

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM #4:

Land Use and Urban Design

ST. HELENS - US 30 & COLUMBIA BLVD./ST. HELENS ST. CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN

December 2013



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
EXISTING AND FUTURE LAND USE PLANS AND PROJECTIONS	3
US 30 Corridor Segment	3
Houlton (St. Helens Street/Columbia Blvd.) Corridor Segment	5
Olde Towne Corridor Segment	6
SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT CODE REQUIREMENTS	7
Uses	9
Building Height	15
Building Setbacks	17
Lot Coverage and Landscaping	17
Other Development Requirements	18
URBAN DESIGN CONDITIONS	21
US 30	21
Houlton Area	23
Old Towne	25
NON-CONFORMING USES AND CODE VIOLATIONS	27
US 30	27
Houlton and Olde Towne	28
CONCLUSIONS	29

This project is partially funded by a grant from the Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program, a joint program of the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. This TGM grant is financed, in part, by federal Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), local government, and the State of Oregon funds.

The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect views or policies of the State of Oregon.

Introduction

The City of St. Helens has been awarded a Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) grant in order to develop a Corridor Plan for the US 30, and Columbia Blvd / St Helens Street and Old Towne/1st Street corridors. The Plan will reflect the community's vision of how these areas should appear and function in the future, and to determine how the plans can be implemented. The Plans will focus primarily on how the major streets and intersections in these areas are designed and improved over time to ensure that vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians have ready access to local businesses and can travel safely and comfortably within and between these different parts of town.

As one of the initial steps in the corridor planning process, the City's project team is preparing a series of technical memoranda describing existing and projected future conditions in the study area, including land use, urban design, access and relevant plans and policies, as well as different strategies or approaches that may be used to meet the goals for the corridor. This memo focuses on land use and urban design conditions in the area and addresses the following topics:

- Existing and future land use plans and projections
- Development code requirements
- Urban design conditions, i.e., the design character of uses within the planning area
- Non-conforming uses and code issues
- Conclusions about how the conditions and character of the area relates to possible Streetscape Design tools or options



This page intentionally left blank.

Existing and Future Land Use Plans and Projections

Following is a summary of land use characteristics of each corridor segment, including current land use and expectations regarding future land use.

US 30 CORRIDOR SEGMENT

Land on the west side of US 30 is zoned and used primarily for commercial development. Figures 1 and 2 show land use patterns and building footprints in the northern and southern portions of the area. Consistent with the area's zoning, the area is primarily characterized by highway commercial developments including grocery stores, pharmacies, hotels, restaurants, banks and a variety of other retail and commercial businesses. There are relatively few vacant properties in this area although some parcels have relatively large parking lots, with buildings taking up a relatively small portion of the site, representing some opportunities for future additional development or redevelopment. Within about 150 feet from the highway, land uses alternate between commercial and residential development.

The Portland and Western rail line parallels US 30 to the east, with a landscaping strip separating the highway from the rail corridor. As

Figure 1. Existing Land Use - US 30 North



Land use projections prepared for the City's Transportation System Plan assumed continued development of this area, consistent with zoning in the area, with additional potential development on properties with the capacity for more development based on the parcel size, amount of existing development and remaining additional capacity.



The Lewis and Clark Elementary School is located at the eastern end of the corridor, just west of 9th Street and area between the school and the Olde Towne area is primarily used for housing although the area is zoned for a mix of housing, retail and commercial uses.

OLDE TOWNE CORRIDOR SEGMENT

For the purposes of this study, this segment includes land along Columbia Blvd. between approximately 8th and 1st Streets, the area along 1st Street between Columbia and St. Helens, and St. Helens Street between 1st and 4th Streets. The area along Columbia Blvd. is zoned for mixed use although the majority of properties are used for housing. The same is generally true for the portion of 1st Street in this area, which is zoned for a combination of mixed use and apartment residential use. However at St. Helens Street and to the south, land uses transition to re-tail and commercial uses in the Olde Towne business area (also home to City Hall and the Columbia County Court-house and services building). Most properties along the St. Helens Street portion of this corridor segment also are home to commercial businesses. There are relatively few vacant parcels in this area although some of the buildings along 1st are vacant and some of the properties with single-family homes potentially could be used more intensively

in the future, given uses allowed in the City’s mixed use (MU) and apartment residential (AR) zones.

Figure 4. Existing Land Use - Olde Towne



Summary of Development Code Requirements

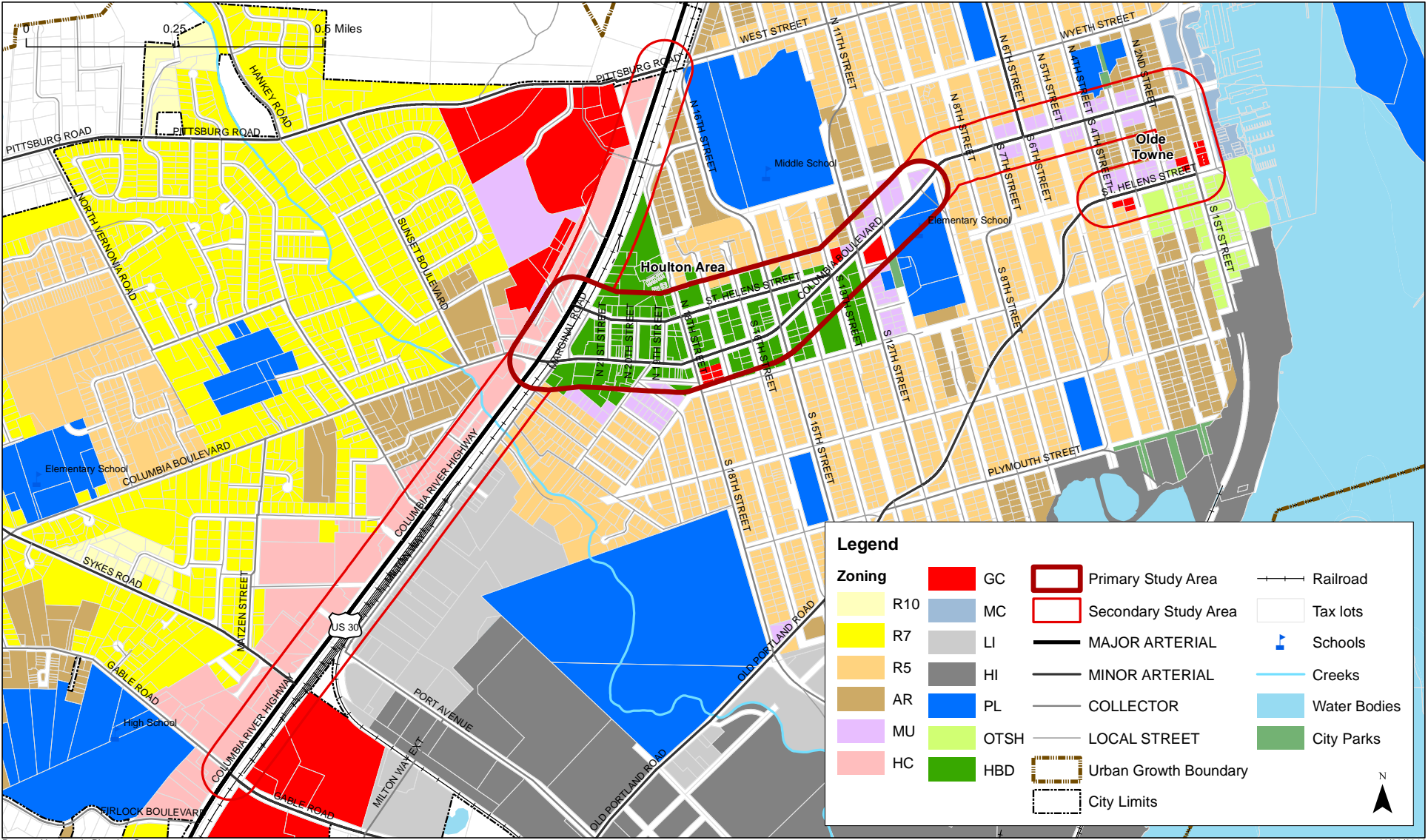
Study area zoning, described briefly in the previous section, regulates the way in which sites within the corridor planning area can develop, including allowed land uses, building heights, building setbacks, lot coverage, and landscaping requirements. These elements affect the way the site is experienced from the sidewalk or street. Elements like vehicle and bicycle parking also can impact the way people experience the streetscape. Development regulations are established in the City's Community Development Code, Title 17 of the St. Helens Municipal Code (SHMC). Zoning regulations are found in SHMC Chapter 17.32.

