

# MILWAUKIE DOWNTOWN AND RIVERFRONT LAND USE FRAMEWORK PLAN

ANCILLARY DOCUMENT  
TO  
MILWAUKIE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



*Adopted September 19, 2000  
(Ordinance No. 1880)*

**MILWAUKIE, OREGON**



September 19, 2000

Dear Colleagues:

During 1999 and early 2000, the community met to develop a new vision for downtown Milwaukie and the Willamette Riverfront. The attached Milwaukie Downtown Plan, the result of creative thinking, hard work and dedication from Milwaukie residents and City staff, will ensure that new development and redevelopment are consistent with that vision.

City officials, community leaders and area businesses have known for a long time that Milwaukie's historic downtown, nestled at the edge of the Willamette River, can and should be a vital center for the community's economic and social activity. The Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront Plan identifies policies to make downtown Milwaukie:

- a livable community where downtown residents can walk to work and shop conveniently;
- a thriving business center; and
- a destination for family activities, featuring salmon-friendly natural areas and a riverfront park.

The heart of our city is the downtown. A thriving downtown will be an integral part of making Milwaukie a more sustainable, livable city. As a longtime participant in the public process, I am confident that with this plan, a commitment from the community, and dedicated partnerships, our downtown will be reinvigorated.

In appreciation to the hundreds of Milwaukie citizens and numerous staff members who worked to make this plan a reality, we dedicate the Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront Plan to the residents of Milwaukie.

Sincerely,

  
Carolyn Tomel, Mayor

MILWAUKIE CITY HALL  
10722 SE MAIN STREET  
MILWAUKIE, OREGON 97222  
PHONE: (503) 786-7555 • FAX: (503) 652-4433

# **Acknowledgements**

## **The Citizens of Milwaukie**

### **Milwaukie City Council**

Carolyn Tomei, Mayor  
Mary King  
Larry Lancaster  
Jeff Marshall  
Brian Newman

### **Planning Commission**

Tracy Cook, Chair  
Judith Borden  
Barbara Cartmill  
Donald Hammang  
Mike Miller  
Doug Ouderkirk  
Howard Steward

### **Riverfront Board**

Jim Bernard, Chair  
Kathi Cardinalli  
Dave Green  
Stephen Loaiza  
Michael Martin  
Paul Verbout  
Mitch Wall

### **Project Staff**

Dan Bartlett, City Manager  
Martha Bennett  
Pat DuVal  
Jeanne Garst  
John Gessner  
Michelle Gregory  
Marcia Hamley  
Craig Holman  
Barb Kwapich  
Charlene Richards  
Paul Roeger  
Alice Rouyer  
Sue Stepan  
Tim Salyers  
Grady Wheeler

### **Project Consultants**

Don Arambula, Crandall Arambula  
George Crandall, Crandall Arambula  
Phil Goff, Crandall Arambula  
Paige Norris Goganian, Crandall Arambula  
Kristin Belz, Crandall Arambula  
Mary Dorman, Dorman & Associates  
Gary Firestone, Esq.; Ramis, Crew, Corrigan & Bachrach  
Gill Williams, Atlas Landscape Architects  
Randy McCourt, DKS Associates  
James Jerde, Architectural Cost Consultants

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# **Downtown and Riverfront Land Use Framework Plan**

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## Land Use Framework

**T**he Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront Land Use Framework Plan represents a major opportunity to reinvigorate downtown Milwaukie. With aggressive and focused efforts from both the public and private sectors over the coming years, downtown Milwaukie will be revitalized. This Plan outlines the components necessary to make such a vision of Milwaukie a reality. It foremost builds upon existing assets, capitalizes upon significant existing uses, and features the natural environment. It also sets out a realistic agenda and implementation program that the city and private development can follow.

### **What This Framework Does**

The Land Use Framework is a vision of what can occur in the downtown and riverfront area. It has been tailored to meet Milwaukie's social, economic and development goals and policies while responding to market conditions and the City's overall vision for future growth.

This document serves as an ancillary document to the Milwaukie Comprehensive Plan. On its own, this Framework is not a regulatory document. Any part of the Framework that is intended to have a binding effect will have to be adopted as part of, or pursuant to, a code to have regulatory effect. The Land Use Framework suggests changes to the existing Town Center Plan Subarea 1 of the Comprehensive Plan.

