

# North Sweet Home Area Plan

City of Sweet Home, Oregon

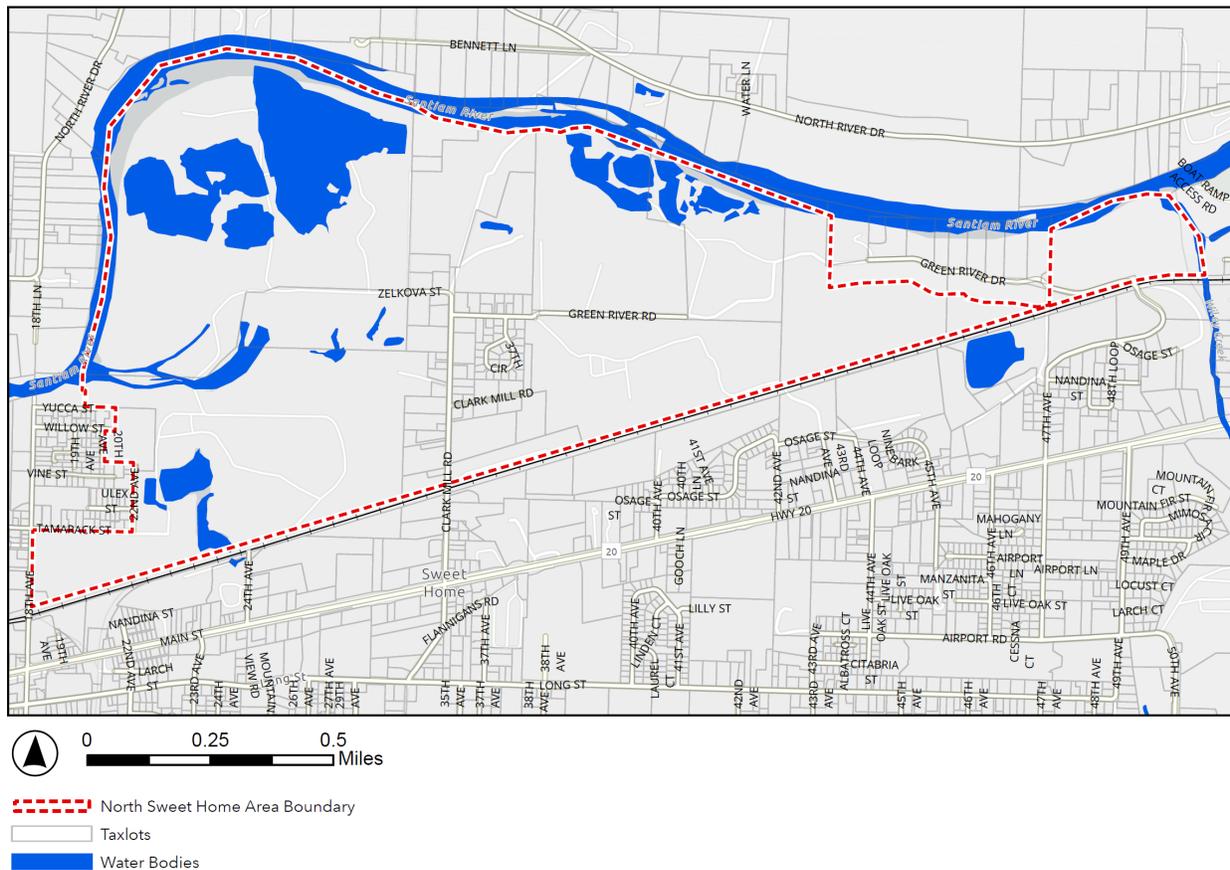
*DRAFT April 17, 2025*



# Introduction

This area plan was prepared by the City of Sweet Home for land in the northern part of the City limits, called the North Sweet Home Area (NSHA). The NSHA is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. North Sweet Home Area



The North Sweet Home Area Plan is intended to provide guidance for future City decisions, certainty for landowners, and a cohesive and functional built environment through incremental development of NSHA properties. The plan document includes:

1. Introductory materials, including an overview of plan policies and the planning process.
2. A description of existing conditions in the NSHA.
3. Plan elements describing the plan’s intent and policies across each of several topic areas

4. Case studies of other communities which have successfully redeveloped similar sites, providing lessons for the City of Sweet Home
5. Implementation actions
6. Appendices which include a summary of alternatives evaluated, implementing Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code amendments, and supporting information from the Transportation System Plan.

## ***NSHA Policies***

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The following policies are intended to guide the incremental development of the North Sweet Home Area into a cohesive and vibrant part of the City of Sweet Home.

1. **Housing.** The North Sweet Home Area will provide a variety of housing types to help accommodate the long-term growth of the City.
2. **Economic Development.** The North Sweet Home Area will provide opportunities for industrial, commercial, and service jobs. New employment areas will be focused in the vicinity of 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue and within the Hospitality Overlay area.
3. **Connectivity.** The North Sweet Home Area will be served by a connected and multi-modal transportation system built consistent with the standards in the City's Transportation System Plan.
4. **Parks and Trails.** The existing Quarry Park, riverfront amenities, and new parks and open spaces will be connected by a system of trails and pathways, including a mixed use path along the area's framework streets.
5. **Natural Resources.** The North Sweet Home Area contains significant river frontage, riparian areas, wetland features, scenic views, and other natural resources that will be protected and enhanced as the area develops.

## ***Planning Process***

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This area planning effort includes the following steps: 1) an analysis of existing conditions; 2) creation and evaluation of land use/transportation options; 3) selection of a preferred alternative; and 4) suggestion of changes to comprehensive plan and zoning designations, as well as policies and transportation projects identified in the updated TSP.

The North Sweet Home Area Plan was prepared in consultation with City staff, elected and appointed officials, property owners in the study area, and the broader public. Three alternatives were prepared to examine different potential combinations of land use and

transportation systems in the area. They are summarized in the Community Booklet, included as Appendix A.