Figure 5 shows the zoning designations in the study area. Table 1 summarizes applicable zones by study area segments. Several of the zones are found in more than one of the study area segments – e.g., General Commercial, General Residential, and Apartment Residential – while other zones are more unique to the study area segments. The Highway Commercial (HC), Houlton Business District (HBD), and Olde Towne St. Helens (OTSH) zones are the predominant and characteristic zones of the US 30, Houlton, and Old Towne segments in the study area, respectively.

Table 1. Zoning in Study Area Segments

	Highway	Houlton	Olde Towne
Highway Commercial (HC)	X		
General Commercial (GC)	X	X	X
Marine Commercial (MC)			X
Light Industrial (LI)	X		
General Residential (R-5)	X	X	X
Apartment Residential (AR)	X	X	X
Mixed Use (MU)		X	X
Public Lands (PL)		X	
Houlton Business District (HBD)		X	
Olde Towne St. Helens (OTSH)			X

Figure 5. Project Area Zoning



Prepared by Angelo Planning Group

11/20/2013

The following sub-sections provide an overview of zoning regulations regarding permitted uses, maximum building heights, minimum and maximum building setbacks, maximum lot coverage, and minimum landscaping requirements in study area zones. Parking and building design, which the code addresses in supplemental developmental regulations, are also summarized. Many of these regulations are also discussed in Technical Memorandum #1, so the following sub-sections include references to that report as well.

USES

Table 2 below presents a summary of the types of uses permitted outright and permitted conditionally in zones in the study area. The use provisions specify that zones other than the residential zones (with some exceptions) are subject to site development provisions in SHMC Chapter 17.96 as well as other supplemental development regulations in the code. Conditional uses are subject to provisions in SHMC Chapter 17.100.

Use provisions outlined in Table 2 compare in the following ways between zones.

- **Commercial zones.** The Highway Commercial (HC) and General Commercial (GC) zones are similar in their use provisions. The HC zone specifies that retail services and offices that are permitted outright be motorist-oriented, including drive-ups and drive-throughs. Civic/cultural services (e.g., libraries) and housing above allowed uses are permitted outright in the GC zone, while multi-dwelling unit buildings and care/residential facilities are permitted conditionally. Residential care facilities and multi-dwelling unit buildings are not permitted in the HC zone. The Marine Commercial (MC) zone blends residential (houseboats and multi-dwelling housing) and commercial uses that are oriented toward marine residential and recreational uses.
- **Residential zones.** Uses permitted outright are the same for the R-5 and Apartment Residential (AR) zones except for multi-dwelling units, which are permitted outright in the AR zone but only conditionally in the R-5 zone. There are also more uses permitted conditionally in the AR zone, including schools, hospitals, and care facilities.
- **Mixed use zone.** The Mixed Use (MU) zone blends City commercial and residential zones. It permits commercial uses like those in the GC zone, which do not have to be vehicle-/motorist-oriented to be permitted outright as is required in the HC zone. Like the R-5 zone, the MU zone permits multi-dwelling unit buildings and auxiliary dwelling units only conditionally, however like other commercial zones, multi-dwelling units are permitted over ground floor nonresidential uses outright.
- **HBD and OTSH zones.** The Houlton Business District (HBD) and Olde Towne St. Helens (OTSH) zones are essentially mixed use zones which combine the permitted uses of the AR, GC, and PL (Public Lands) zones,

allowing for a variety of uses that can be developed and redeveloped in the HBD and OTSH zones, which is a major City objective. The same sets of uses are permitted in the HBD and OTSH zones. As will be discussed in following sub-sections, they also share the same development regulations. The main distinction between the zones is the set of architectural design guidelines that have been adopted for the OTSH zone.

Table 2. Summary of Permitted Uses in Study Area Zones

Zone	Uses	Uses
<p>I Pursuant to SHMC 17.16.010, minor public facilities include the following public service improvements developed by or for a public agency:</p> <p>(a) Minor utility structures, except substations, but including poles, lines, pipes or other such facilities.</p> <p>(b) Sewer, storm drainage, or water system structures except treatment plants, reservoirs, or trunk lines, but including reconstruction of existing facilities, pump stations, manholes, valves, hydrants or other portions of the collection, treatment and distribution systems located within public property or specified easement.</p> <p>(c) Street improvements within existing development including sidewalks, curbs, gutters, catch basins, paving, signs and traffic control devices and street lights.</p> <p>(d) Transit improvements, such as shelters or pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements, located within public right-of-way or on public property.</p>	<p>Uses Permitted Outright</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retail sales establishments, motorist-oriented ▪ Offices, motorist-oriented services ▪ Personal and business services ▪ Eating and drinking establishments ▪ Most drive-in/drive-up/drive-through services ▪ Vehicle sales, services, and repair ▪ Parking lots ▪ Produce stands ▪ Minor public facilities¹ 	<p>Uses Permitted Conditionally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retail establishments, not motorist-oriented ▪ Dwelling units above outright permitted uses ▪ Hospitals ▪ Parks and recreational facilities ▪ Schools ▪ Religious assembly ▪ Major public facilities²
<p>2 Major public facilities include any public service improvement or structure developed by or for a public agency that is not defined as a minor public facility.</p>	<p>Uses Permitted Outright</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retail sales establishments ▪ Offices ▪ Personal and business services ▪ Dwellings above permitted uses ▪ Eating and drinking establishments ▪ Small equipment sales, rental and repairs ▪ Retail product maintenance and repair ▪ Cultural and library services ▪ Produce stands ▪ Minor public facilities 	<p>Uses Permitted Conditionally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drive-up businesses and services ▪ Parking lots ▪ Vehicle repair, service, and sales ▪ Transit and rail stations ▪ Bars ▪ Bed and breakfast facilities and boarding houses ▪ Child care facility/nursery ▪ Hospitals and senior or convalescent care facilities ▪ Residential facilities ▪ Multi-dwelling units ▪ Parks and recreational facilities ▪ Schools ▪ Civic assembly ▪ Religious assembly ▪ Major public facilities

