

CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT



To: City Council
From: Jacob A. Graichen, AICP, City Planner
cc: Planning Commission

Date: March 26, 2021

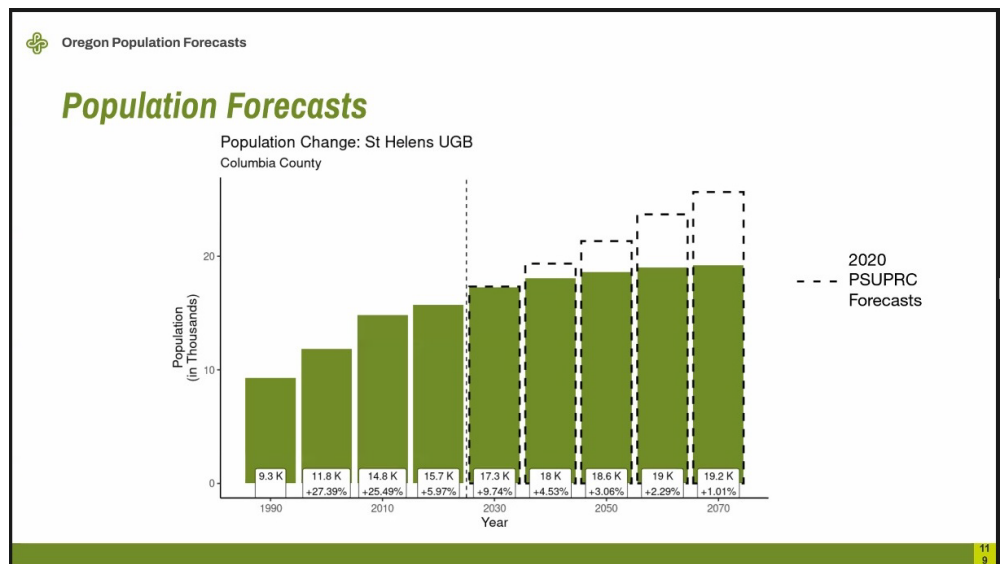
This report does not indicate all *current planning* activities over the past report period. These are tasks, processing and administration of the Development Code which are a weekly if not daily responsibility. The Planning Commission agenda, available on the City's website, is a good indicator of *current planning* activities. The number of building permits issued is another good indicator as many require Development Code review prior to Building Official review.

ASSOCIATE PLANNER/PROJECT MANAGER—*In addition to routine tasks, the Associate Planner/Community Development Project Manager has been working on: See attached.*

PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—MISC.

Prepared legal description and map for Oregon Dept. of Revenue review, which is our typical first step after receiving an Annexation application. In last month's report, I mentioned two annexations that will probably be processed this year. The one referred to in this report is #3.

Attended virtual
Portland State
University Population
Research Center
PSUPRC Forecast
Proposal Meeting on
March 6, 2024. Most
recent projections
show jump in the near
term with a slower
long term growth rate
for St. Helens. This is
a toned-down
projection from
previous assumptions
as shown on the slide



on **the right**. This reflects forecast adjustments since the 2020 forecast. Another interesting tidbit is that Scappoose growth is expected to be higher than Columbia County and the region.

Conducted (almost) final inspection for temporary occupancy of the Fast Lube and Oil business along US30 by Burger King. There is still some more work to do, mostly pertaining to a shared pedestrian path with the adjacent lot where Dairy Queen is proposed. This followed pre-inspection to assist with city expectations.

Pre-final occupancy inspection to assist with city expectations of the St. Heles High School to open a phase of school. That final inspection anticipated soon.

Participated in Resource Assistance for Rural Environments application preparation with City Engineering and Columbia County LDS for someone to help (for 11 months) with the DEQ mandated TMDL requirements that the city and county are now facing.

TMDL: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/wq/tmdls/pages/default.aspx>

RARE: <https://rare.uoregon.edu/>

Assisted Engineering with review of speed hump policy they have initiated to address the somewhat common speed bump requests.

Presented to the Columbia County Board of Realtors along with Columbia County's Director of Land Development Services at the library building this month.

DEVELOPMENT CODE ENFORCEMENT

"Training grounds" sign on CRFR property on the west side of the wastewater treatment pond installed in 2022 without permits under the previous Fire Chief, has been removed. After 2022 correspondence between attorneys (about more than just the sign), I emailed the current chief last December about this. The sign was removed sometime after that message with no further drama. I hadn't discussed this matter with the chief until this reporting period.

Visited a site where kids were allegedly were crossing a protected creek with a dirt bike in the Barr Avenue area. As luck would have it, maybe it was because of spring break, I caught them doing that when I visited. So not alleged but legit. 2-cycle engines will get you noticed.

PLANNING COMMISSION (& *acting* HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION)

March 12, 2024 meeting (outcome): The Commission held three public hearings including a Historic Resource Review of the historic landmark at 175 S. 1st Street *As the Historic Landmarks Commission*), a pair of yard (setback) Variances to allow two duplexes to be attached along a shared property line, and an appeal of a 3-parcel partition/lot line adjustment. All were approved.