# Existing Conditions

The North Sweet Home Area today consists of roughly 750 acres in total, including the City-owned Quarry Park, the former Sweet Home Mill site, existing residences and businesses, and undeveloped land. The majority of the land has a “Mixed Use Employment” Comprehensive Plan designation and a “Recreational Commercial” zoning designation. Comprehensive Plan designations are shown on Figure 2 and zoning map designations are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 2. Comprehensive Plan Designations

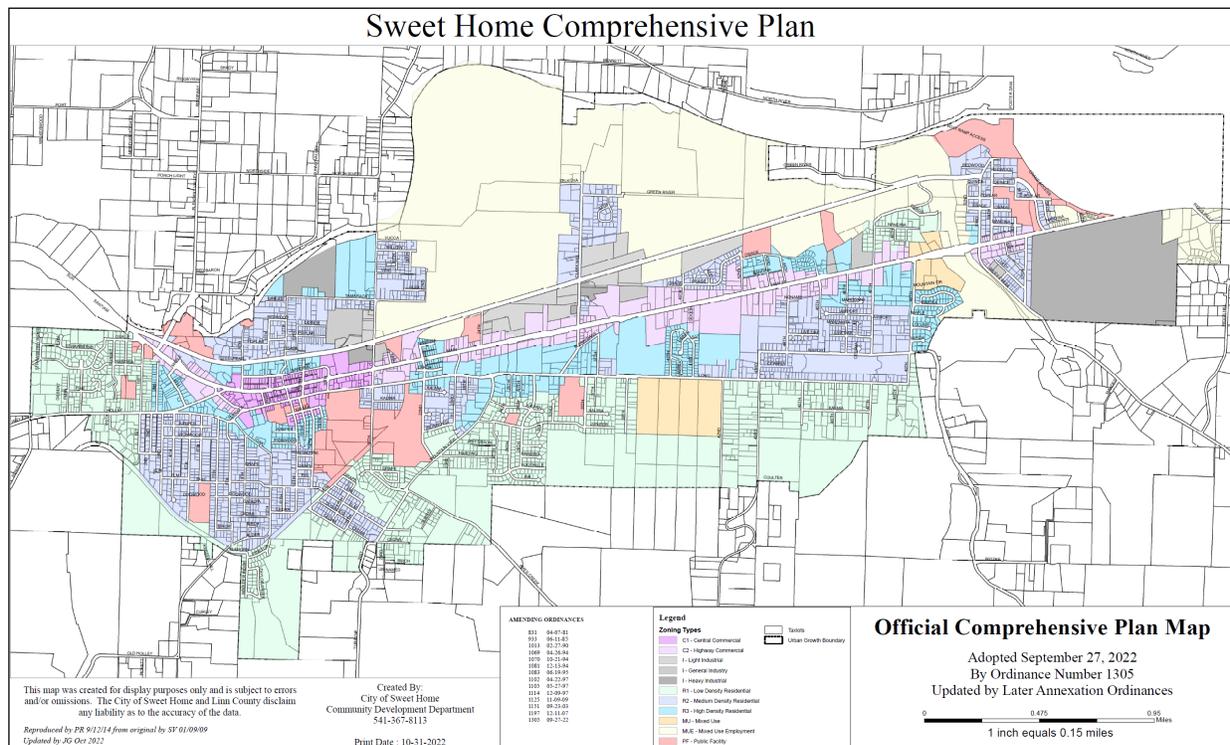
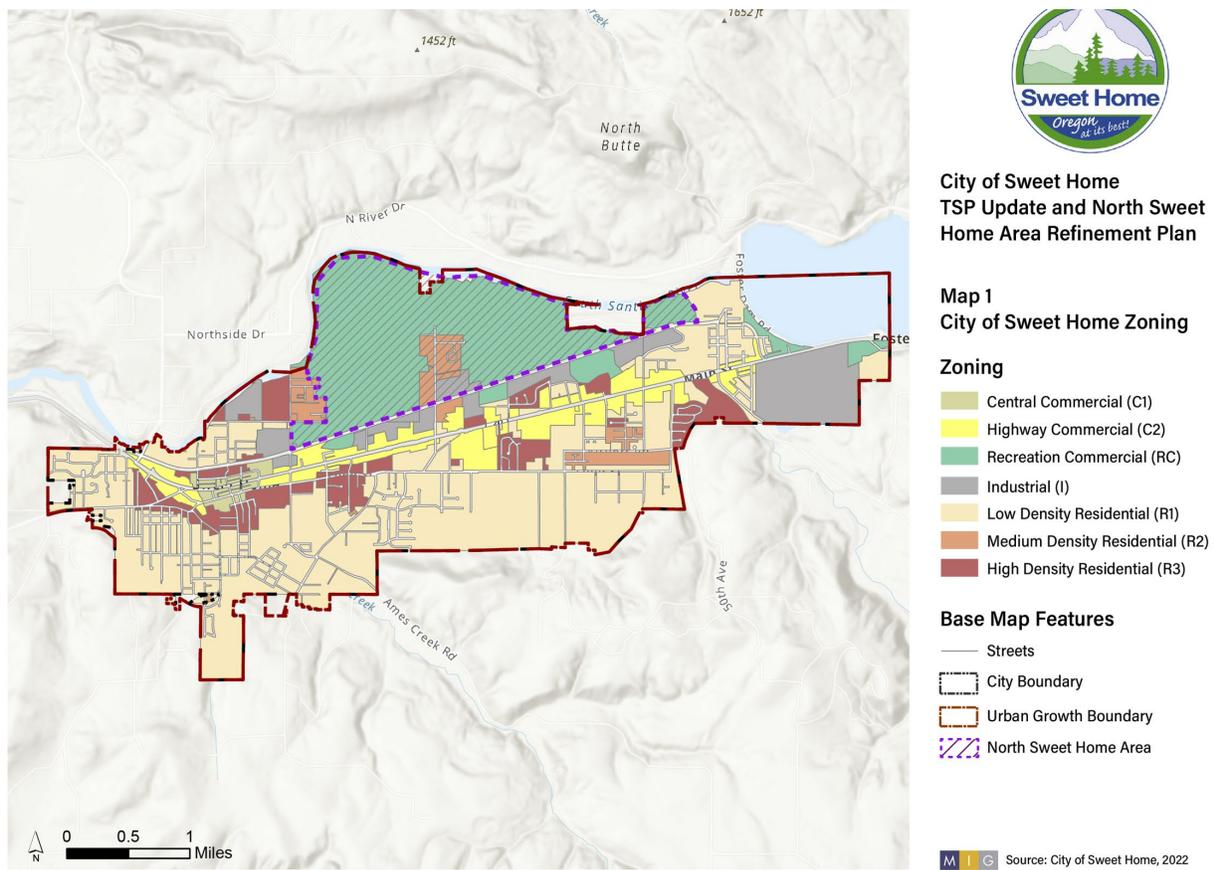