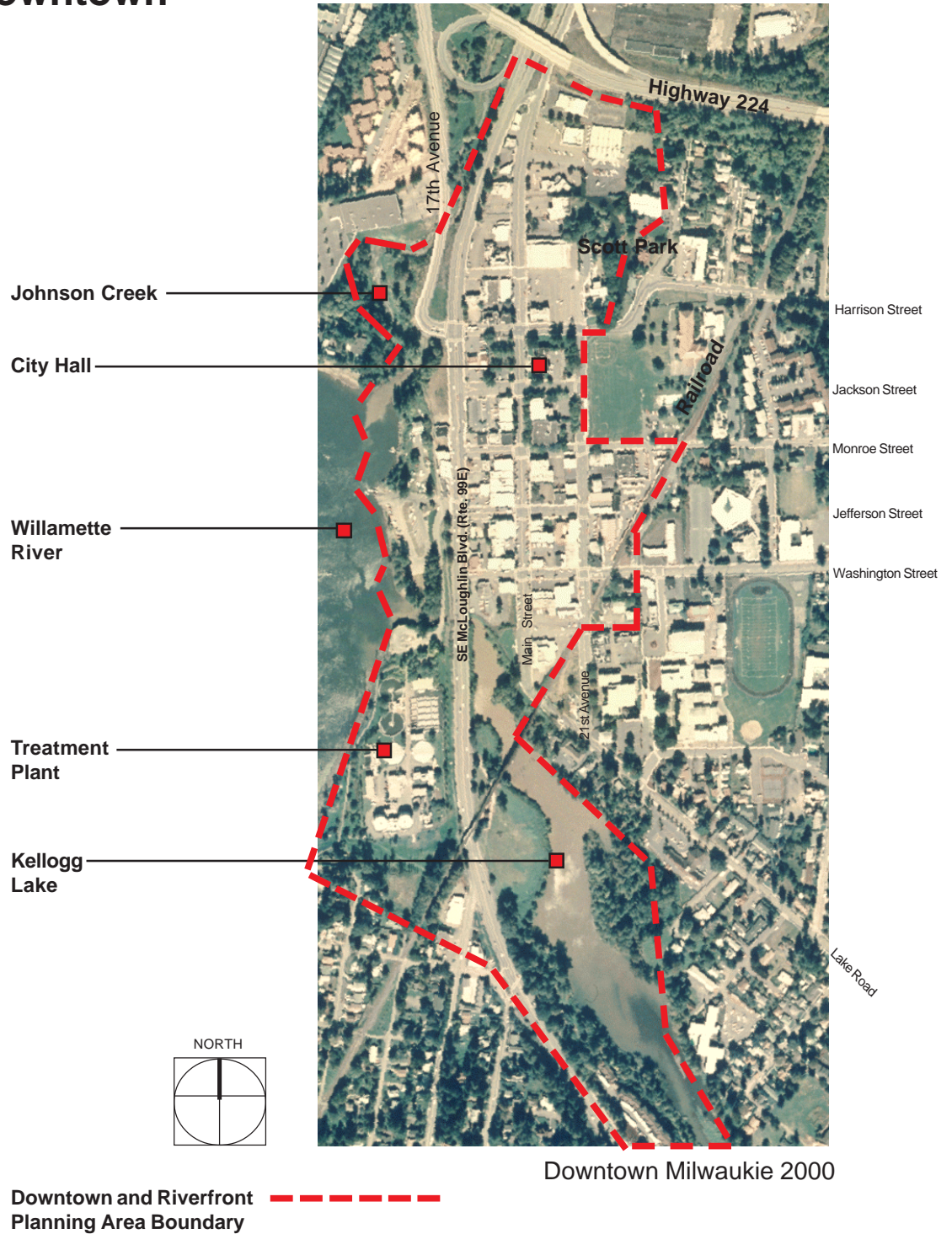
This Framework establishes and guides the development of publicly and privately owned parcels of land, and outlines specific land uses. Nothing in this framework authorizes public use of private property. The Zoning Ordinance provisions regarding permissible uses prevail over any inconsistent provision in this Downtown and Riverfront Land Use Framework.

This Land Use Framework allows existing businesses to remain as long as their owners wish. All privately owned property designated as a public use in this Framework - for example, parks or trails - will continue to be in a "private ownership" zoning category, and will not be rezoned for public use until it is acquired by a public entity.

If an existing business does not conform to the new planning area's allowable uses and development regulations, it will be allowed to continue to operate, as well as to expand and rebuild, in accordance with the Downtown Design Standard Threshold Regulations of the City of Milwaukie's Zoning Ordinance.

