



INTRODUCTION

During the week of August 9, 2021, the City of Albany held five Stakeholder Group Meetings to identify challenges, opportunities, and priorities for the East Albany Plan. Stakeholders were interviewed in small groups in a hybrid in-person and on-line setting, organized by topic:

- City of Albany Department Heads
- Transportation Interests
- Regional Interests
- Business and Industry
- East Albany Residents/Landowners

These meetings began with a summary of the East Albany Plan's funding sources, objectives, study area, and anticipated timeline. These materials are included in **Attachment A**. Consultant project manager Matt Hastie and City Project Manager Anne Catlin then facilitated a discussion through a set of questions tailored for each group. The content of the discussions is summarized in the remainder of this memorandum. A list of attendees is included in **Attachment B**.

RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES FOR THE EAST ALBANY PLAN

Participants in all stakeholder groups were asked what the priorities for the East Albany Plan should be in their view. Responses included the following.

- Connectivity (all modes, sidewalks, roads and utilities) that makes sense
- Interconnected streets with transit and bus stops, and safe pedestrian routes to transit and destinations
- East I-5 Plan sets framework for future development and improvements and zoning that makes best use of land
- Improved public safety access and response times
- More livable neighborhoods with safe sidewalks/paths to schools and parks
- Off street path system as an alternative to motor vehicles
- More sidewalks and ADA compliant sidewalks
- Multi-generational housing and smaller single-family lots
- More affordable housing
- More services and make them easy to get to – medical/urgent care, restaurants, groceries
- Identify where intersections with Highway 20 should be located
- Plan uses along Highway 20 and throughout the area
- Identify highest priorities for growth
- Make industrial lands shovel-ready and buildable – including how to finance needed infrastructure
- Create a sense of place with amenities for residents and employees
- Improved access to freeway



PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

Issues related to public facilities, emergency services, and utilities were discussed with several stakeholder groups. Key points are described briefly below.

Emergency Services

- Fire/EMT response times are longer in this area than elsewhere in the City.
- No fire station in the Timber Ridge/Knox Butte area.
- The Millersburg and Three Lakes Road fire stations serve this area, but Millersburg is also growing.
- There is an opportunity for additional police/fire substations in the area; could co-locate together or with other facilities.
- A few areas lack public water and fire hydrants.

Public Facilities/Schools

- Assess school needs and locations.
- Library could partner with school district for services.
- Ensure facilities can be maintained.

Utility Infrastructure

- Development in East Albany will require expansion of water/sewer infrastructure.
- However, it is challenging to cross I-5, the airport, and the fairground properties with infrastructure – private development is unlikely to fund much of the cost as these are public lands.
- Lack of infrastructure, costs, and timeline to get infrastructure are barriers to development.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation was a key theme in many stakeholder discussions. Key themes are identified below.

Connectivity

- I-5 is a significant barrier to connectivity with the rest of Albany. There are few places to cross the highway.
- North-south connections are incomplete.
- Generally, there are few continuous routes across the whole study area – streets, sidewalks, bike lanes.
- Creeks and wetlands also create barriers to connectivity associated with roadway and utility crossings.



- Vacant/underdeveloped land creates opportunities to plan connectivity and system needs.
- Lack of interconnected streets and paths to support transit and increase ridership.

Planned connections

- There are several planned connections that will improve transit and automobile connectivity in the area.
- The TSP has connections shown, they are fairly straight lines that might not be realistic.
- No good mechanism to implement proposed TSP connections.