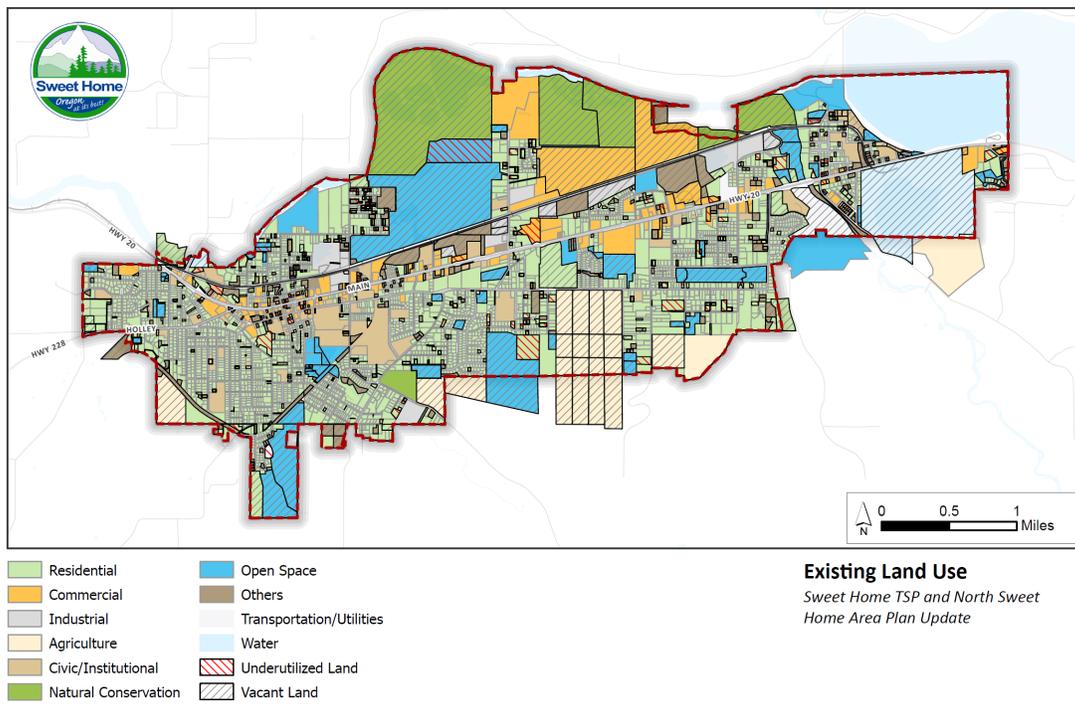
Figure 3. City of Sweet Home Zoning



## Existing Land Use

Existing land uses in the North Sweet Home Area are shown in Figure 4. Uses include residential neighborhoods, industrial and/or commercial uses, and open spaces. Much of the area is undeveloped or underdeveloped, with low-improvement uses occupying most large parcels in the area. The former Sweet Home Mill site is within the study area, which serves as an opportunity for a redevelopment anchor and informs the likely infrastructure phasing.

Figure 4. Existing Land Uses



## Environmental Characteristics

The North Sweet Home Area contains significant areas of wetlands and floodplains in the vicinity of the South Santiam River. Much of the area is within a Natural Resources overlay zone, which requires additional screening for environmental issues through the City’s development process. These features are shown in Figure 5.

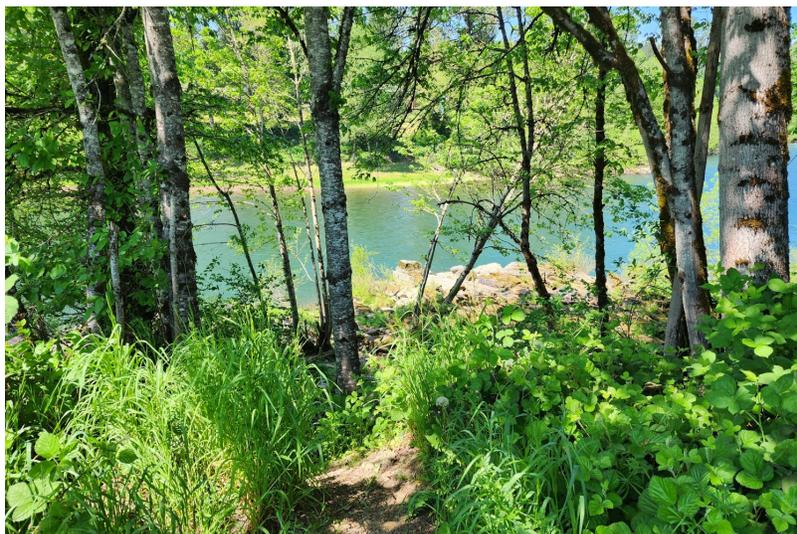
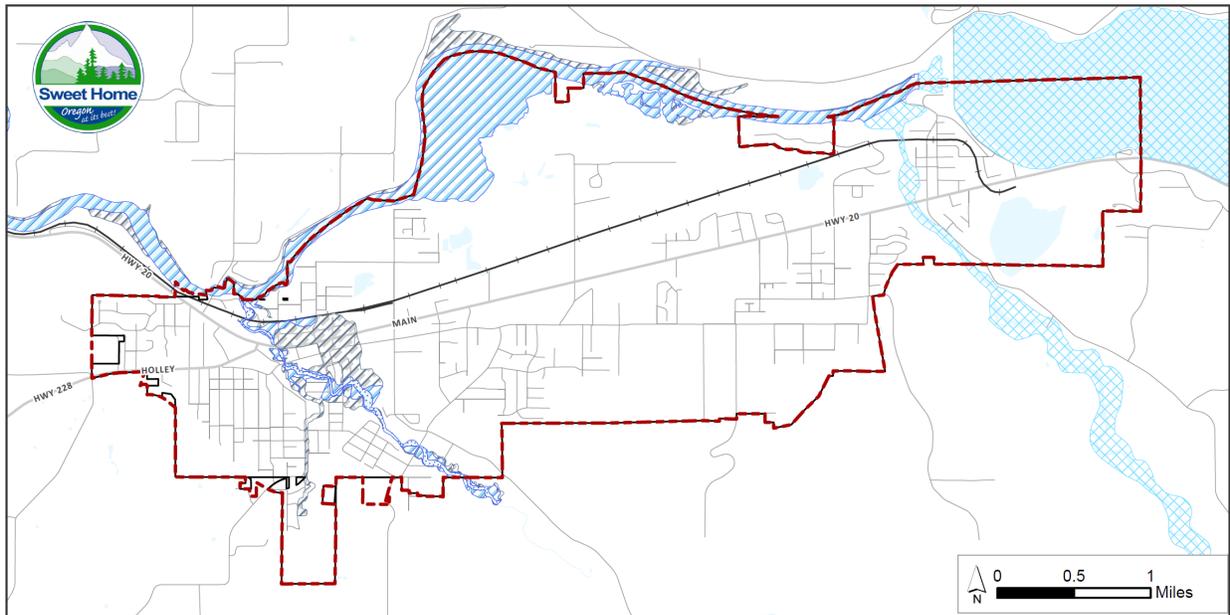