Zone	Uses	
Marine Commercial (MC)	<p>Uses Permitted Outright</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Boat and boat-oriented facilities and services (e.g., moorage, equipment sales, service, storage, rental, or repair) ▪ Retail sales, marine recreation-oriented ▪ Retail sale, tourist-oriented ▪ Eating and drinking establishments ▪ Houseboats ▪ Dwellings located above permitted uses ▪ Parking lots ▪ Public parks and public recreational facilities ▪ Minor public facilities 	<p>Uses Permitted Conditionally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commercial amusement and recreational facilities and private parks ▪ Multi-dwelling units ▪ Private parks ▪ Major public facilities
Light Industrial (LI)	<p>Uses Permitted Outright</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manufacturing, repairing, compounding, research, assembly, fabricating, or processing activities of prepared materials, without off-site impacts ▪ Laboratories and research services ▪ Warehousing, enclosed ▪ Wholesale trade ▪ Equipment sales, storage, repair, and rentals ▪ Building supply including outdoor storage ▪ Mini storage and storage site ▪ Vehicle sales, service, repair, and painting. ▪ Parking lots ▪ Minor public facilities 	<p>Uses Permitted Conditionally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manufacturing, repairing, compounding, research, assembly, fabricating, processing or packing of resource materials, with some off-site impacts ▪ Industrial park to combine light manufacturing, offices, and complementary related commercial uses ▪ Wrecking and junkyards ▪ Eating and drinking establishments and bars ▪ Child care facilities ▪ Public parks and public and private recreational and amusement facilities ▪ Major public facilities

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT CODE REQUIREMENTS

Zone	Uses	Uses
General Residential (R-5)	Uses Permitted Outright <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-dwelling unit, detached Single-dwelling units, attached (five units maximum) Duplex dwelling units Public parks Residential facilities and homes Minor public facilities 	Uses Permitted Conditionally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auxiliary dwelling units Multi-dwelling units Bed and breakfast and boarding houses Children's day care/nursery Elderly/convalescent home Private parks and commercial recreation facilities Cultural exhibits and library services Religious assembly Neighborhood stores/plazas Major public facilities
Apartment Residential (AR)	Uses Permitted Outright <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-dwelling unit, detached Single-dwelling units, attached (five units maximum) Duplex dwelling units Multi-dwelling units Public parks Residential facilities and homes Minor public facilities 	Uses Permitted Conditionally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auxiliary dwelling units Multi-dwelling units Hospitals and care homes Schools and related facilities Bed and breakfast and boarding houses Children's day care/nursery Private parks and commercial recreation facilities Cultural exhibits and library services Civic assembly Religious assembly Neighborhood stores/plazas Parking facilities Major public facilities

Zone	Uses	
Mixed Use (MU)	<p>Uses Permitted Outright</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retail sales establishments ▪ Offices ▪ Personal and business services ▪ Eating and drinking establishments ▪ Small equipment sales, rental and repairs ▪ Retail product maintenance and repair ▪ Cultural and library services ▪ Produce stands ▪ Dwellings: single-dwelling detached or attached, duplexes, and multi-dwelling above permitted uses ▪ Residential facilities and homes ▪ Minor public facilities 	<p>Uses Permitted Conditionally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drive-up businesses and services ▪ Parking lots ▪ Vehicle repair, service, and sales ▪ Transit and rail stations ▪ Bars ▪ Bed and breakfast facilities and boarding houses ▪ Child care facility/nursery ▪ Hospitals and senior or convalescent care facilities ▪ Residential facilities and homes ▪ Multi-dwelling units ▪ Auxiliary dwelling units ▪ Dwellings on same level as nonresidential use ▪ Parks and recreational facilities ▪ Schools ▪ Religious assembly ▪ Major public facilities
Public Lands (PL)	<p>Uses Permitted Outright</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural exhibits and library services ▪ Parks and playgrounds ▪ Schools and colleges ▪ Minor public facilities 	<p>Uses Permitted Conditionally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hospitals ▪ Major public facilities

Zone	Uses	
<p>Houlton Business District (HBD) and Olde Towne St. Helens (OTSH)</p>	<p>Uses Permitted Outright</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dwellings above nonresidential permitted uses (single-family, duplex, townhouse, and multi-family dwellings) ▪ Historic residential structures, with or without auxiliary dwelling unit ▪ Transient housing ▪ Public and institutional uses ▪ Cultural/historical exhibits and library services ▪ Education and research facilities ▪ Government administrative facilities/offices ▪ Civic assembly ▪ Parks and recreation facilities ▪ Public parking lots ▪ Schools and colleges ▪ Artisan workshops and art studios/galleries ▪ Bed and breakfast facilities ▪ Retail sales establishments ▪ Produce stands ▪ Small equipment sales, rental, and repairs ▪ Retail product repair and maintenance facilities/services ▪ Offices ▪ Business and personal services, including health and fitness clubs ▪ Eating and drinking establishments and bars ▪ Major and minor public facilities 	<p>Uses Permitted Conditionally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transit and rail stations ▪ Business with outdoor storage ▪ Vehicle repair, service, and sales ▪ Drive-up businesses and services ▪ Child care facility/day nursery ▪ Hospitals, clinics, and care homes ▪ Religious assembly ▪ Private parking lots/facilities

Unless they have particular off-site impacts, the uses described above and in Attachment __ may not affect the streetscape as much as other development regulations. These other development regulations are discussed in the following sub-sections.

BUILDING HEIGHT

Building heights, in conjunction with building setbacks in cases when there are no or minimal setbacks, help provide a sense of enclosure and place along a street and corridor. Limiting heights contributes to the character of an area (e.g., a traditional or small town feeling) and its human scale and orientation.

As shown in Table 3, in the study area maximum building heights are generally limited to roughly three to four stories in the commercial and mixed use zones (HC, GC, MU, HBD, and OTSH), and two to three stories in the residential zones (R-5 and AR).³ Building heights are determined on an individual basis in the more specialized MC and PL zones.