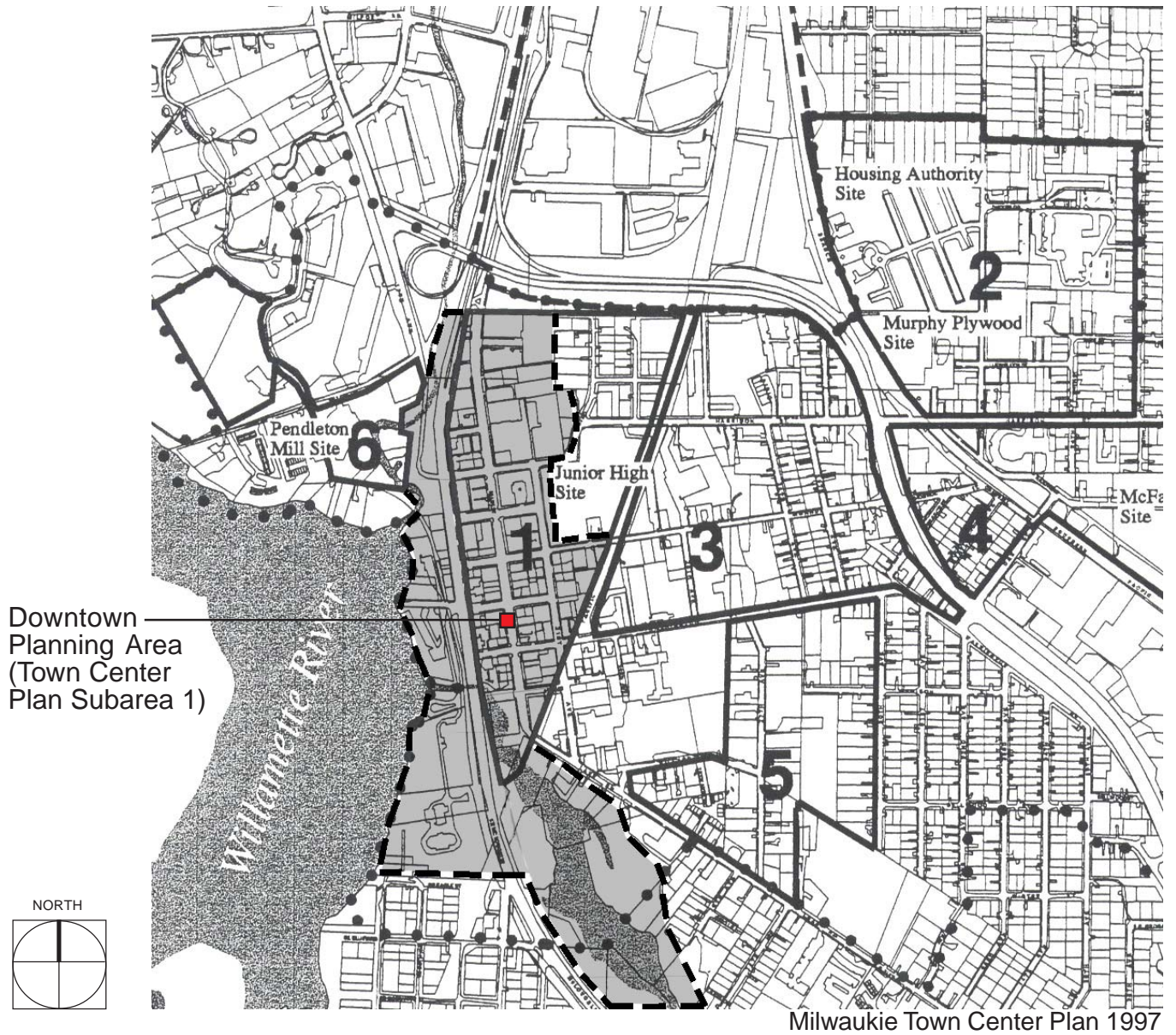
# Land Use Framework

## 1.1 Aerial Photograph of Existing Downtown



# Land Use Framework


## 1.2 Downtown Planning Area Map Subarea 1 of the Town Center Master Plan

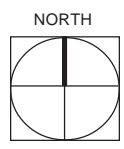


# Land Use Framework

## 1.3 Illustrative Plan

### Land Uses

-  Retail/Mixed Use
-  Housing
-  Office
-  Civic
-  Arts/Entertainment
-  Hotel
-  Parking Structure
-  Recreation and Opens Space





## Land Use Framework

### 1.4 Framework Elements

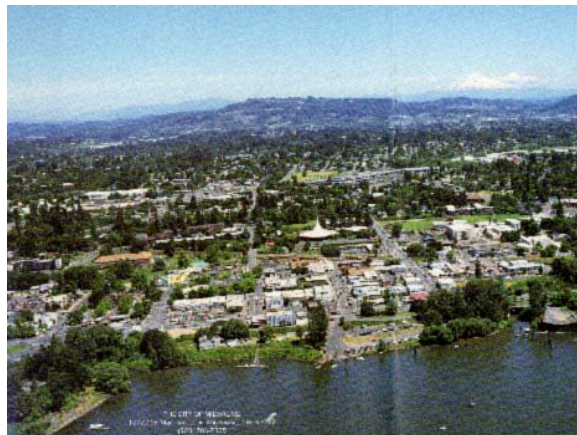
The Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront Land Use Framework recognizes and builds upon the rich character and history of our town. It celebrates the diversity and spirit of the people and places of Milwaukie, and reinforces those special qualities.

City officials, community leaders and area businesses have known for a long time that Milwaukie's historic downtown, nestled at the edge of the Willamette River, can and should be a vital center for the community's economic and social activity. Starting in 1999, the City of Milwaukie began a process to develop a concept for downtown Milwaukie that reflects the vision of the people who live and work there. During a number of community design forums, citizens have tested various aspects of the plan, with local residents ranking their priorities for the downtown area.

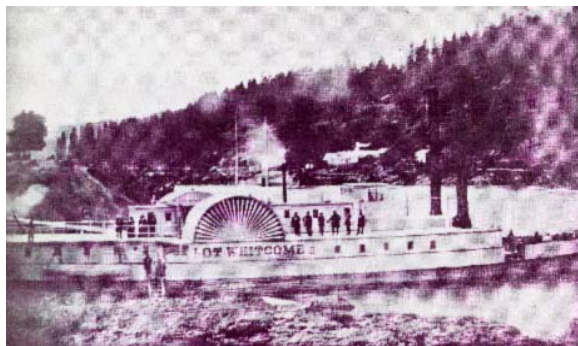
This Land Use Framework represents the leadership of a skilled volunteer Riverfront Board and the input of the more than 2000 community members who have attended meetings, returned surveys, provided focus and ideas, and directed the plan.

#### The Recipe that Works

This Land Use Framework represents a process derived from a recipe of fundamental concepts that has worked successfully in other cities, equal in size to Milwaukie and with similar challenges. In those cities, the public and private sectors worked together to make revitalization happen. They developed a plan, and subsequently residents and government officials did what it took to make their plans work. Their efforts paid off. This Land Use Framework will do the same for Milwaukie.



Downtown view from Willamette River



Lot Whitcomb, 1850



Historic Masonic Lodge

## **Fundamental Concepts**

Milwaukie's unique character is at the heart of the Downtown and Riverfront Framework. The Framework reconnects Milwaukie to the Willamette River, knitting together the seam of McLoughlin Boulevard. It creates the new Riverfront Park as the city's "living room." And it calls for revitalizing historic buildings while designing new structures to harmonize with the town's historic character.