Figure 5. Environmental Characteristics



**Environmental Conditions**

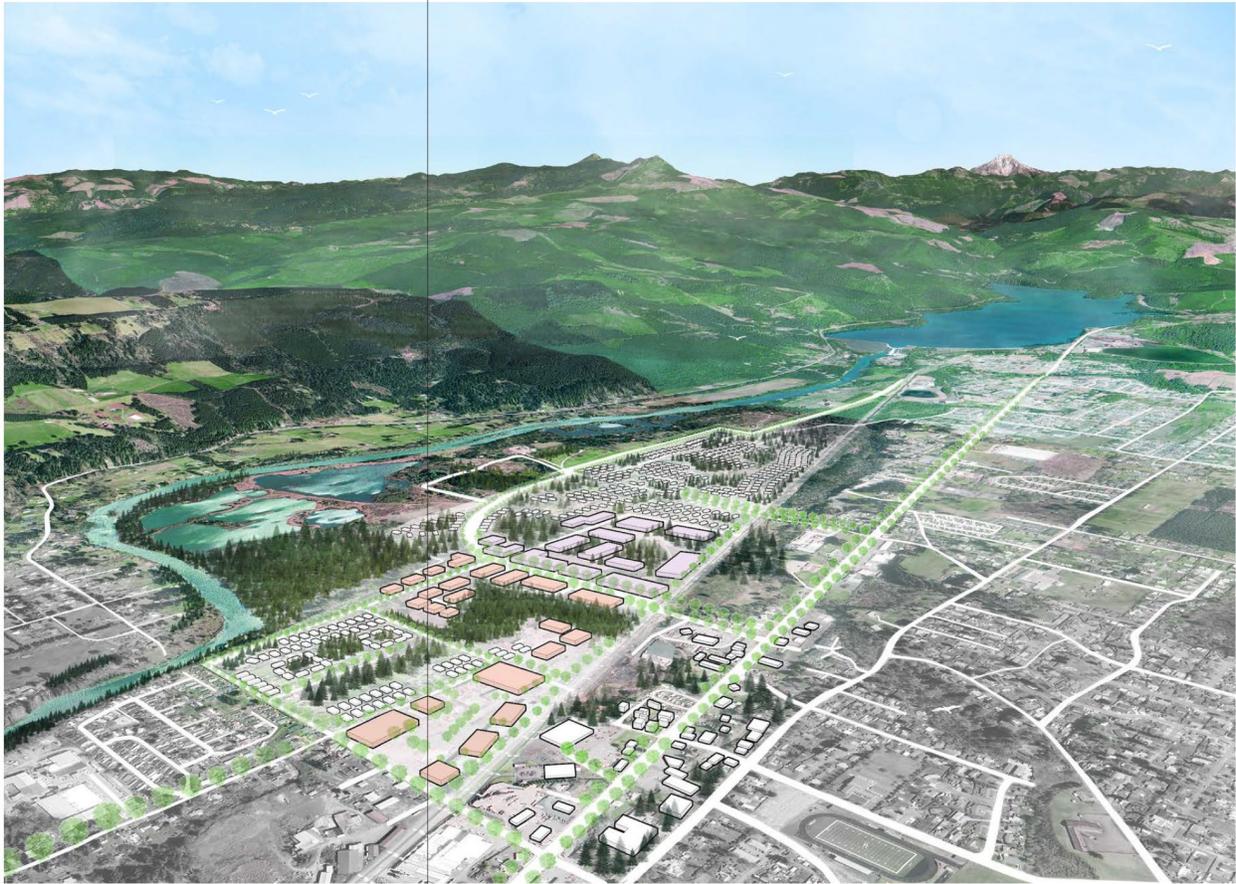
- FEMA Floodplain**
-  500-year Floodplain
  -  A (100-year undetermined)
  -  AE (100yr)
  -  AE (100yr) Floodway
  -  Waterbody
  -  Sweet Home City Limits
  -  Urban Growth Boundary

**Environment**

Sweet Home TSP and North Sweet Home Area Plan Update



## Plan Elements



*A view looking NE across the North Sweet Home area towards Foster Reservoir and the Cascade Mountains, showing one potential buildout of the Preferred Alternative in the next 20-30 years, integrating a new neighborhood into this beautiful riverfront next to downtown Sweet Home. The ultimate eventual developed neighborhood will be shaped by this plan, with flexibility for individual design decisions from property owners and developers.*