SHMC 17.68.040 establishes additional limitations and exceptions to building height regulations in individual zones. These provisions include building height criteria related to scenic resources, which affects only the Olde Towne segment of the study area. These requirements specify that no new development over one story (or 15 feet in height) on lots fronting South 2nd Street, North and South 1st Street, and River Street in the study area shall significantly obstruct⁴ views of the Columbia River.

Another set of height-related development regulations are City vision clearance area regulations (SHMC Chapter 17.76). These provisions, also addressed in Technical Memorandum #1, more directly address the streetscape. They create a triangular area at the intersection of streets, railroads, and driveways in which there shall be no obstructions taller than three feet, except “the occasional utility pole” and trees whose branches must be removed up to eight feet in height.

Table 3. Development Standards in Study Area Zones

Zone/Corridor Segment	Building Height (Maximum)	Building Setback (Minimum/Maximum)	Lot Coverage (Maximum)	Landscaping (Minimum)
Highway Commercial (HC)	40 feet	No setbacks specified ^a	90%	10% of gross land area
General Commercial (GC)/ All corridor segments	45 feet	No setbacks specified ^a	90%	10% of gross land area
Marine Commercial (MC)/ Olde Towne	Case-by-case determination ^b	No setbacks specified ^a	90%	10% of gross land area
Light Industrial (LI)/US 30	75 feet ^c	Standards shall be determined by proximity to residential zones, anticipated off-site impacts, and other supplemental code chapters		

- 3 The exception is the LI zone, found in the Highway segment of the study area. SHMC 17.68.020 permits buildings up to 75 feet (roughly six to seven stories) in industrial zones, given requirements related to total building floor area and yard setbacks as a percentage of height requirements in adjacent zones. However, existing development in this area of LI zoning is generally not this tall.
- 4 SHMC 17.68.040(3) defines significantly obstruct as: “...restrict(ing) the ability to see the full view of the Columbia River by more than 50 percent. This shall apply to an accumulation of view from all living spaces with view at time of new development application.”

SFR Single-family/single-dwelling residential

MFR Multi-family/multi-dwelling residential

- a Proposed setbacks are subject to site development review, SHMC Chapter 17.96.
- b Buffers and screens must be provided according to proposed use and existing adjacent use, pursuant to the matrix (Figure 13) in SHMC 17.72.130.
- c With provisions regarding total floor area and yard setbacks related to building height regulations in adjacent zones (SHMC 17.68.020)
- d Except for multi-dwelling housing. SHMC 17.64.030 establishes special development standards for multi-dwelling housing.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT CODE REQUIREMENTS

- e Single-dwelling units and duplexes shall comply with R-5 standards, and multi-dwelling units and units above permitted uses must comply with AR standards.
- f The maximum setback in the Olde Towne St. Helens and Houlton Business Districts can be increased if the increased setback is used for pedestrian-oriented amenities, such as a sidewalk cafe, plaza, or courtyard, pursuant to SHMC 17.32.170 and SHMC 17.32.175(4).
- g Development featuring 100% lot coverage may be approved with payment of a lot coverage fee to the Olde Towne St. Helens and Houlton Business District community capital improvement accounts, pursuant to SHMC 17.32.170 and SHMC 17.32.175.

Zone/Corridor Segment	Building Height (Maximum)	Building Setback (Minimum/Maximum)	Lot Coverage (Maximum)	Landscaping (Minimum)
General Residential (R-5)/ All Corridor Segments	35 feet	Front: 20 feet Side: 5 feet (SFR and duplex), 10 feet (MFR and corner lots) Rear: 10 feet	35% (SFR detached) 50% (SFR attached and MFR)	25% ^d
Apartment Residential (AR)/ Houlton and Olde Towne	35 feet	Front: 20 feet Side: 5 feet (SFR detached), 10 feet (SFR attached, duplex, MFR, and corner lots) Rear: 10 feet	50%	25% ^d
Mixed Use (MU) ^e /Houlton and Olde Towne	45 feet	Buffer and screening requirements ^b	90% (non-residential)	-
Public Lands (PL)/Houlton	Case-by-case determination ^b	Standards shall be determined by proximity to residential zones, anticipated off-site impacts, and other supplemental code chapters		
Houlton Business District (HBD)/Houlton	45 feet ^b	Front: No min setback, zero max setback ^f Side and Rear: No min setback (adjacent to non-residential zone) or 1 foot per foot of building wall height (non-residential use adjacent to residential zone), min 10 feet	90%**	10% open space**
Olde Towne St. Helens (OTSH)/Olde Towne	45 feet ^b	Front: No min setback, zero max setback ^f Side and Rear: No min setback (adjacent to non-residential zone) or 1 foot per foot of building wall height (non-residential use adjacent to residential zone), min 10 feet	90% ^g	10% open space ^g

BUILDING SETBACKS

As noted in the previous section, building setbacks – particularly front and side building setbacks – can play a significant role in the sense of enclosure and place experienced on the sidewalk and street. This is of particular importance in the HBD and OTSH zones, where the City would like to encourage more development and redevelopment.

Building setbacks for zones in the study area are summarized in Table 3. Many setbacks are determined during the development review process. However, the HBD and OTSH zones make a point of bringing buildings up to the property lines except when sites are adjacent to residential zones or are providing pedestrian amenities like seating and plazas in the front yard setback.

The requirements for uses along those streets are as follows:

- **Major arterials (US 30).** Setback distance required by the zoning district plus 50 feet measured from the centerline of the street.
- **Minor arterials (Columbia Boulevard and St. Helens Street).** Setback distance required by the zoning district plus 30 feet measured from the centerline of the street.
- **Collectors (1st Street).** Setback distance required by the zoning district plus 25 feet measured from the centerline of the street.

LOT COVERAGE AND LANDSCAPING

In the same way that setbacks regulate where buildings will be located on a site, lot coverage requirements regulate the extent to which buildings can cover a site. Like setbacks, this also influences how people experience buildings from the sidewalk and street. The commercial and mixed use zones that account for most of the zoning in the study area (HC, GC, MC, MU, HBD, and OTSH) allow for relatively high lot coverages. In the HBD and OTSH zones, where the City wants to encourage development and redevelopment and reinforce a traditional small city look and feel, 100% coverage is permitted in exchange for payment of a fee to district capital improvement accounts (SHMC 17.32.170 and SHMC 17.32.175).

Landscaping requirements are related to lot coverage standards in the City's code and also affect the look and feel of development in an area. As can be seen in Table 3, whatever part of the lot is not covered by a building needs to be landscaped. City landscaping and screening provisions (SHMC Chapter 17.72) apply to construction of new structures and to changes of use, and not to single-family and two-family dwelling units or to uses that do not require site design review or a conditional use permit.

As is also discussed in Technical Memorandum #1, landscaping and screening provisions primarily address on-site requirements. Landscaping in the right-of-way (e.g., street trees) is part of the streetscape. SHMC Chapter 12.06 (Street Trees) and SHMC 17.72.030 (Street trees) specify the conditions under which the City and property owners must provide street trees as well as exceptions to those conditions.

