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*Engaging people to create and sustain great communities.*

September 10, 2015

**To:** Mayor Hatcher, Members of the North Plains City Council; Planning Commissioners

**From:** Kirstin Greene, AICP, Managing Principal

**Re:** Envision North Plains Vision to Implementation Work Session Sept 14 – Materials

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We look forward to meeting with you Monday evening. As background, we are enclosing the following materials:

1. Proposed Agenda for our Meeting
2. Final Draft Vision Statement
3. Updated Working Draft Implementation Strategy
4. Proposed Draft Implementation Schedule
5. Planning Issues Evaluation by Laurence Qamar

It has been a distinct pleasure and honor to work with your Envision Steering Committee members this year on this draft vision statement. As part of the vision development process, we had a valuable “Community Conversation” with Chair King and members of the Planning Commission. Thank you for that opportunity. We also appreciate Mayor Hatcher’s commitment to the Envision North Plains process and his involvement at Committee meetings and the two Public Workshops.

At our meeting Monday, we will ask for your comments on the final draft vision and implementation strategy. Members of the Envision North Plains Steering Committee have been invited to attend and listen to our discussion. With your guidance, we will have a final meeting with that Committee to wrap up this phase of the process in October.

Hearing the real and urgent concerns about residential design standards, with City Manager Boyles permission, I engaged a leading architect and urban designer in our region, Laurence Qamar to tour North Plains with us and to offer his observations and suggestions for next steps. His memo also is attached for your consideration. As we will review on Monday, his recommendations dovetail with some of our recommended next steps as we move from Vision to Implementation!

Best wishes for a great weekend. We look forward to seeing you Monday.



**Joint Planning Commission and City Council Work Session**  
**September 14, 2015, 7 p.m.**  
**Jessie May Community Hall**

Time	Subject	Lead	Desired Outcome
7 pm	Welcome, Introductions, Overview	Blake Boyles All	Welcome and introductions
7:10	North Plains Vision and Goals	Kirstin Greene	Feedback on final draft vision and goals
7:45	Draft Implementation Strategy	Kirstin	Feedback, priorities
8:15	2015 – 2016 Implementation Schedule	Kirstin	Review and discuss
8:30	Adjourn	Blake	



**Final Draft Vision Statement  
August 3, 2015**

**North Plains in 2050**

In the year 2050, residents of North Plains enjoy their safe and welcoming community as a livable place for people of all ages. North Plains has maintained its small town character while accommodating current and future residents. Citizen participation is strong and community members can see the results of their involvement. Community gathering places and events form the heart of North Plains.

*Community*

Our events are inclusive and connect neighbors frequently. Residents and visitors enjoy a rich variety of social and cultural activities to celebrate the city, its history and its people. North Plains residents are active and engaged in civic events and decision-making processes.

*Neighborhoods*

Historic structures are maintained and rehabilitated to accommodate new homes and businesses. There is an attractive range of housing for all ages and income levels. Housing is attractive, cohesive and builds upon historic North Plains patterns. Land uses and housing types transition well from one to another.

*Connectivity*

North Plains a well planned and connected city where residents enjoy pedestrian and bicycle paths between neighborhoods and to downtown. Residents and visitors walk to and around North Plains' downtown. Walking is safe; bicyclists understand designated routes and share the road safely. North Plains is connected to Pumpkin Ridge Golf Course and other area amenities.

*Economic Opportunity*

Downtown North Plains retains its old town atmosphere and has developed into a vibrant, walkable, attractive place to shop, dine and gather. Employment areas provide land for jobs; home-based businesses offer employment opportunities for all ages. Proximity to US 26 provides easy access to well paying jobs in the region. North Plains is recognized as a gateway to the Oregon Coast.

*Heritage and Natural Resources*

North Plains' agricultural heritage is visible and accessible. City policies preserve natural assets and areas.

*Public Services*

North Plains families and visitors enjoy the City's parks, trails, new community center and recreational opportunities. The library continues its vital role as a place of learning. Residents value well funded police, fire and emergency response services. Proficient government agencies maintain existing city assets and coordinate future development. Transportation routes for freight, automobiles, bicycles and pedestrians are well-marked and communicated. Activities such as walking, bicycling and access to parks and recreation activities are easily accessible.



