of Eugene Public Works
Ollie Snowden	Lane County
Charles Snyder	Residents for Responsible Rapid Transit
Tom Stinchfield	Lane County

We are collectively grateful for all the members' commitment and dedication to this long process that has produced an exciting new look at a long standing problem in our community. In addition to countless personal volunteer hours, many members took time away from their work lives, their business lives and personal lives to dedicate many hours towards this effort. We are grateful for their personal dedication and, in turn, the support their families and employers have provided through the donation of their time.

More importantly, perhaps, strong new relationships have been forged and galvanized across the political spectrum through this process. As a result, our community is more able to successfully and collectively reach positive solutions to difficult problems we face going forward. This can only result in a stronger community over time and for this we are grateful. Thank you.