OTHER DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

Vehicle Parking and Loading

Minimum off-street parking requirements are established according to land use in SHMC 17.80. Parking issues that most affect the streetscape are whether parking is permitted between the building and the sidewalk (in the front yard setback) and the extent to which parking requirements must be met on-site, i.e., how much of the site is devoted to parking. Of the zones in the study area, only the HBD and OTSH address these issues.

There are maximum zero-foot front yard setbacks in the HBD and OTSH zones, which do not allow for parking between buildings and the street.

No additional on-site parking is required for sites when existing development covers more than 50% of the site area; there is a change of use; or remodeling being done does not change the footprint of existing development.

New development may use on-street parking spaces in adjacent right-of-way to help meet off-street parking requirements. Alternately, new development can buy out of on-site parking requirements by contributing to the districts' capital improvement accounts for the provision of future parking facilities in the districts.

Bicycle Parking

Providing bicycle parking is important in encouraging biking in a community, and it also can be a contributing element of the streetscape. Currently, bicycle parking is required for multi-family residential, commercial, civic/institutional, and industrial uses in St. Helens, pursuant to SHMC 17.80.020(15). The minimum number of required bicycle parking spaces is generally scaled to the number of required vehicle parking spaces. Bicycle parking must be constructed within 50 feet of primary building entrances and not within landscape areas or pedestrian ways. Cover should be provided where possible.

Building Design

Generally, there are no building design standards or guidelines in the City of St. Helens. However, the City has determined that it is important to develop architectural design guidelines for the Olde Towne St. Helens district in order

to support development and design that is complementary to historic buildings and the traditional feel of the district, particularly in terms of materials, scale, features, and orientation. Guidelines and a review process have been adopted into the code (SHMC 17.32.170). The guidelines address awnings and canopies, building façades/entries, building lighting, building signage, and building setback, orientation, and bulk. Historic photos of Olde Towne are included in the guidelines for reference.

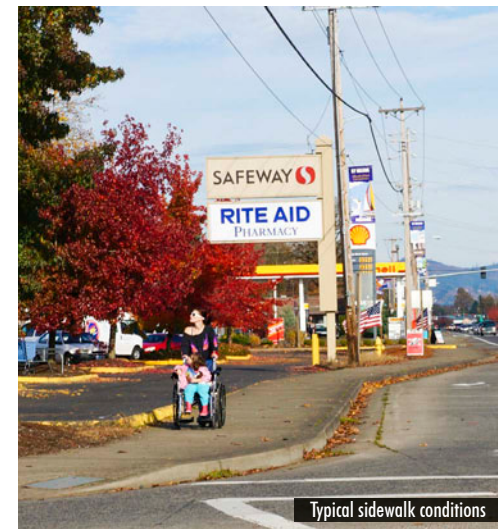
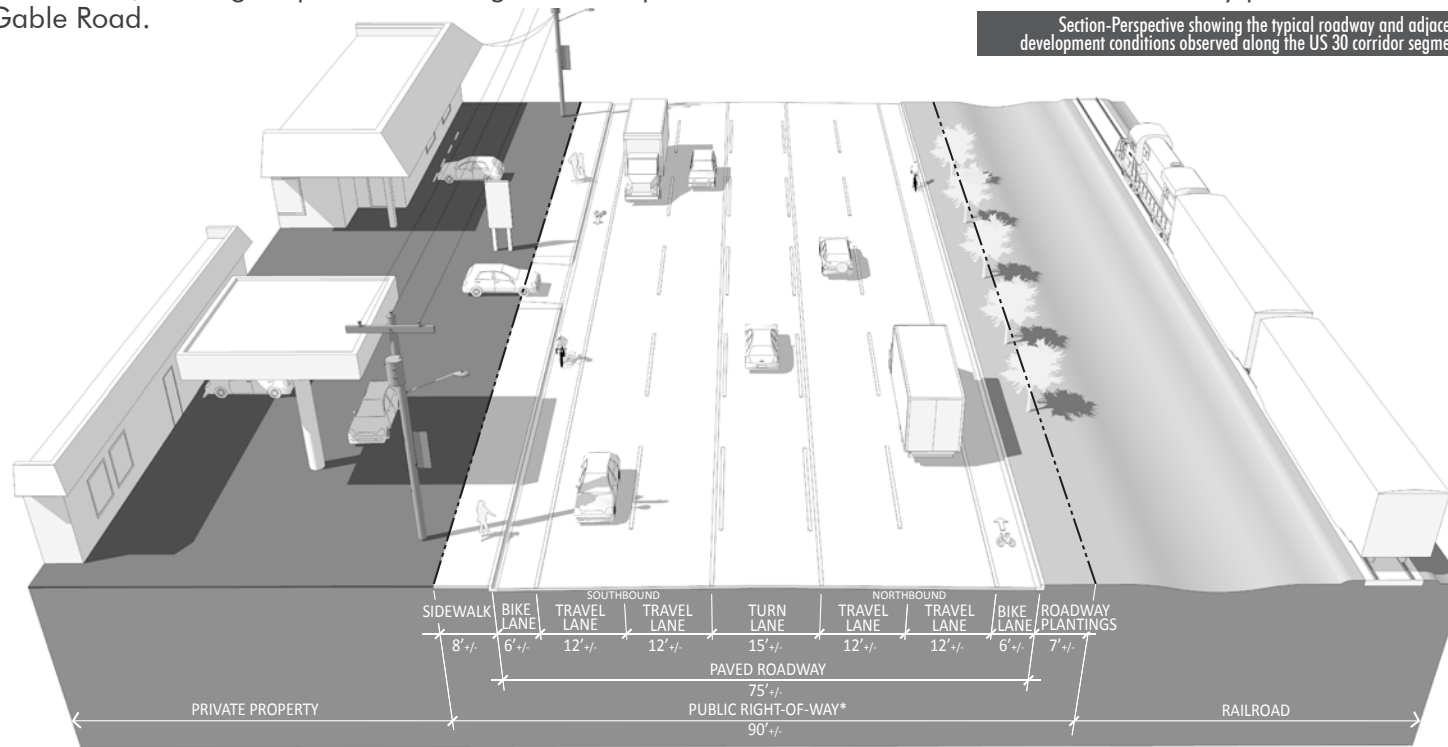
This page intentionally left blank.

Urban Design Conditions

This section summarizes physical and environmental characteristics that will have implications for enhancing the design of streets and future development in each corridor segment of the project area. This will help advance the overall goal of creating viable, aesthetically pleasing, safe and sustainable business districts in these areas. A description of each corridor segment summarizes the roadway configuration, pedestrian facilities, and adjacent development. Graphic section-perspectives show the typical conditions observed in each corridor segment, providing a visual analysis of the relationships between each of these spaces.