Anchors and attractors are used to build upon existing resources, and to strengthen the Main Street "retail armature." Thus the Framework is a blueprint to make Milwaukie and its downtown a vital, livable and sustainable community.

## **Amenities and Open Spaces**

Milwaukie is fortunate to have a setting that inspires its citizens, that offers history, beauty and vitality. The Willamette River, Johnson Creek, and Kellogg Creek all provide beautiful natural borders to the downtown area. The Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront Framework capitalizes on these natural resources, by restoring the creeks and connecting the river to the historic blocks of downtown. Thus both the town and the natural areas are reinvigorated.

## **Implementation**

This Framework coordinates with Milwaukie's existing planning efforts and regulations. The Milwaukie Comprehensive Plan provides the guiding policies to manage the city's physical elements. Ancillary planning documents may be attached to the Comprehensive Plan. These include the Milwaukie Vision Statement of 1995 and the Town Center Master Plan of 1997. The latter responds to Milwaukie's designation as one of Metro's 2040 Growth Concept Town Centers. The Downtown and Riverfront Framework is a conceptual document. Therefore, various sections may be adopted as part of, or referenced by the existing Milwaukie Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, or Municipal Code to be effective as regulatory document.

The Downtown and Riverfront Framework responds to environmental policies including Metro's Title 3 Requirements and Federal Endangered Species Act.

## **Phasing and Financing Strategy**

The Framework makes this bold statement: that investing in the future of Milwaukie makes sense. Investment offers employment and opportunity for all the citizens of Milwaukie; it enriches the town literally and figuratively. Smart public improvements stimulate substantial private investment. Thus, investing today in a better quality of life for downtown Milwaukie makes sense for the whole town, for years to come.

## Land Use Framework

### 1.5 Our Guiding Principles - A Touchstone

In 1999, the City of Milwaukie began a process to develop its vision of the downtown and riverfront. Throughout this community effort, the Framework was developed in accordance with and responded to the following guiding principles:

#### **Creating a livable community:**

- Provide for residents, workers and visitors alike.
- Provide for people of all ages, cultures, ethnic groups and incomes.
- Provide cultural arts and entertainment facilities.
- Provide significant open spaces and connections to the riverfront.
- Provide for specific “programmatic” requirements, such as parking or visibility from major roadways.

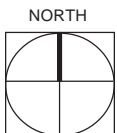
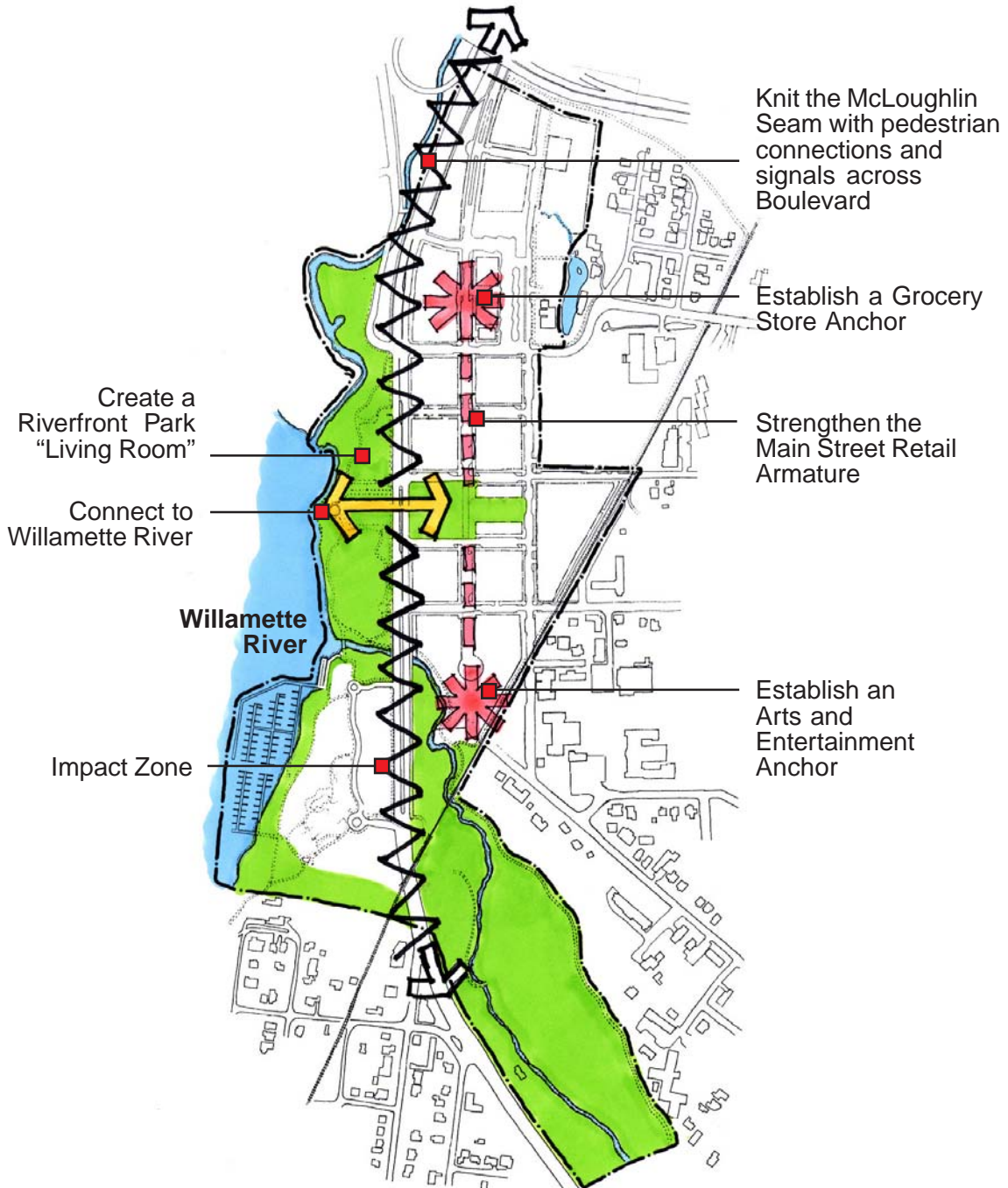
#### **Ensuring economic success:**