Transit

- Expecting growth in multifamily/affordable housing in this area.
- The area has few bus stops currently.
- Buses have to turn around at Walmart today, which is challenging. Their site is not transit friendly in its design.
- Expansions are being planned but narrow roadways and limited connectivity are barriers.
- Stretches of some roads that are in the County's jurisdiction are narrower and challenging to add bus stops to (e.g., Goldfish Farm Lane and Clover Ridge Road).
- The proposed future routes assume that buses will use the Knox Butte roundabout as a turnaround facility.
- There are no bus pullouts or shelters in the area currently – stops are provided where possible by adding a post in the ground along an ADA-compliant sidewalk.
- Need sidewalks, paths connecting to bus stops – can't necessarily get to destination safely once get off the bus.
- There is an opportunity to require transit amenities/connections through the development code.
- Intercity transportation should be considered as well – the Linn Shuttle used to go through the area.
- A proposed update of transit routes and projections will go to City Council in September and be shared with the East Albany Plan team.
- Transit access to Timber Ridge school is challenging, with no good place to turn around. Using school facilities as turnaround sites is problematic due to potential conflicts with school drop-off and pick-up traffic and other school events.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

- Sidewalks in the area are inconsistent today, and absent on many routes that are commonly used.
- Children walking to school is a particular concern.
- A path system connecting residential areas to East Albany schools and transit stops is a high priority.
- Pedestrian connections to the rest of the City (west of I-5) should be addressed as well.
- Few safe places/distances to go running or biking.



- Off-street path/corridors are needed as an alternative to motor vehicles.
- The Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is undertaking a bicycle/pedestrian path planning effort that should be coordinated with the East Albany Plan.

Highway System

- It is unlikely that another connection across I-5 will occur.
- Crossing Highway 20 is problematic in several areas.
- Eventual updates to interchanges in the area are an opportunity to improve access to neighboring commercial properties.
- ODOT should identify intersections with highways.

Congestion

- There are several areas with frequent congestion, where left turns are difficult and time consuming (e.g., at the intersections of Knox Butte Road with Century Drive, Clover Ridge Road, and other streets).
- Some take Scrael Hill and other back roads to avoid Knox Butte and other areas of congestion and difficult left turns.
- Growth in this area is expected to worsen traffic congestion and mobility.
- School pick up/drop off times are congested currently, as are workday peaks, and events at the fairgrounds and Timber Linn park.
- Narrow streets with on-street parking can be difficult to navigate for drivers, school busses, and city busses.
- Knox Butte and Century Drive are challenging today.
- As the area grows, addressing automobile congestion is a very high priority.

LAND USE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The mix of housing, employment, and public land use in East Albany was a topic in many stakeholder groups, as discussed below.

Land Uses Generally

- East Albany is one of the few places in the City with significant acreage left to develop – particularly in industrial/commercial zones and multifamily zones.
- There is an opportunity to update Comprehensive Plan designations in the area.
- Depending on the density of ultimate buildout, East Albany could support a grocery store.
- Coordinating development of individual properties through the East Albany Plan can produce a more cohesive and functional area.
- There are few existing services in the area and connectivity to them (lack of personal services, restaurants, etc.).



- A gas station would be good for the area (one is planned near the roundabout on Knox Butte Road).
- Other types of shopping, groceries, and restaurants would be beneficial for these neighborhoods. Families have to drive across town for a pizza, for example.
- Area lacks medical and urgent care services –medical services are far away.
- Avoid food desserts and trips across I-5.
- Encourage mixed use developments and compact/smart growth so goods/services within mile to decrease vehicle trips and traffic.
- Evaluate Highway 20 development – type of land uses given access and traffic.

Place Making

- There is a limited sense of community in the area currently – walkable amenities and gathering spaces would help that. Feels commuter based.
- Improve livability and walkability – paths to schools, parks, coffee shop, etc.
- Amenities are good for everyone and attracting employment growth.
- Improve image along Highway 20.

Housing

- The area contains older housing that was inexpensively built and may not age well, as well as newer and more costly housing.
- Mixed-use housing developments that provide local goods and services would be a good addition to the area.
- Coordination with the school district would be helpful for their long-term planning – knowing where, when, what type of growth is expected.
- Need for affordable housing for low and moderate incomes, and housing that meets multi-generational needs.
- Given the large lots and old homes in this area, East Albany may be well suited for infill middle housing (HB 2001). Housing on smaller lots and middle housing would be a good fit for the area.
- Recent news indicated that there are developers looking to develop affordable housing in Albany – they just need property to do so.
- Overall, there is a need for single family housing in the City.