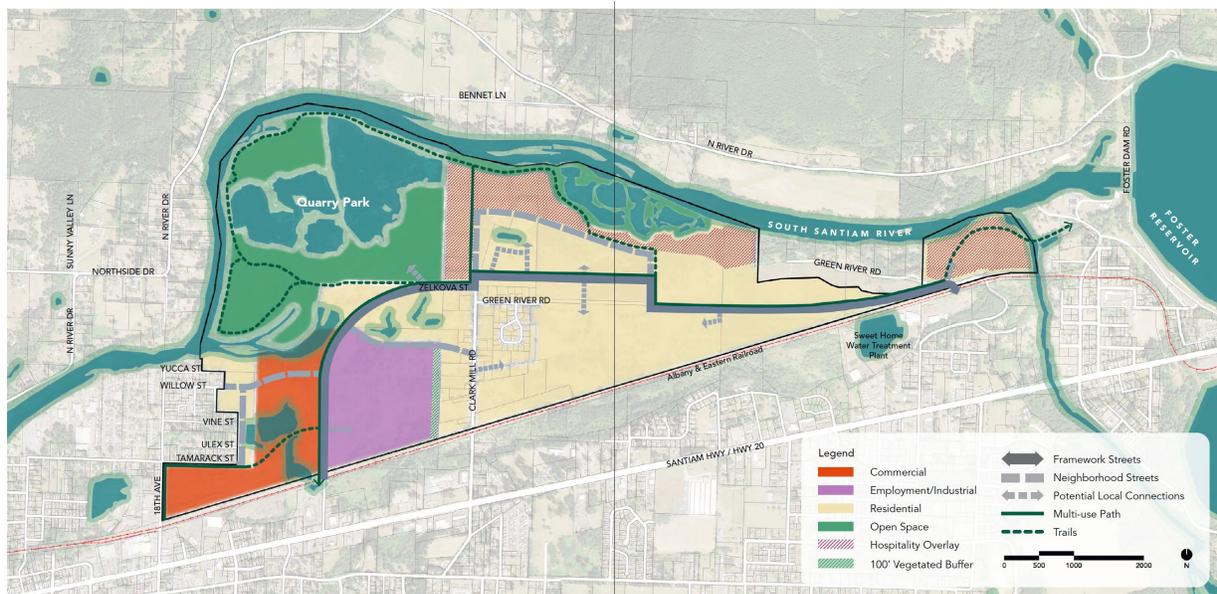
### **Land Use Summary**

The Preferred Land Use Plan is shown in Figure 6. It contains industrial and commercial uses in the Southwest of the NSHA, open space designations on Quarry Park and wetland areas, and residential uses in the remainder of the area. A “Hospitality Overlay” zone on land in the vicinity of the South Santiam River is intended to allow for uses catering to a visiting public, including hotels, restaurants, equipment rentals, and similar uses. Hospitality uses could range in scale depending on the size of a given development, but could retain a more residential feel to match surrounding uses. Less intensive hospitality

uses may include rental cabins, campsites, yurts, or RV sites with access to the river or nearby riverfront trails. More intensive hospitality uses could include a small resort.

Nearby commercial and employment lands could also provide services related to tourism, like outdoor recreation equipment rentals or venue / restaurant space.

Figure 6. Preferred Land Use Plan



## Employment / Industrial

The Plan contains roughly 75 acres of land in Industrial designation in a large contiguous site, located at the rail crossing at 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This location would allow future industrial users to take advantage of the active rail line and the flat topography of the former Sweet Home Mill site. Industrial considerations include:

- Manufacturers of prefabricated buildings or prefabricated wood components could take advantage of nearby timber industry businesses and sources.
- Timber-related industrial uses would be well situated on this railroad-adjacent site in the NSHA.
- Employment areas could include pedestrian and bike connections for both workers and residents to access the river and downtown.
- Small scale “Craft” manufacturing related to nearby tourism industries (e.g., boating, snow sports, hiking, etc.), could locate manufacturing and show-room space within the NSHA in this option.

- A brewery or food-related manufacturer could locate their facility within employment industrial employment areas.



## Riverfront Hospitality

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Roughly 70 acres of land north of Zelkova Street and adjacent to the South Santiam River is designated as Residential with a “Hospitality Overlay” zone. This designation is intended to provide additional allowances for development that takes advantage of the site’s potential as a recreational hub. For additional details about the Hospitality Overlay zone, see **Appendix B: Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Amendments.**

Riverfront hospitality considerations include:

- A resort could be designed around unique site features and take advantage of views of the river and mountain landscape.
- A small resort or lodge sited adjacent to neighborhoods could be more residential in character.
- Riverfront hospitality uses like cabins and campgrounds could preserve natural features within the NSHA.
- Hospitality uses including short term rentals, campsites, yurts, or RV resorts could be located within hospitality zones.



## ***Residential***

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Over 300 acres of the NSHA area has a residential designation, providing land to help the City of Sweet Home meet its future housing needs. Design of residential neighborhoods in the NSHA will follow the following principles:

### **Neighborhood Design Principles:**

*Great neighborhoods...*

- *Preserve natural features for future enjoyment of all*
- *Provide scenic views*
- *Include parks, trails, and open spaces*
- *Are pedestrian and bicycle friendly*
- *Have connected streets*
- *Have a mix of activities*
- *Provide housing for a range of incomes and lifestyles*
- *Have a variety of housing forms*

Residentially designated land in the NSHA will receive the R-2 zoning designation, with the possibility of additional flexibility provided by the City's Planned Development process.



## ***Commercial, Retail, & Event Spaces***

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A large new commercially-focused area is envisioned for the land in the southwestern area of the NSHA, west of 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue, occupying a portion of the former Sweet Home Mill site. Many commercial uses may also be developed as outright permitted use within the Hospitality Overlay zone.

Additional commercial considerations include:

- Interim uses in commercial zones could include pop- up food and drink vendors, potentially serving tourism during the Oregon Jamboree.
- Small retail businesses could serve locals as well as tourists passing through town.
- Incubator space related to tourism could be located within NSHA Hospitality overlay zone, like this photo of incubator wineries at the Port of Walla Walla.
- A covered stage area could be located within Quarry Park.
- A commercial node near the Hospitality Overlay zone could include outdoor equipment rentals.
- Open space within the NSHA could be used to host events like the Oregon Jamboree.