- Efficiently maximize current investment in infrastructure.
- Spur further private investment.
- Recognize and respond to the current marketplace.
- Establish a strategy for capturing unrealized market niches.
- Complement, protect and promote the continued growth and vitality of current businesses.



# Land Use Framework

## 1.6 Fundamental Concepts Map



## Land Use Framework

### 1.7 Fundamental Concepts

#### Anchors and Attractors

The keystone to building a successful downtown is to build upon existing resources - the quality stores and offices that we already have - and supplement these with anchors and attractors - places used by hundreds of people on a daily basis. A grocery store, for example, will generate considerable foot traffic, which will in turn provide additional customers for downtown businesses.

The framework includes key elements which will be necessary to achieve these goals. New “anchor” uses are as follows:

- Bus transit center.
- Grocery store across Main Street from the transit center.
- Arts, entertainment and office “campus” of buildings at the southern end of Main Street, including a graphics-oriented higher education facility.

#### The Main Street “Retail Armature”

Reactivating Main Street is a major focus - re-establishing and strengthening a lively storefront retail character with a pedestrian emphasis and 24-hour use.

The framework establishes an environment in which people can shop, work, live and socialize along Main Street. It addresses and repairs the fundamental problems that have drained downtown of its vitality. The Framework suggests adding to or filling in blocks with new uses and in some instances tearing down buildings and starting over again.

In the four blocks between these two anchors, the fabric of ground floor retail establishments will create a lively flow of pedestrian activity. The Main Street retail armature ensures that a healthy retail street includes:

- Retail on both sides of the street.
- Continuous retail facades with no interruptions.
- On-street parking in front of retail.
- Anchor retail at both ends of Main Street.
- Retail on all four corners of intersections.
- A pedestrian loop.
- Safe, signalized pedestrian crossings.
- Pedestrian-friendly amenities - wide sidewalks, landscaping, benches.

This north-south flow of activity will be further enlivened where it intersects with the new Main Street Plaza - in the block between Monroe and Jefferson Streets and leading directly to the Willamette River and the new Riverfront Park.


#### Connecting to the River

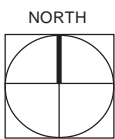
The new Riverfront Park will be the location for special events such as “Festival Daze,” holiday celebrations and community assemblies. At its southern end will be a new hotel, adjacent to the new public marina and rowing facility.

# Land Use Framework

## 1.8 Land Use Framework

### Planning Areas:

-  Commercial
-  Housing
-  Storefront Main Street
-  Arts/Entertainment/Office
-  Public Park
-  Hotel



## Land Use Framework

### 1.9 Key Land Use Features

#### Revitalizing Main Street and downtown:

- Main Street improvements - shops, services, and family wage jobs
- Save Landmarks - to preserve history and heritage
- New Grocery Store - to anchor Main Street
- New Tri-Met Bus Transit Center
- New Arts and Entertainment Campus



Revitalizing Main Street

#### Reconnecting to the River:

- New McLoughlin Bridge - to knit the seam between the downtown and the river
- New Riverfront Park - the City's living room
- New Public Marina and restaurant
- New Riverfront hotel - to replace the water treatment plant



Reconnecting to the River

#### Restoring Natural Areas and Parks:

- Downtown stream - divert a portion of Spring Creek into downtown park
- Restore Spring Creek
- Restore Johnson Creek
- Restore Kellogg Creek



Restoring Natural Areas - Spring Creek

#### Providing Quality Housing:

- To the North, townhomes and apartments engaging new parks, near Spring Creek and trail to Spring Water Corridor
- To the South, townhomes and apartments along landscaped creek and Rail Trail.



Providing Quality Housing

## Land Use Framework

### 1.10 Land Use Descriptions

**D**owntown Milwaukie includes six established and emerging planning areas, each with distinctive physical characteristics and varying uses. While they share a singular overall area - the downtown of Milwaukie - they serve various social, cultural, and economic roles. The goal of the Downtown and Riverfront Plan is to secure a future which binds all of these existing and potential areas into a coherent downtown while enabling each individual area to maintain or develop a distinctive identity.