Industrial and Employment Lands

- There is a deficit of “shovel-ready” land in the City today for industrial/employment uses.
- East Albany contains large parcels of industrially-zoned land. This is an opportunity but getting infrastructure and access to these parcels are costly barriers to their development, particularly given the presence of wetlands in the area and the cost of wetland mitigation.
- Wetland mitigation is costly (\$93k per acre). Need to work with regional partners on a wetland banking credit system.



- A current employer is looking to expand into a 20-30 acre site – East Albany may or may not make sense for them.
- There is interest from the State’s economic development department (Business Oregon) in developing East Albany industrial sites, and grant money might be available.
- Supporting existing industries or finding compatible businesses should be a priority. Don’t re-zone industrial land – it’s a precious commodity. Need to find a way to unlock its potential.
- Tax Increment Financing might be an opportunity for East Albany to get funds to unlock industrial property in East Albany.
- Finding a way to pay for the cost of infrastructure is a problem throughout the state. If we can find a way to do that here, it could give us a competitive advantage.

Scravel Hill Area

- The far Northeast portion of East Albany lacks utilities and has topographic constraints.
- It is considered a “Wildland Urban Interface” area with particular fire risk.
- The lack of multiple ingress/egress points is a concern from an emergency services perspective.

Natural Resources

- The area’s creeks and wetlands represent a challenge to development and also an opportunity to create a system of off-street bike/pedestrian pathways, viewsheds, wildlife corridors, and open space for the area.
- The costs of creating and maintaining these corridors may be high and needs to be thought through.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- Albany Parks System Master Plan has been updated recently (adopted February 2021).
- Timber Linn Park is not well connected and would likely see more use with more multi-modal connections.
- A new park is planned between Timber Ridge and Meadow Ridge schools.
- Recent apartment development contains an easement for a path system – building on and formalizing this network should be part of this plan.
- Parks maintenance office is at Timber Linn Park currently – lots of people and machinery get moved from there all over town. Traffic is a challenge, Knox Butte in particular for left turns/large equipment.
- This plan may be an opportunity to look at the City’s tree code and greening up the streetscape in this area.
- Dog parks are often mentioned as a need by residents.
- Parks are needed in neighborhoods.

REGIONAL ISSUES



Jurisdictional Issues

- The area is partly within the City Limits and partly under County jurisdiction, and there are pockets of unincorporated lands; this can hamper the ability to build facilities to City standards within the area and/or to extend city facilities through portions of the area.
- Most of the County land in the urban fringe is designated Urban Residential Reserve, which is a holding designation that lacks certainty for planning and development.
- Annexation can't be forced by the city except for "island" and health hazard annexations (e.g. failing septic systems, or wells).
- County roads are built to a different standard than City roads, leading to an inconsistent system.

Airport and Fairgrounds

- The airport is owned and operated by the City of Albany, but only serves a small portion of residents.
- The airport isn't a big priority of the community today.
- Airport is a good amenity for some businesses, but it's landlocked and can't grow or lengthen runway to serve jets.
- There might be some opportunity for additional industrial uses at the airport site.
- Height restrictions around the airport affect land use.
- The airport occupies land that could be good for other land uses but moving the airport would be a difficult task, particularly given FAA requirements for identifying alternative sites for a relocated facility, and possible repayment of federal funds that have supported the existing facility.
- Little local support for relocating airport between Albany and Lebanon.

OTHER SUGGESTED PLAN PARTICIPANTS

- Landowners in East Albany
- School District should be a partner in the plan.
- Linn Shuttle
- ODOT
- Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO)
- Linn Benton Community College
- Linn County Transportation
- A handout for City Council members would be helpful to educate them and allow them to respond to questions
- Use social media to reach out to the public regarding this effort
- Samaritan Health and their property management committee