US 30

The US 30 corridor segment is a major arterial characterized by a wide concrete roadway with four lanes of traffic, a continuous center turn lane, and north- and southbound bicycle lanes on each side of the street. The roadway widens to provide right-turn only lanes at three signalized intersections, each of which provide striping and crosswalk signals for pedestrian crossing. This segment currently lacks pedestrian refuge islands or planted medians at any intersection, although a pedestrian refuge island is provided at the US 30 entrance to the Safeway just north of Gable Road.





East side of US 30



Typical crosswalk conditions



Typical back of sidewalk condition - lack of screening

Pedestrian facilities on the west side of the street consist of a narrow curb-tight sidewalk with frequent utility poles occurring behind the sidewalk. Very few, if any, pedestrian amenities or street trees exist. The east side of the street is predominately grassy drainage ditch lined with occasional groupings of small to medium sized ornamental trees, beyond which is a railroad right-of-way with a high frequency of daily freight trains. Crosswalks and curb ramps are provided for pedestrians at signalized intersections.

Adjacent development is primarily situated along the west side of US 30, and consists of service-related and retail businesses with various setbacks ranging from zero to 100+ feet. Buildings are predominately single-story and utilitarian in character, lacking a cohesive definitive architectural style. Business frontages consist predominately of asphalt-paved parking and vehicular-oriented areas, very few of which have adequate edge screening or interior landscape areas.

Based on these conditions, this corridor segment lacks an overall identity, or a sense of place. Public and private spaces are not clearly distinguished from one another, nor do they provide amenities for pedestrians to feel welcome. The corridor is generally oriented towards vehicular users, resulting in ready access for vehicles but creating intimidating conditions for pedestrians to easily move through or around.

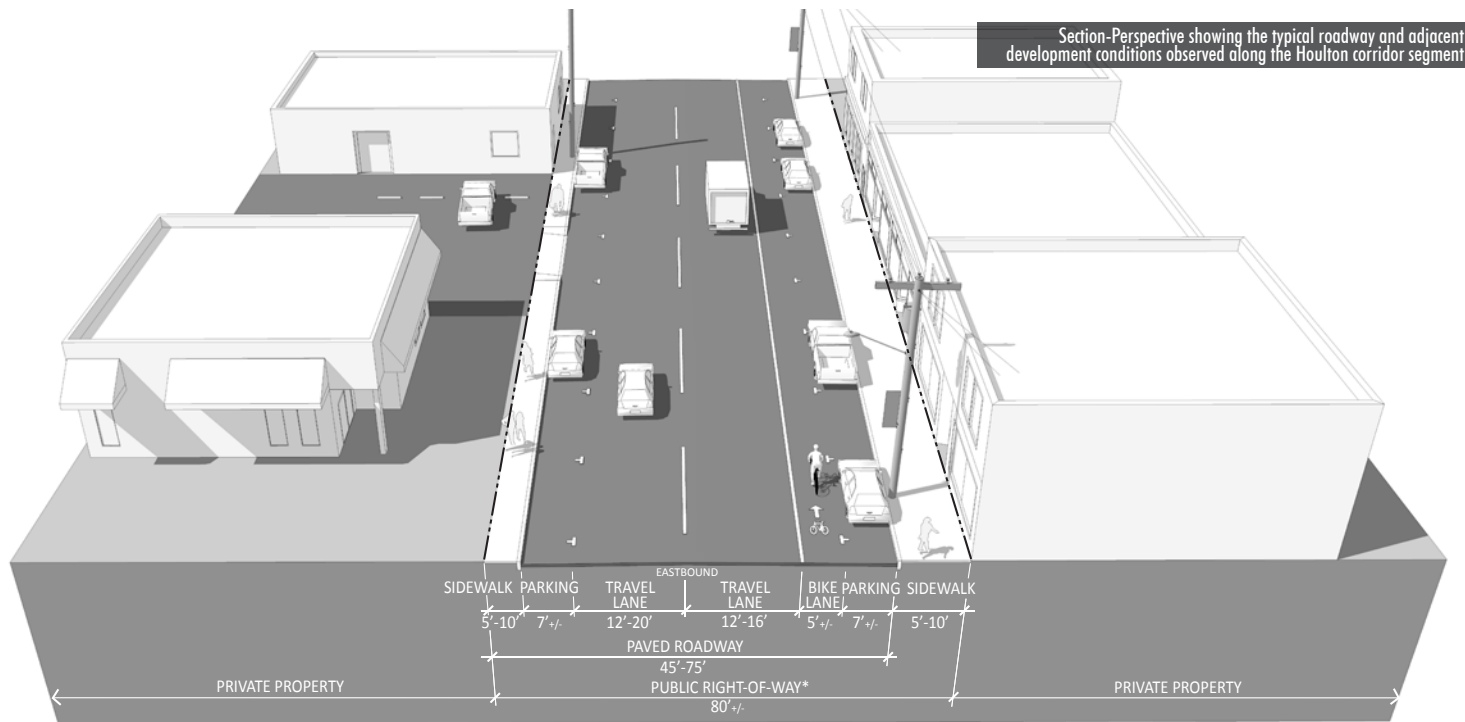
Streetscape improvements within the ODOT right-of-way along the east side of US 30 are generally favored by railroad representatives, however special consideration must be given to any physical improvements to ensure they do not impact operations or safety. For example, clearly designated pedestrian pathways are encouraged, granted they are located at least 25 feet from the tracks or within the outer 10 feet of the right-of-way. Landscaping is permissible, however, trees and shrubs must be located so that they do not interfere with railroad operations. Fencing is also permissible, granted it is tall enough to discourage people from climbing over it, and it is located on both sides of the tracks. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements at railroad crossings are generally supported, so long as clear sight distances are maintained. Since ODOT Rail owns the right-of-way within which the railroad operates, any proposed improvements would need to be coordinated through ODOT Rail.



HOULTON AREA

The Houlton corridor segment consists of the Columbia Boulevard / St. Helens Street couplet, which turns into Columbia Boulevard at the 13th Street intersection. The asphalt roadway typically consists of two travel lanes, one to two bike lanes, and parallel parking on each side of the street. Striped crosswalks are provided for pedestrian crossing at each intersection. New curb ramps have relatively recently been installed at a number of intersections; however, other intersections lack adequate curb ramps. Curbs are observed to range in height from flush with the roadway to over 8" in height in some locations. This corridor segment is separated from US 30 by a 100-foot wide railroad right-of-way.