Bus Transit Center



Storefront Main Street



Apartments - North Housing



# Land Use Framework

## 1.11 Housing North Area



**Character:**  
Multiple-family residences: ownership/condominiums and rental (including townhouses and apartments).

**Approximate Area:** 10 acres  
**Proposed Use:** 25 townhouse units (target)  
225 units apts/condominiums (target)

**Total units:** 250 (target)

# Land Use Framework

## 1.12 Housing South Area



**Character:**  
Multiple-family residence types: rental apartments or condominiums.

**Approximate Area:** 2 acres  
**Proposed Use:** 200 units (target)

# Land Use Framework

## 1.13 Storefront Main Street Area

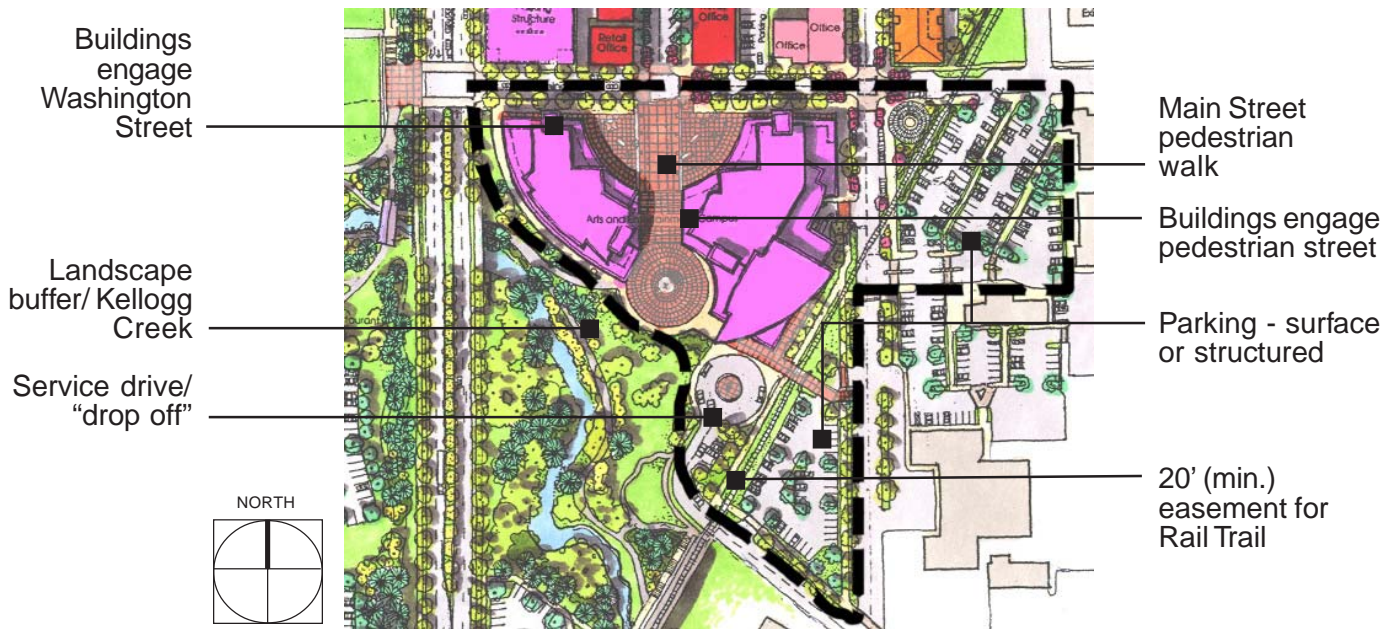


**Character:**  
 One block deep along Main Street, and including parking areas behind buildings. Retail uses at ground floor and second floor, and mixed uses of office and residential above. Maintains pedestrian orientation throughout.

**Approximate Area:** 8.5 acres  
**Proposed Use:**  
 retail: 115,000 SF (target)  
 office: 75,000 SF (target)  
 residential: 150 units (target)  
 theater: 25,000 SF

## Land Use Framework

### 1.14 Arts/Entertainment/Office Area



**Character:**

Envisioned as a campus to anchor the Main Street retail armature. The area will be highly visible from McLoughlin Boulevard, and buildings will address Washington Street. To the south, the campus will be adjacent to the park at Kellogg Creek.

**Approximate Area:**

5 acres

**Proposed Use:**

Retail 50,000 SF (target)  
Office 100,000 SF (target)