# Vision Implementation Strategy

## Revised Discussion Draft September 10, 2015

### North Plains in 2050 Vision Statement

In the year 2050, residents of North Plains enjoy their safe and welcoming community as a livable place for people of all ages. North Plains has maintained its small town character while accommodating current and future residents. The Library, Senior Center, fairs and events form the heart of our community. Other assets, community gathering places, and public services are supported and available. *Strategies to implement this vision follow.*

Goals	2015	City	Other	2016	City	Other	2017
Community	Continue support for North Plains fairs and events	○	●				Final Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Update  ● Update TSP (Goal 12) for walking, biking, autos, freight***
	Comprehensive Plan/ Code review	●		Draft key sections, goals			
Public safety	Continue support for police, fire and emergency services	●					
Neighborhoods	Convene a Vision to Implementation community workshop to evaluate and discuss residential and commercial design	●*			●		
	Pursue Technical Assistance funding for Housing Needs Analysis	●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Update Buildable Land Inventory**</li> <li>● Update Housing Needs Analysis (Goal 10)**</li> </ul>	●		
Connectivity/Health		●		Pursue funding for Transportation System Plan (TSP) update	●		
Economic Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conduct market assessment</li> <li>● Conduct interviews with businesses and other key stakeholders</li> </ul>	●	○ Chamber URA	Update Economic Opportunities Analysis (Goal 9)**	●	○ Chamber, EDD, Washington County, GPI, Business Oregon	
	Pursue Technical Assistance funding for Economic Opportunities Analysis						
Public Services	TBD			Update Public Facilities and Services (Goal 11)			
Natural Resources	Discuss historic amenities, provisions in Comp Plan			Update Historic and Natural Resources (Goal 5)	●		

● = Lead; ○ = Support; \*TGM Education and Outreach Grant; \*\*DLCD Technical Assistance Grant; \*\*\*TGM Program Grant



# Vision Implementation Strategy

## Draft Schedule September 10, 2015

### Timeline

Tasks	2015				2016												
	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Planning Commission / City Council Work Session	●																
Comprehensive Plan / Zoning and Development Code Review																	
TGM and DLCD Grant Applications																	
Market Analysis for Vanderzanden Property																	
Economic Development Interviews and Objectives																	
Housing Design Options																	
Vision Steering Committee Meeting		●															
Residential and Commercial Street Workshop(s)*		●		●													
Economic Opportunities Analysis Coordination**																	
Housing Needs Analysis Coordination**																	
TGM Program Services Grant Application																	
Historic and Natural Resources Analysis																	
*TGM Outreach and Education grant funding																	
**DLCD Technical Assistance grant funding																	
● Meeting/Workshop																	



## QAMAR AND ASSOCIATES

ARCHITECTURE AND TOWN PLANNING CORP.

DATE: August 24, 2015

TO: Kirstin Greene, Cogan Owens Greene, AICP

FROM: Laurence Qamar, AIA, CNU-A

RE: Initial impressions from August 12 tour of North Plains, OR

Kirstin Greene, Blake Boyles and I toured the City of North Plains to evaluate a variety of current citywide planning issues. This memo is a summary of my initial impression of the city and some brief recommendations for consideration in the context of the vision to comp plan update process.

Issues considered include:

1. Commercial Street town center
2. Newer commercial gateway from Highway 26
3. New residential housing standards
4. Historic residential neighborhoods
5. Edge conditions surrounding town

- 1. Commercial Street** - The town's main street is the historic and ongoing heart of North Plains and as such deserves special consideration as a place to revitalize the economic and cultural heart of the town. North Plains has actual industry in its center, which many small towns strive to attract. Maintaining old and encouraging new business is the lifeblood of a town. A main street revitalization strategy could address issues such as streetscape updates, storefront revitalization, and renovation of some simple industrial buildings into new retail shops and active workshops.

The core of the retail on Commercial Street remains somewhat isolated from the more heavily trafficked Glencoe Road, so some consideration could be given to growing new mixed-use retail from the heart of Commercial Street out toward the Glencoe intersection. Good signage into Commercial Street at the Glencoe intersection would be a start. Eventually consideration should be given to new mixed-use buildings on the corners of Commercial and Glencoe as a way to identify it as the town's new "Main and Main" and a symbol of a gateway into Commercial Street.