Pedestrian facilities generally consists of narrow, curb-tight, concrete sidewalks with utility poles, fire hydrants, and roadway signs occurring just behind the curb, constricting the path of travel at each location. Due to the difficulty of planting trees in the underlying layer of basalt rock, this segment area currently has no street trees, though isolated clusters of small ornamental trees in container planters occur in the right-of-way in some locations. Relatively few pedestrian amenities exist along this corridor segment, although customized benches have been provided just behind the sidewalk in some locations. Cobra-style roadway lighting provides the only pedestrian illumination

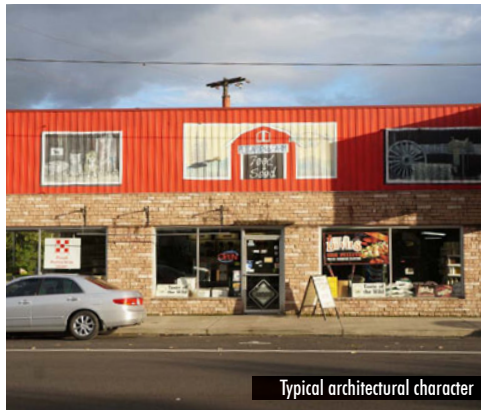




Typical sidewalk conditions



Example of an underutilized pedestrian-oriented setback



Typical architectural character

during night-time hours. An ornamental landscape area with a fountain feature marks the St. Helens St. and Columbia Blvd intersection, although this is the only landscape feature along this corridor segment. Seasonal decorations such as cornstalks, scarecrows, and American flags are placed along the street by neighborhood and business associations during holiday celebrations.

Adjacent development is predominately commercial and civic in nature, with some vacant lots and single-family residences occurring in between Columbia and St. Helens, and along the north side of the corridor segment. Buildings are one- to two-story, and have setbacks ranging from zero to 20+ feet. Architecturally, many retail buildings are of the early 20th century commercial vernacular, with some articulation of the facades. Many buildings have glass fronts, allowing for some visibility between the insides of the businesses and the public street. Many buildings that are set back from the sidewalk have attempted to create pedestrian-oriented spaces in front, though most are separated from the sidewalk with small parking lots. Very few properties have landscaped areas along this segment, though some mature trees are observed in this project segment.

Based on these conditions, this corridor segment has an identity that lacks a clear distinction, though some “pockets” exhibit some consistency in character and feel. Public and private spaces are not generally distinguished from one another, although there are a few exceptions. This corridor segment is more pedestrian-oriented than US 30; however, sidewalks are generally too narrow and travel lanes are excessively wide for this street classification, and the lack of amenities does little to make pedestrians want to linger.

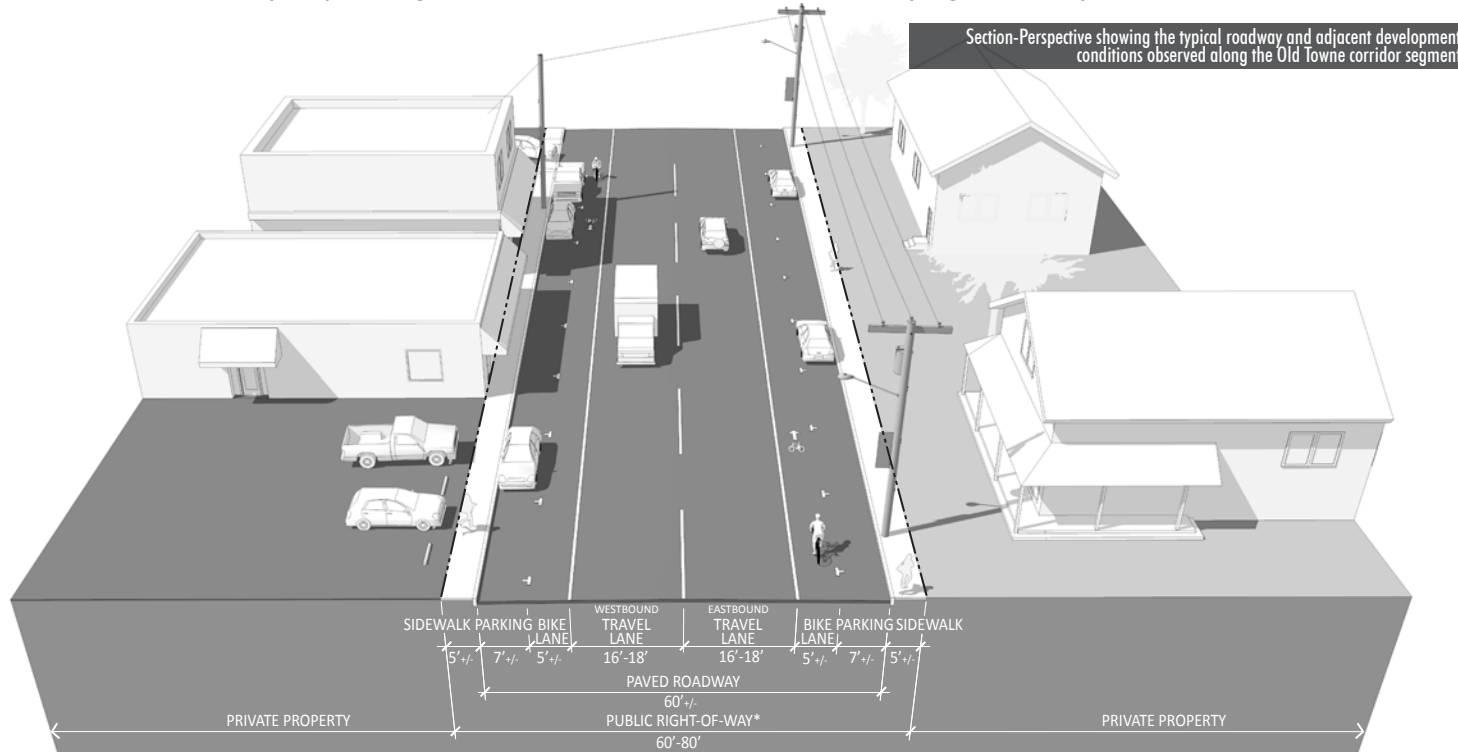
The extensive system overhead utility lines along Columbia Boulevard and St. Helens Street visually clutters the streetscape and can significantly impact many potential streetscape improvements by limiting, for example, locations of street trees and constricting pedestrian routes. Undergrounding existing overhead utilities is an effective way to reduce this visual clutter, opening up valuable space in a constricted pedestrian environment for a number of streetscape improvements. However, the high costs associated with excavating bedrock and undergrounding utility lines and vaults can be prohibitively expensive, but may be combined with other municipal and/or privately funded projects in the vicinity.



OLD TOWNE

The Olde Towne study area is split into two segments: Uppertown, or the area above Dispaïne’s Hill, and Lowertown, the area below Dispaïne’s Hill. Similar to the Houlton area, the roadway in the Old Towne corridor segment consists of two travel lanes, two bike lanes, and parallel parking on each side of the street. However, a large basalt outcropping encroaches the roadway on Columbia Blvd. and on S. 1st Street, having significant impact on the roadway cross section. Additionally, the St. Helens Street portion of this corridor segment consists of a wider roadway with angle-in parking between 1st and 4th Streets. Striped crosswalks are provided for pedestrian crossings at nearly every intersection of the Old Towne corridor segment.