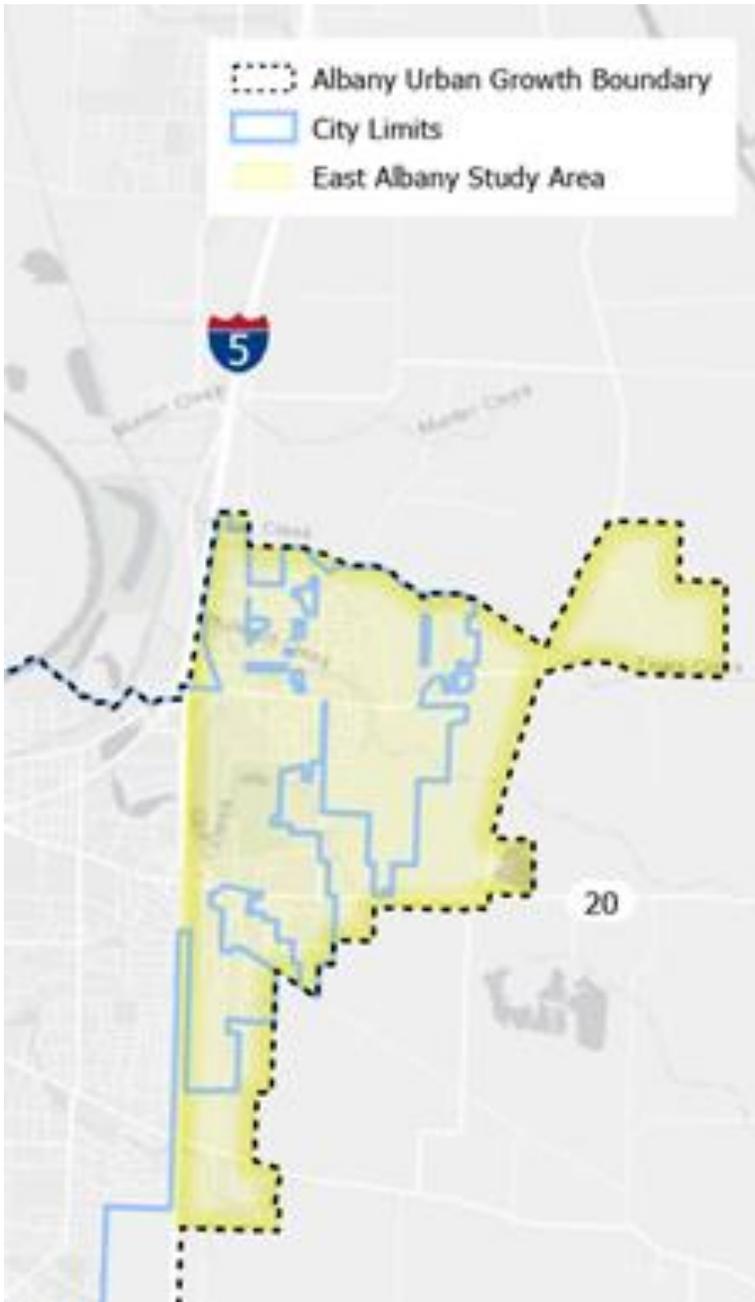


Attachment A: Project Information Materials

PROJECT GOALS, OBJECTIVES & PRIORITIES

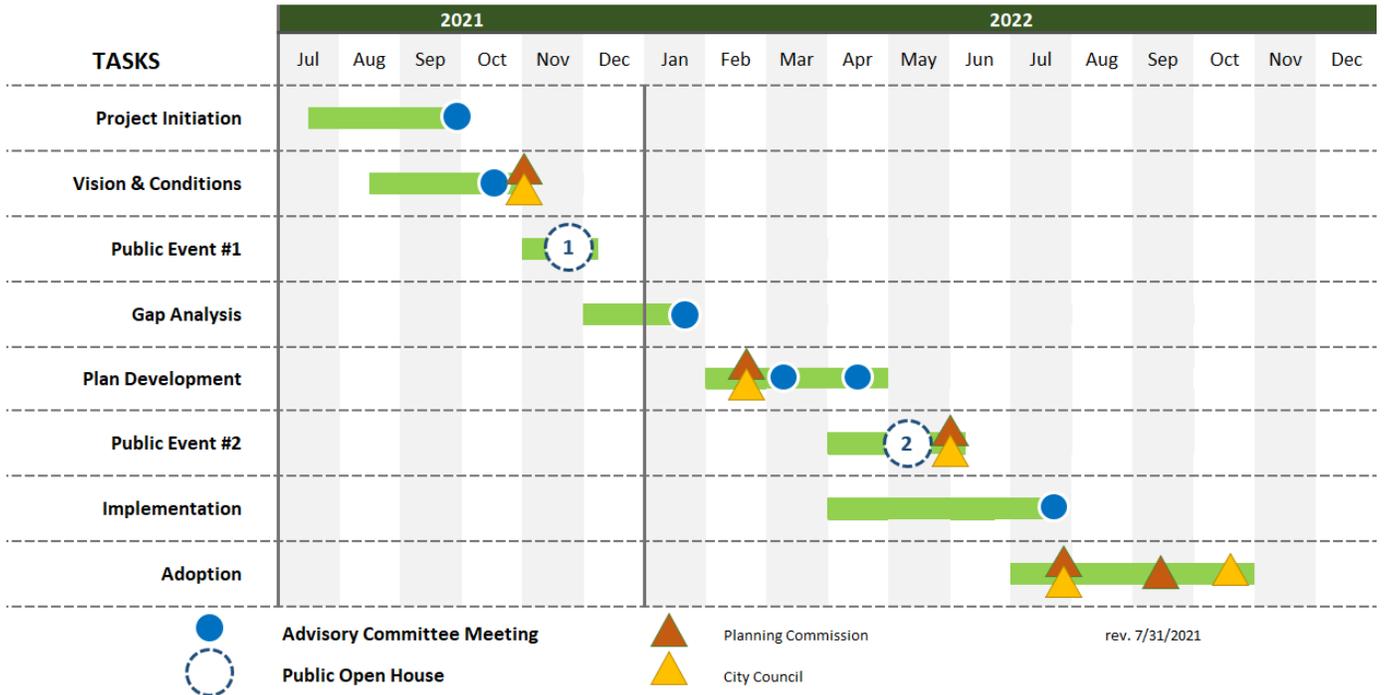
- Connect residential, employment, commercial and recreational uses with a functional and safe multi-modal transportation system and interconnected greenway trail system.
- Provide a transportation system that provides access and mobility while supporting anticipated residential and employment growth.
- Create attractive gateways into Albany from I-5 and US 20.
- Increase the variety of housing types, densities, and mixed-use developments to accommodate the needs of current and future residents.
- Protect the area's riparian and wildlife corridors, wetlands and drainage ways located within significant natural resource overlays.
- Use interconnected natural resource corridors to provide pedestrian, open space and wildlife connectivity between neighborhoods and will help protect scenic vistas.
- Identify opportunities to provide aesthetic and recreational amenities.