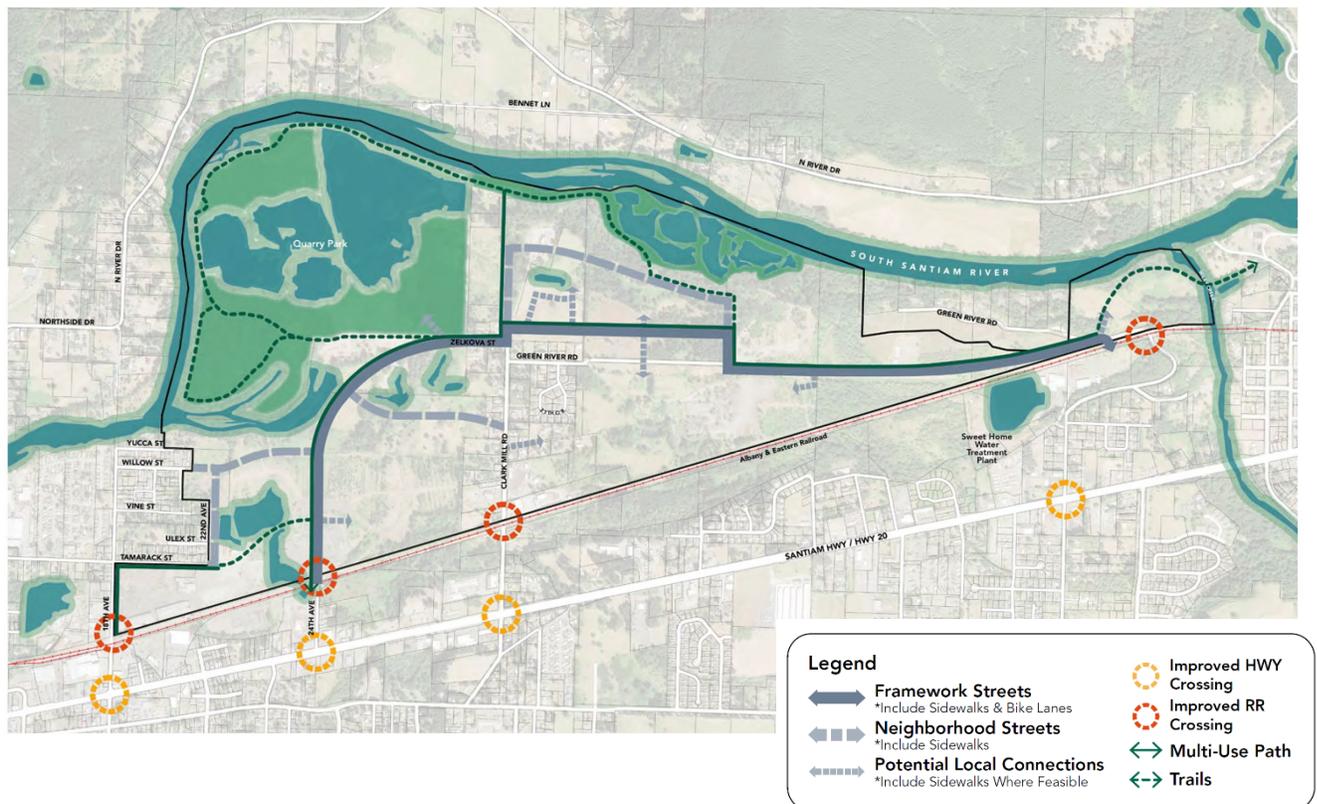
## Transportation

The NSHA Street Network includes a main vehicular entrance into the study area along 24th Ave, and a connection to the east that stays as close to city limits as possible. The City has received approval of a new rail crossing at 24th Avenue.

New transportation facilities could support and be supported by redevelopment of the mill site. Pedestrian and bike infrastructure improvements are proposed throughout the study area, including improved crossings along the framework street, 24th Avenue/Zelkova Street, at the following intersections: 18th Avenue, 24th Avenue, Clark Mill Road, and 47th Avenue. Recreational paths are also proposed through Quarry Park and along the Riverfront, including a pedestrian footbridge across Wiley Creek at the eastern edge of the NSHA.

The proposed street network (Figure 7) addresses the transportation-related needs for the North Sweet Home Area by emphasizing connectivity for bikes and pedestrians in/ around the North Sweet Home Area. As the area grows and develops, impacts to the city and regional transportation system that can be mitigated with reasonable projects that emphasize the efficiency and safety of auto travelers, pedestrians, and cyclists alike.

Figure 7. NSHA Transportation Network



A list of projects was developed that supports the preferred land use and street network. Projects were divided into three categories Corridor (C), Spot (S), and Multi-modal (M) improvements projects. These projects were identified as part of the Sweet Home Transportation System Plan Update.

Table 1 shows each proposed project and its associated cost, which includes a new roadway and path system. The total cost of transportation projects supportive of the NSHA Preferred Scenario is approximately \$120 million. The Corridor (C) projects focus on providing connectivity through the North Sweet Home Area by providing a parallel collector street to Main Street (US20) that also supports development and re-development of parcels abutting the new framework street. New street extensions and new neighborhood streets stemming from the framework street will help serve the new developments that arise in the North Sweet Home Area and further enhance connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists. The corridor projects form the backbone of the transportation network that the Spot (S) projects and Multimodal (M) projects enhance.

The Framework Streets (Projects C-1 and C-2) will be built to the cross-section standards outlined in this memorandum (Fig. 6), however there is potential that this project could be modified to have a wider cross section on 24th Avenue (project C-1). The City of Sweet Home in coordination with ODOT rail have determined that a 4 to 5 lane section could be allowable along this alignment.

While traffic is not anticipated to reach levels that would require 4 to 5 travel lanes, the City may choose to develop with flexibility in mind in case dense development takes place in the North Sweet Home Area. Doing so would require the 3 lane framework street to include larger on-street bike lane buffers that allows for future conversion to a 5 lane section without any full-deep pavement construction (i.e. dedicate 22 feet between the curbs to bike lanes and buffers) and without relocating existing curblines. This is not anticipated to take place within the planning horizon, and project C-1 does not assume this to take place.

Table 1. Transportation Projects

<b>Index</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Planning Level Cost Estimate</b>
<b>C-1</b>	24th Ave Improvements	Widen 24th Ave with Framework Street cross section from US20 to railroad. Extend 24th Avenue north of railroad to to Zelvova St.	\$21,450,000

<b>Index</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Planning Level Cost Estimate</b>
<b>C-2</b>	Zelkova St Improvements	Extend Zelkova Street east of 24th Avenue to Zelkova Street.	\$43,550,000
<b>C-3</b>	New Neighborhood Street 1	Construct new neighborhood street connecting 24th Avenue to Clark Hill Road.	\$9,005,000
<b>C-4</b>	New Neighborhood Street 2	Construct new neighborhood street connecting Zelkova Street to proposed hospitality district.	\$18,005,000
<b>C-5</b>	Willow St Extension	Extend Willow Street east of 20th Avenue to 24th Avenue.	\$9,000,000
<b>C-6</b>	22nd Ave Extension	Extend 22nd Avenue from Tamarack Street to Willow Street.	\$9,000,000
<b>S-1</b>	US20/18th Ave Improvements	Modify existing signal to meet capacity needs, including potential addition of protected left turns on US20.	\$150,000
<b>S-2</b>	US20/24th Ave Improvements	Install signal at existing intersection.	\$1,000,000
<b>S-3</b>	US20/Clark Mill Rd Improvements	Traffic control upgrade pending the completion of an Intersection Control Evaluation and review and approval of ODOT Traffic Engineer	\$2,000,000
<b>S-4</b>	US20/47th Ave Improvements	Traffic control upgrade pending the completion of an Intersection Control Evaluation and review and approval of ODOT Traffic Engineer	\$2,000,000
<b>S-5</b>	Zelkova St/Clark Mill Rd Improvements	Traffic control upgrade pending the completion of an Intersection Control Evaluation and review and approval of ODOT Traffic Engineer	\$2,000,000
<b>S-6</b>	18th Ave Railroad Crossing Improvements	Upgrade signing and striping, install railroad crossing gates, and install ADA-accessible improvements to align with current railroad safety guidelines	\$600,000
<b>S-7</b>	24th Ave Railroad Crossing Improvements	Upgrade signing and striping, install railroad crossing gates, and install ADA-accessible improvements to align with current railroad safety guidelines	\$600,000
<b>S-8</b>	Clark Mill Rd Railroad Crossing Improvements	Upgrade signing and striping, install railroad crossing gates, and install ADA-accessible improvements to align with current railroad safety guidelines	\$600,000