# Land Use Framework

## 1.15 Parks and Open Space Areas



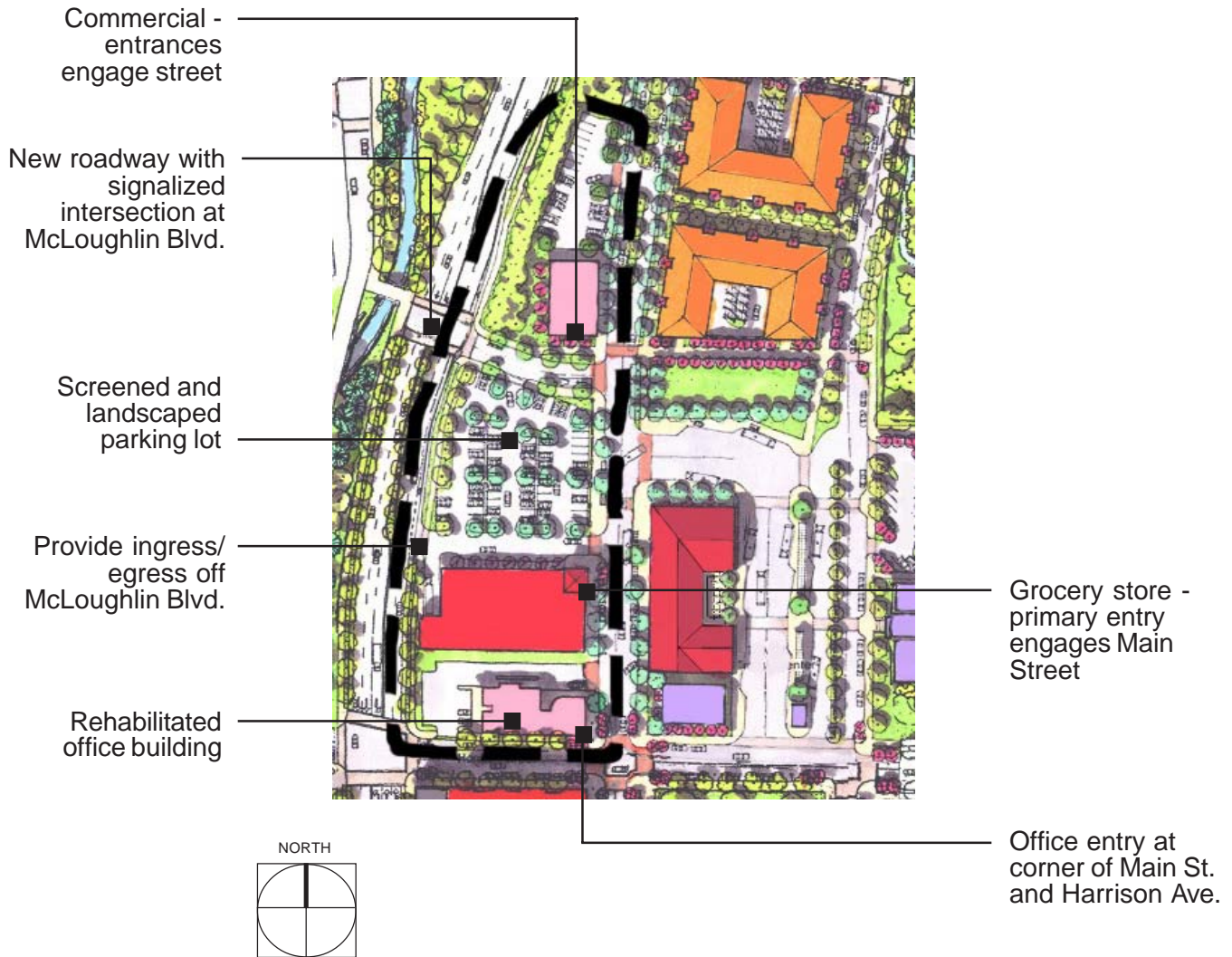
**Note:**  
All development will be consistent with protection of river, wetlands and waterways as required by Willamette Greenway, Title 3, ESA and other applicable requirements. All existing private ownership and use may continue, and no use of private property for public purposes is required.

**Character:**  
Connects to downtown by the new McLoughlin Bridge. Park includes a "festival lawn" for assembly, as well as walkways, seating areas, waterways, and enhanced wetlands.

**Approximate Area:** 25 acres

# Land Use Framework

## 1.16 Commercial Area



**Character:**

An area for commercial development which is auto-accommodating yet maintains a pedestrian-orientation at least at one entrance, and still engages the street right-of-way.

**Approximate Area:**

2.5 acres

**Proposed Use:**

Commercial 18,000 SF (target)  
Office 20,000 SF (target)

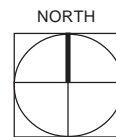
# Land Use Framework

## 1.17 Hotel Area



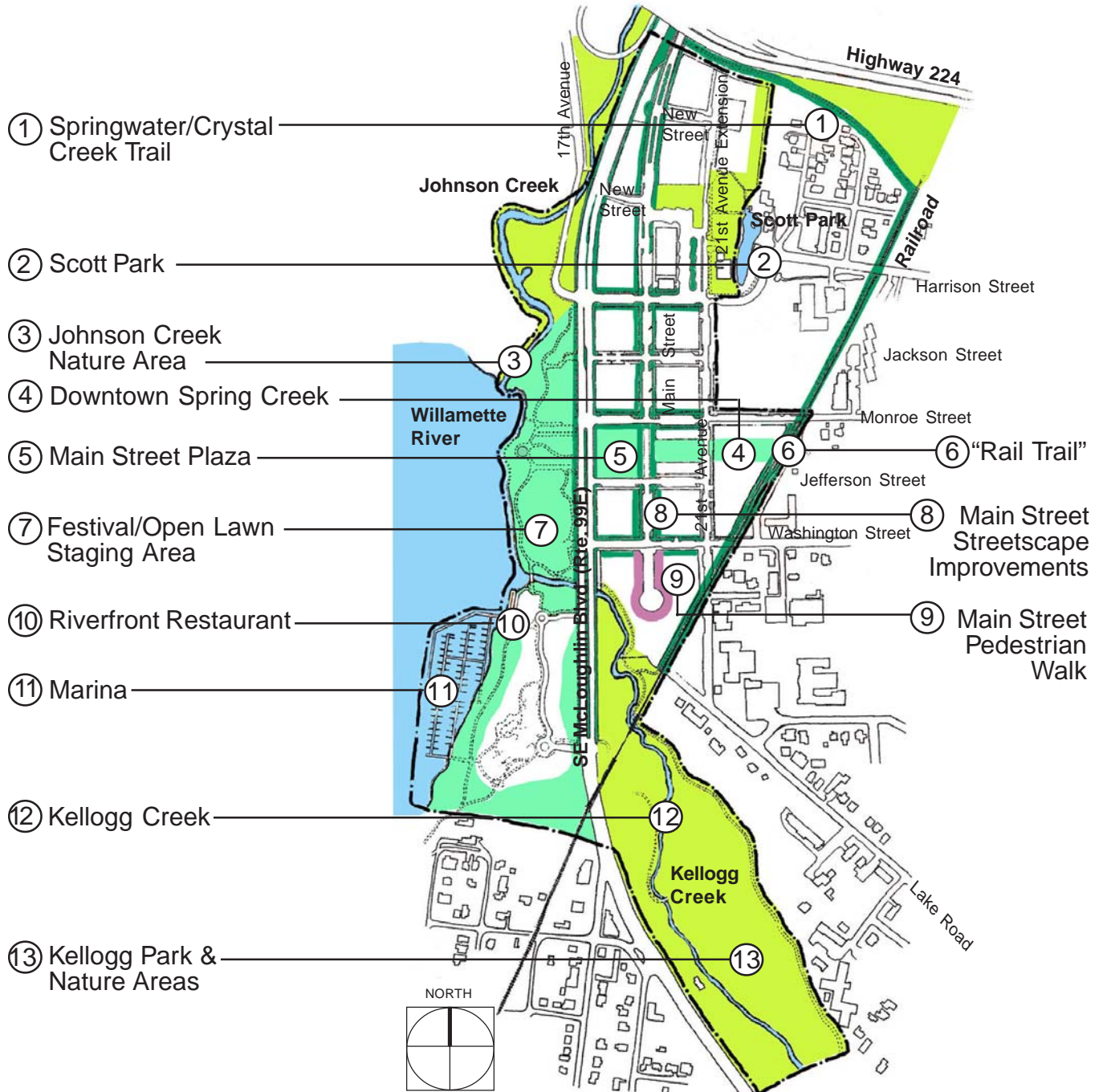
**Character:**  
Area specifically for a hotel establishment; auto-accommodating but well-landscaped and pedestrian-friendly.