- Identify a strategy for implementation, including short-term and long-term measures the City can take that will help achieve its goals for Project Study Area.

STUDY AREA





OVERALL PROJECT SCHEDULE





Attachment B: Participants

Name	Representing	Group
Ross Shultz	Coastal Farm	Business and Industry
Seth Sherry	Eco Devo CoA	Business and Industry
Arlen Emmert	Samaritan Albany General Hospital	Business and Industry
Shane Wooton	Fire	Department Heads
Chris Bailey	Public Works	Department Heads
Kristin Preston	Public Works	Department Heads
Eric Ikenouye	Library	Department Heads
Alex Johnson II	Mayor	Mayor
Doug Pigman	GAPS	Regional Interest
Rick Barnett	Parks & Recreation	Regional Interest
Alyssa Boles	Linn Co planner	Regional interest
Juston Alexander	Resident/Police	Resident
Jennifer Kizer	PC/Resident	Resident
Karen Cardosa	Resident/Community Development Commission/Realtor	Resident
Michael Louk	Resident	Resident
Adam Huskey	Residential Developer / Resident	Resident/Business and Industry
Barry Hoffman	Transit/AAMPO	Transportation
Lora Ratcliff	Fire	Transportation
Candy Bliss	Transit	Transportation
Ron Irish	Transportation	Transportation