<i><b>Index</b></i>	<i><b>Project Name</b></i>	<i><b>Project Description</b></i>	<i><b>Planning Level Cost Estimate</b></i>
<b>S-9</b>	47th Ave Railroad Crossing Improvements	Upgrade signing and striping, install railroad crossing gates, and install ADA-accessible improvements to align with current railroad safety guidelines	\$600,000
<b>M-1</b>	18th Avenue Multiuse Path	Install multiuse path along 18th Avenue and Tamarack Street.	\$360,000
<b>M-2</b>	New Neighborhood Street 2 MUP	Install multiuse path along New Neighborhood Street 2	\$260,000
<b>M-3</b>	Quarry Park Trail	Install new trail route through Quarry Park.	\$1,440,000
<b>M-4</b>	Tamarack Street Pedestrian Trail	Install new trail route between Tamarack Street and 24th Avenue, including pedestrian bridge over existing body of water.	\$1,650,000
<b>M-5</b>	24th Ave/Neighborhood St 1 Crossing	Install pedestrian crossing at 24th Ave/New Neighborhood Street 1 intersection. Type of crossing to be identified following engineering study.	\$50,000
<b>M-6</b>	24th Ave/Neighborhood St 2 Crossing	Install pedestrian crossing at 24th Ave/New Neighborhood Street 1 intersection. Type of crossing to be identified following engineering study.	\$50,000
<b>M-7</b>	25th Ave/Willow St Crossing	Install pedestrian crossing at 24th Ave/Willow Street intersection. Type of crossing to be identified following engineering study.	\$50,000
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$123,420,000</b>	

The Spot (S) projects focus on intersections that will require operational and safety upgrades based on the new street network. For example, additional side street traffic is expected at the existing intersections with US20, including: 18th Avenue, 24th Avenue, Clark Mill Road, and 47th Avenue due to additional trip demand in the North Sweet Home Area. As development takes place, this additional trip demand will cause operational deficiencies at these existing intersections that need to be mediated with intersection control upgrades. Similarly, additional traffic using the existing rail crossings will spur the need to update existing rail crossing orders and upgrade the existing rail crossings. Today, some of the existing rail crossings do not include pedestrian or bicycle facilities to safely cross the rail, and some of the crossings do not include any treatment other than signing and striping for motor vehicles. See Figures 4 and 5.

The Multimodal (M) projects focus on safety and connectivity specific to cyclist and pedestrian modes, including the installation of new multiuse paths that enhance pedestrian connectivity, and improvements to the trail system that provide a recreational aspect to the walking and biking previously unavailable in the North Sweet Home Area. Pedestrian crossing installations are also included at some strategic locations to enhance the pedestrian network. Additional street crossings should be considered as development occurs to include crossings at/near schools or neighborhoods. Street crossing treatment types should be determined with an engineering study to identify the appropriate treatments based on vehicle traffic volumes and speeds as growth occurs.

Project costs for some projects, especially those constructing new roadways, trend on the higher end due to the expectation that the terrain will be difficult to build on due to variable grades, wetlands, and anticipated impacts to existing parcels. The Preferred Street Network may require changes to alignment to conform to the natural environment and to maneuver other obstacles, such as the area the encompasses much of Green River Road that is not within the City urban growth boundary (UGB).



*Rail crossing at 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Google Maps, 2022)*



*Rail crossing at 18th Avenue (Google Maps, 2022)*

Figure 8. Framework Street with adjacent Multi-use Path (MUP)