**Approximate Area:** 6.5 acres  
**Hotel units:** 200 rooms (target)  
**Restaurant:** 5,000 SF (max.)



# Land Use Framework

## 1.18 Amenities and Open Space Framework Map



**Note:** All existing private ownership and use may continue, and no use of private property for public purposes is required.



## Land Use Framework

### 1.19 Amenities and Open Space Framework

The Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront Land Use Framework Plan includes a system of outdoor open and green spaces weaving around and through the city. There are creeks, restored wetlands, the Willamette River, and a landscaped urban plaza.

Many of the areas are subject to various municipal, state and federal regulations intended to protect environmental and natural resource values; the elements of this framework are intended to be consistent with those regulations.

#### **Spring Creek/Crystal Creek Trail -**

Connects the northern end of Milwaukie's downtown with the Portland metro area's Springwater Corridor.

**Scott Park** - Adjacent to the Ledding Library and the Transit Center Park, as well as to the North Downtown Housing, Scott Park offers lawn and play areas for children and adults. An improved Scott Lake connects through a natural stream to the restored Crystal Creek.

**Johnson Creek Nature Area** - The creek would be restored to its natural state. The creek connects the Springwater/Crystal Creek Trail to the north with the Riverfront Park and downtown.

**Downtown Spring Creek** - A small portion of Spring Creek may be diverted into downtown, streaming from the railroad tracks and new "Rail Trail" to the east, through the new Main Street Plaza, to the Riverfront Park.

**Main Street Plaza** - A paved and landscaped open public gathering space at the center of town, connecting the primary retail street to the Riverfront Park.

**"Rail Trail"** - Along the railroad tracks runs a trail that, when combined with the Riverfront Park pathways, completes a loop around downtown. The Rail Trail also links the Kellogg Creek area in southern Milwaukie to the Springwater/Crystal Creek Trail to the north, and gives a green edge to the east side of downtown.

**Festival/Open Lawn Staging Area** - A part of the Riverfront Park is landscaped to accommodate public festivals and assembly.

**Main Street/Streetscape Improvement** - From the Transit Center south to Washington Street, Main Street benefits from special sidewalk treatments, crosswalks, curb extensions, pedestrian-scaled lighting, street furniture, street trees and planting beds.

**Main Street Walk** - A pedestrian street with special paving, crosswalks, curb extensions, lighting and street furniture, Main Street Walk terminates in a circle at the arts/office/entertainment campus in the south side of downtown.

**Riverfront Restaurant** - In Riverfront Park, a new restaurant overlooks the Willamette River and new marina.

**Marina** - A new public marina and rowing facility is located near the proposed restaurant and hotel buildings which replace the wastewater treatment plant. The marina would accommodate a riverboat or similar vessel.

**Kellogg Creek/Kellogg Park and Nature Areas** - The creek and wetlands are to be restored to a salmon-friendly state.

# Implementation

## 2.1 Priority Projects

This diagram sets forth priority projects for the Land Use Framework Plan. The first priority projects will establish a climate of positive change and growth, while larger or more costly ones would occur later.

### Priority Projects

- 1a: Riverfront Park Phase 1
- 1b: Bus Transit Center and transit-oriented development
- 2a: Grocery store and parking
- 2b: Arts/entertainment/office complex
- 3: McLoughlin Boulevard improvements, McLoughlin Bridge and parkway connection from Main Street to Riverfront Park
- 4: Main Street streetscape improvements
- \*: Residential, commercial and hotel and open space development may occur at any time throughout downtown's revitalization