Also, *as the Historic Landmarks Commission*, they reviewed and provided recommendation to staff for an architectural review of the Klondike building.

April 9, 2024 meeting (upcoming): One public hearing is scheduled for a yard (setback) Variance for a property along N. Vernonia Road. Code review of the 2024 Development Code amendments will start and the Commission will be asked to determine who will be a part of the Technical Advisory Committee for the upcoming EOA effort.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

Work for data related to Economic Opportunity Analysis (EAO) effort. Certain GIS data is used to inform the buildable lands inventory aspect of the EAO. Included review of data for 862 taxlots. Tedium abounds in this sort of effort.

Annual software renewal efforts start this month for GIS products used by the Planning, Engineering and Public Works Departments.

COUNCIL ACTIONS RELATED TO LAND USE

The quarterly joint meeting with the City Council and Planning Commission occurred this month.

The City Council ok'd a 45-day extension to continue to pause the Police Station matter to the state Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA).

From: [Jennifer Dimsho](#)
To: [Jacob Graichen](#)
Subject: March Planning Department Report
Date: Monday, March 25, 2024 4:43:09 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Here are my additions to the March Planning Department Report.

GRANTS

1. **Business Oregon – Infrastructure Finance Authority** – Low-interest loan for Streets & Utilities Project and Riverwalk improvements. Provided updates to loan officer. Compiled invoices and submitted our 2nd loan disbursement request. Received confirmation that this was received/processed.
2. **Riverwalk Project (OPRD Grants x2)** – 4 bids opened on March 7! Lowest bidder was Advanced Excavating Specialists for just under \$3 million. Council awarded bid on 3/20. Working on contract to be approved on April 17 with anticipated Notice to Proceed in May. Working with state grant coordinators on project timeline, budget, and forthcoming amendment. Working with County on an agreement to use County’s parking lot as the construction access into Columbia View Park. Erosion & Sediment Control inspections by Lower Columbia Engineering agreement to be approved on 4/3 Council meeting.
3. **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** – \$2.5 million grant award to fund design/engineering/permitting for the City’s Sanitary Sewer Improvement Project which 3 sanitary sewer basins identified as deficient in the adopted Wastewater Master Plan. Consor contract approved on 2/21 by Council after meeting to discuss local land use and environmental permitting required. Working with CRPUD to get a triangular-shaped property annexed into the City which contains City sewer to be upsized as part of this project near US 30. Held kickoff meeting on 3/14.
4. **CLG Historic Preservation Grant Program** – SHPO Certified Local Government Program. Received our contract for 17k. State approved work plan. Executed contract with property owners. Project to be completed by July 31, 2024. SHPO asked for an update. Applicant stated that they did a walkthrough with contractor and received a new construction scheduled which states work to be completed by mid-May.
5. **DLCD Technical Assistance Program** – 60k will fund a new Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA). Contract approved with the state and with our consultants. Kicked off project with monthly check ins. Received initial Buildable Lands Inventory (BLI) data based on City’s GIS data. Working on initial BLI feedback by the end of March. Drafted EOA Technical Advisory Committee list of potential 10-12 members and sent invites out. Finalizing list by April 10.
6. **ODOT Community Paths Program: St. Helens Scappoose Trail Refinement Project** – 405k to study a trail route refinement project (30% design) from St. Helens to Scappoose. Award is \$363,407, with a match of around 42k split between Scappoose, the County, and

us. We finally received our draft/initial contract from ODOT. Contract needed a few changes which ODOT submitted again to DOJ for review. Met with Scappoose & Columbia County to work through draft Statement of Work (SoW). SoW can now be sent to DOJ for review. Working on IGAs for County & Scappoose in the meantime to cover our required match.

7. **Travel Oregon Grant Program –100k grant for Riverwalk Project** - Thanks to Columbia Economic Team and our Regional Destination Marketing Organization for providing support. Received 50% of the grant as contract terms require.
8. **ODOT TGM Program: Transportation Systems Plan** – Assisting with planning process. ODOT says it could be ~6 months before we see movement on this project. Coordinated & attended another meeting with a contractor interested in the project.

PROJECTS & MISC

9. **Riverfront Streets/Utilities Project** – Attending weekly check-ins. Pump station generator to be installed soon. Tualatin staircase/bluff trailhead and Wapama Way intersection under construction. Traffic circle and elevated picnic platform under construction. North and south water quality swales underway. Undergrounding contract for 1st & St. Helens intersection awarded to lowest bidder (Landis & Landis) on 3/6. Undergrounding project pre-construction meeting scheduled for 3/28 which means work at 1st & St. Helens intersection to restart soon.
10. **Urban Renewal Agency** – Prepared for upcoming FY 24-25 budget process with Gloria/John.
11. **CDBG** – Met with Beth Pulito at the Amani Center to discuss CDBG eligibility and pros/cons if they were to utilize CDBG funding for their resource/health center.

Jenny Dimsho, AICP | Community Development Project Manager

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