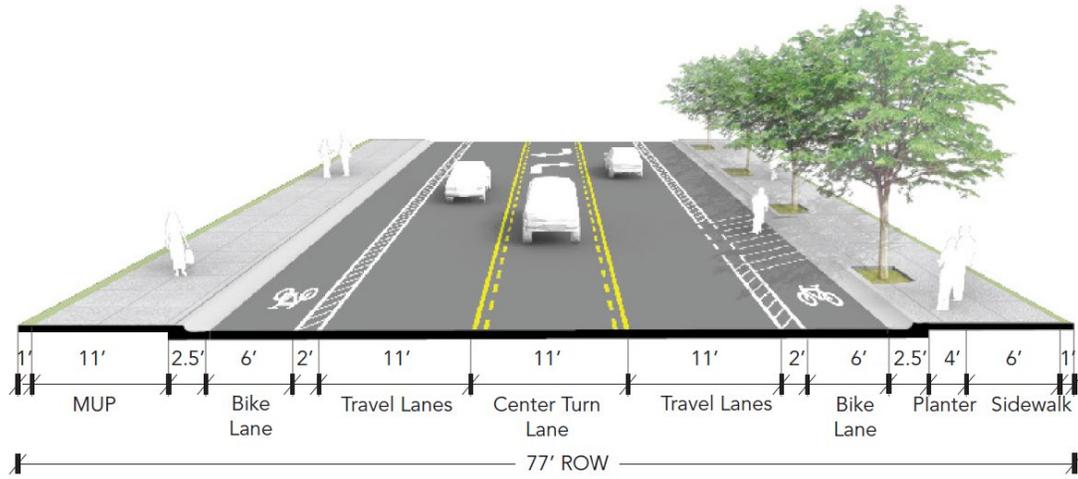


Figure 9. Neighborhood Street

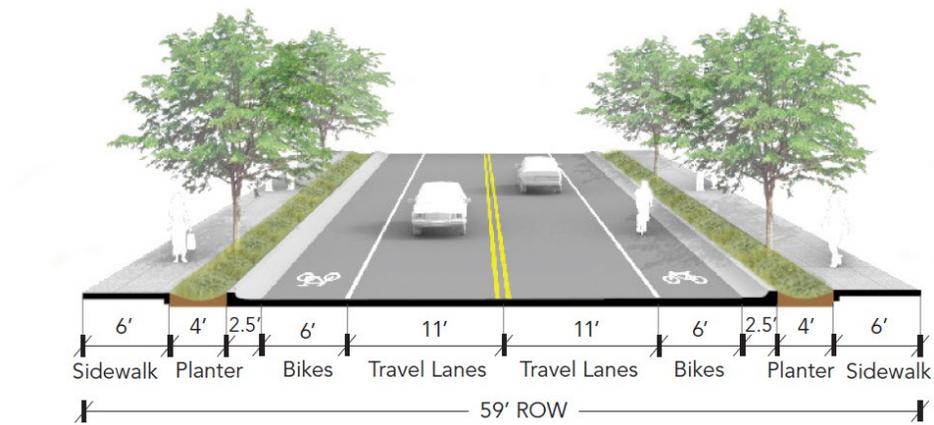


Figure 10. Neighborhood Street with Parking

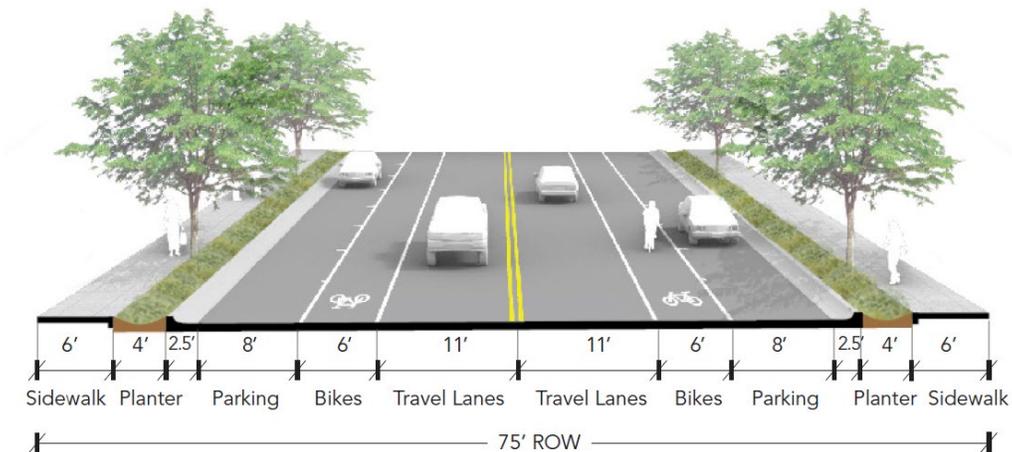
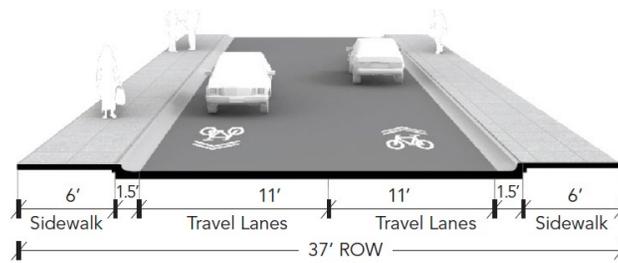


Figure 11. Local Street



## Parks and Trails

A system of parks and trails are envisioned for the NSHA to take advantage of existing City-owned open space and buildout of new transportation infrastructure. The park and trails system will include the following elements.

- Public Riverfront access at key locations
- Connections to and through Quarry Park
- Multi-use trails along key roadways to provide safe and comfortable access for people walking and rolling (see Figure 13)
- Protected wetlands to provide open spaces within future development areas



*A multi-use path in the vegetated buffer along employment areas could provide a direct dedicated connection from the NSHA to Foster Reservoir and into town.*



*Trails could weave through neighborhood open spaces, providing pedestrian connectivity to natural resources, and access to passive recreation opportunities.*

## Case Studies

The following case studies offer inspiration for the North Sweet Home Area. They include a range of residential, industrial, commercial, and hospitality efforts that have successfully transformed other communities.

### ***Case Study 1: Chemainus, BC***

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The closure of a sawmill in 1983 devastated the local economy in Chemainus, a small town on Vancouver Island, British Columbia. But it revived itself as a tourist destination, hosting events like the Festival of Murals Society since 1987 and the Theater Festival since 1993. Strategic long-term planning efforts transformed the resource-based economy into a successful community-based tourist industry.



*The Chemainus Theater is a popular tourist destination.*



*Paul Ygartua's Native Heritage mural pictured above is a highlight of the Chemainus Festival of Murals.*

## ***Case Study 2: Prineville, OR***

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The decline in the timber industry 30+ years ago led to the highest unemployment in Oregon. But Prineville attracted data centers to support the high-tech industry over the last 15 years.

While other timber towns in Oregon pivoted to outdoor recreation and craft breweries, Prineville invested in an economy around data centers.



*Aerial view of the Meta data center campus in Prineville.*



*The newest Meta data center in Prineville is LEED Gold certified.*

### **Case Study 3: Port Gamble, WA**

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Port Gamble is undergoing a transformative redevelopment effort aimed at rejuvenating its economy while preserving its rich legacy. It was originally established in the 1850s by New England timber entrepreneurs and built as a company town for the Puget Mill Company to produce lumber for the California gold rush.

For roughly 140 years, the mill churned out lumber, holding the title as the nation’s longest-operating mill until it ceased operations in 1995. The decline in the timber industry has led to economic challenges for the town.

The current redevelopment initiative, driven by a collaborative partnership involving private developers, local government entities, and community stakeholders, seeks to revitalize Port Gamble into a thriving, sustainable community. Central to this effort is the preservation of its historic charm and architectural heritage, which includes carefully restoring and repurposing existing buildings to maintain their historical significance.

The master plan for Port Gamble’s redevelopment emphasizes a mix of land uses designed to enhance the town’s livability and attractiveness to visitors. This includes plans for new residential units to support a diverse population, commercial spaces to foster local business growth, and recreational amenities to promote tourism and community engagement.

Key components of the 318-acre redevelopment project include infrastructure improvements such as road enhancements and utility upgrades, ensuring that the town can accommodate new development while maintaining its environmental integrity.

The plan also includes provisions for public spaces and parks, aimed at enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Community involvement played a crucial role in shaping the redevelopment vision, with ongoing input from local residents and stakeholders guiding the project’s evolution. This collaborative approach aims to create a sustainable economic future for Port Gamble while honoring its unique history and character.

Overall, the Port Gamble redevelopment project represents a comprehensive effort to revitalize a historic community, stimulate economic growth through thoughtful development, and create a sustainable and vibrant destination that celebrates its past while looking towards the future.



*Historic Port Gamble water tanks, painted with the city's logo.*



*Olympic Outdoor Center in Port Gamble.*



*The Port Gamble General Store.*



*Port Gamble's historic buildings are popular filming locations.*

## Implementation

The North Sweet Home Area Plan will be realized through the following implementing actions:

- Adoption of the Sweet Home TSP, which establishes an updated set of transportation standards, projects, and plans for the City of Sweet Home. These are intended to improve the City's multi-modal transportation system, including in the North Sweet Home Area.
- Adoption of the North Sweet Home Area Plan as an attachment to the City of Sweet Home's Comprehensive Plan, as described in **Appendix B: Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Amendments**
- Adoption of changes to the City of Sweet Home Comprehensive Plan Map and Zoning Map included in **Appendix B: Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Amendments.**

## Appendices

**Appendix A: North Sweet Home Area Community Booklet**

**Appendix B: Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Amendments**