Pedestrian facilities also are similar to those in the Houlton area, with narrow, curb-tight concrete sidewalks and few pedestrian amenities. Utility poles with cobra-style roadway lighting are located just behind the curb, as well as fire hydrants and roadway signs. Broken sections of sidewalk are observed at some locations, and are either in disrepair, or have been paved over with asphalt. Street trees are also absent from this corridor segment, with the exception of four maple trees on the south side of Columbia Blvd. between 2nd and 3rd Streets. This also is likely a function of the difficulty of planting street trees in areas where the underlying basalt layer forms a natural barrier.



URBAN DESIGN CONDITIONS



Unique conditions observed along Columbia Blvd



Typical setback and sidewalk conditions



Commercial business "hub"

Adjacent development is a mix of one- to two-story commercial buildings and single family residences, parking lots and vacant lots. Setbacks range from zero to 20+ feet, and consist primarily of minimally-landscaped front yards and parking areas. Very few commercial buildings are architecturally significant, though many residences are craftsman bungalows that have been well-maintained and have a strong presence along this corridor segment.

The Old Towne area has a strong residential character along the eastern end of the segment, though lacks a consistent set of facilities and amenities for pedestrians. The western end of the segment lacks a clear character due to the inconsistent quality and frequency of adjacent development. The basalt outcrops present significant barriers to pedestrian and bicycle movement in these areas, limiting sight lines and acting to divide this portion of the project area into three distinct segments. Like Houlton, Old Towne is more geared towards pedestrians than US 30; however, the sidewalks are also generally too narrow and the travel lanes are excessively wide to make travel for pedestrian feel safe and comfortable.



Non-Conforming Uses and Code Violations

While non-conforming uses and code violations are not significant issues in the study area from the perspective of City staff, there are a number of issues that the City has identified as challenges in the study area, particularly in the US 30 and Houlton segments of the study area. These issues are discussed below. Example images are provided to illustrate the issues being discussed, although many of the images come from other communities.

US 30

Built-out nature of the area. There are relatively few undeveloped parcels in the Highway segment. This may limit the amount of redevelopment that will occur in the area in the foreseeable future and, thus, limit the use of redevelopment to help directly fund streetscape improvement projects (e.g., establishing planting strips, medians, etc.).

Older nature of development in the area. Much of the development in the US 30 segment occurred before current code provisions were implemented. As a result, development in this area may not be consistent with current requirements for streetscape and site elements such as parking or landscaping. This makes these uses non-conforming in this respect and may present challenges for property owners during an expansion or redevelopment process.

Signs. There have been difficulties with highway signs and temporary signs in this area, particularly on the railroad side of the highway and at key intersections. Temporary signs often are not consistent with city standards and/or remain in place beyond the duration allowed.



An example of older development



Temporary Signs



Pedestrian Crossing without Sidewalk

Lack of Landscape Cover. Many properties along US 30 appear to lack the minimum amount (10%) of landscape coverage, which detracts from civic identity.

Pedestrian Crossings. Several intersections exhibit sub-par pedestrian crossing features, including curb ramps and detectable warning strips. Though the latter may not necessarily be in violation of the City's code, there are a number of locations where pedestrian crossings across US 30 terminate at a curb, or at a curb ramp with no sidewalk.

HOULTON AND OLDE TOWNE

Older nature of development in Houlton. As in the Highway segment, the age of existing development in Houlton means that it is not always consistent with current requirements for streetscape and site elements such as parking or landscaping.

Ground floor residential uses. These are no longer permitted uses in Houlton, resulting in a number of non-conforming uses. There is concern that if these uses become vacant and do not redevelop in the future, they may become derelict uses and degrade the character and quality of the streetscape.



Example of large setback with parking

Setbacks and off-street parking. Building are required to be built close to the street in the Houlton and Olde Towne area pursuant to existing requirements. As a result, parking must be placed on the side of or behind buildings. There may be some uses in these areas that do not conform to these setback requirements.

Parking. On-street parking spaces may be counted towards meeting off-street parking requirements in Houlton and Olde Towne, so that development may be able to provide a few less off-street parking spaces. Buildings that occupy 50% or more of a site are exempt from meeting off-street parking requirements, which may make them more reliant on on-street parking. In these and other cases, on-street parking is an important asset and streetscape improvements that reduce on-street parking may face resistance from local businesses.

Street trees and planters. Both private and public improvements can trigger the requirement for the City or property owners to provide street trees or planters. The City Council can waive those requirements under certain circumstances. The corridor planning project represents an opportunity to refine that process and set criteria for making those decisions based on analysis and recommendations generated during this process.



Street Trees and Planters in St. Helens

Conclusions

US 30. The pattern and character of development in this corridor segment from land use, zoning and urban design character is very vehicle-oriented as would be expected along a state highway. Short of undergoing a very significant transformation through major redevelopment, this character is not likely to change in the near future. However, enhancements to the streetscape in this area can improve the overall appearance of the corridor and improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians and bicycles. The design of targeted improvements should focus on the following:

- Provide more landscaping and greenery along the east side of the road.
- Establish an enhanced landscaping plan for the west side of the road adjacent to the rail line.
- Enhance pedestrian crossings, particularly at key intersections.
- Establish gateway features either at entrances to the town or at key intersections (Gable and Columbia/St. Helens).
- Consider implementation of a landscaped central median along portions of the road to enhance its appearance, manage access and improve safety.
- Consider updating standards for parking lot landscaping and design to increase landscaping and improve pedestrian connections and encourage businesses to voluntarily make such improvements, possibly through some kind of business association.

Houlton. This is a key shopping and business district for residents and visitors, as well as a gateway to the Olde Towne area. It currently features wide rights-of-way and limited pedestrian amenities. Land use patterns and design standards have the potential to encourage a mix of land uses and a relatively pedestrian-oriented district with building built close to the sidewalk, parking located to the side or rear of buildings and requirements for future street trees (in containers) and/or other landscaping. The design of future streetscape improvements in this area should include:

- Improve pedestrian crossings through pavement treatments, curb extensions or other strategies.
- Use excess right-of-way to enhance landscaping, as well as bicycle and pedestrian facilities and create a narrower feel to the road that can help slow traffic.
- Establish a gateway feature and improved signage at the intersection of Columbia Blvd and US 30 to draw

people into the Houlton area and toward Olde Towne.

- Provide improved pedestrian amenities (e.g., pedestrian scale light, street furniture, etc.) to create more of sense of place and unique identity for the area; use signage both for this purpose and to guide people to Olde Towne.
- Consider creating a small park or pedestrian plaza somewhere in the area to serve as an amenity and gathering place for residents and visitors.

Old Towne. This corridor segment represents an opportunity for more future mixed use development and helps draw people towards civic uses and businesses north of St. Helens Street and activities on the Riverfront. It has a strong residential character but pedestrian and bicycle facilities are constrained. Streetscape improvements in this area should include:

- Continue signage from the Houlton area guiding people towards Olde Towne and the Columbia River.
- Improve facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians, working within constraints posed by topography and geology.
- Ensure that on and off-street parking requirements and availability are integrated to meet the needs of existing and future land uses and businesses in the area.