New building design standards for mixed-use retail infill could organically blend the old with the new. There are excellent examples of one and two-story mixed use buildings right on Commercial Street, not to mention in nearby towns. Retaining that small-town character of the main street buildings would help blend the new with the old.

- 2. Commercial gateway on Glencoe from Highway 26** - At some point in recent decades a new commercial zone was added along Glencoe Road likely in recognition of the traffic counts coming from Highway 26. We heard plans for new larger format commercial to be



## QAMAR AND ASSOCIATES

ARCHITECTURE AND TOWN PLANNING CORP.

built along Glencoe, such as a grocery store. Currently the character of this district is more “auto oriented commercial strip” than “pedestrian oriented main street” as on Commercial Street. Under current transportation and land use regulations, Glencoe is destined to continue growing into an auto-oriented strip rather than a walkable and attractive main street. The current road section has two travel lanes, a center turn lane and bike lanes, but no on-street parking. Without on-street parking, the retail developers should not be expected to push their building fronts up to the sidewalk, which is one component of a walkable main street. Instead, they will be understandably inclined to locate parking lots in front. There are a couple of strategies for providing much needed, easily accessible customer parking without resorting to a commercial strip format.

- 3. New residential housing standards (R2.5)** - There is currently much concern in the North Plains community with the character and quality in the past year or two of houses in R2.5 zone, which allow minimum 2,500 sq. ft. lots. Developers have been mass producing these subdivisions in a standardized pattern consisting of 25’ wide x 100 deep lots with ~18’ wide single family detached houses and code minimum separations of about 7’ between homes. The houses are setback ~20’-25’ from the street right-of-way (ROW) thus allowing cars to park in driveways in the setbacks in front of one or two car garage doors. Sidewalks are typically placed curb tight with driveways cutting through the walking path in front of each house. The overall effect is monotonously repetitive, and not conducive to walking.

It might seem that the way to resolve these issues would be to simply increase the minimum lot sizes to something like 4,000 sq. However, without good design standards and models of successful small lot houses to inspire current builders, it’s likely that making houses larger will not improve the character of new residential neighborhoods. Pending further discussion, we can say that the continuous row of narrowly spaced garage doors and cars parked in front of these houses makes them unappealing and uninviting. Improving the “curb appeal” is not dependent on new colors and materials alone. Making a lively house front depends primarily on properly designed front porches, stoops, windows or other living spaces that offer opportunities for the residents to engage with their neighbors walking by.

- 4. Historic residential neighborhoods** - The old residential neighborhoods surrounding the core of town contain modest, and attractive homes from a range of eras. We notice that the streets are being upgraded in places with new sidewalks and storm drainage. Historically, deep rural-style ditches were used to collect storm water, and while they do so in a relatively low cost and “green” manner with limited concrete structure, they also take up a lot of space on the street edges that otherwise would provide sidewalks. If there is little traffic on a small town street, it is not always necessary to install a new sidewalk if people can stroll on the sides of the street and drivers are slow-moving and respectful. On certain streets; however, sidewalks are essential for pedestrian safety and convenience. We recommend an assessment of design standards, including a provision that all new sidewalks be separated from the edge of the street curb by at least 3 feet and preferably 5-6 feet in order to buffer



## QAMAR AND ASSOCIATES

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pedestrians from the moving traffic, allow space for driveway ramps out of the walking path, and accommodate street trees between the sidewalk and the street.

- 5. Edge conditions surrounding town** - We drove around most of the edges of the existing town, and looked out to open farm fields or wooded areas that are currently considered for future urban expansion. We are struck by the beauty of the open farm fields on one side of the street with existing houses on the other side. The edges of town are clear and distinct. There are ways to recreate this “public town edge” in the design of new neighborhood expansions, rather than the typical planning practice of backing-up houses to the UGB, and privatizing that farm field view for only a limited number of homeowners. The ability to “design” the edges of a town is a very unique opportunity, and one that North Plains should consider with great care.

We would be pleased to explore these ideas and more with the City, and help North Plains grow in a manner that is appealing to existing and future members of the community.

Sincerely,

Laurence Qamar, AIA, CNU-A

# North Plains Vision to Comprehensive Plan Update Planning Commission + City Council Briefing \*Preview\*



For September 14, 2015

# Process



- Logo identifier
- Project website
- Facebook
- Online surveys (2)
- Email list
- Workshops (April & June)

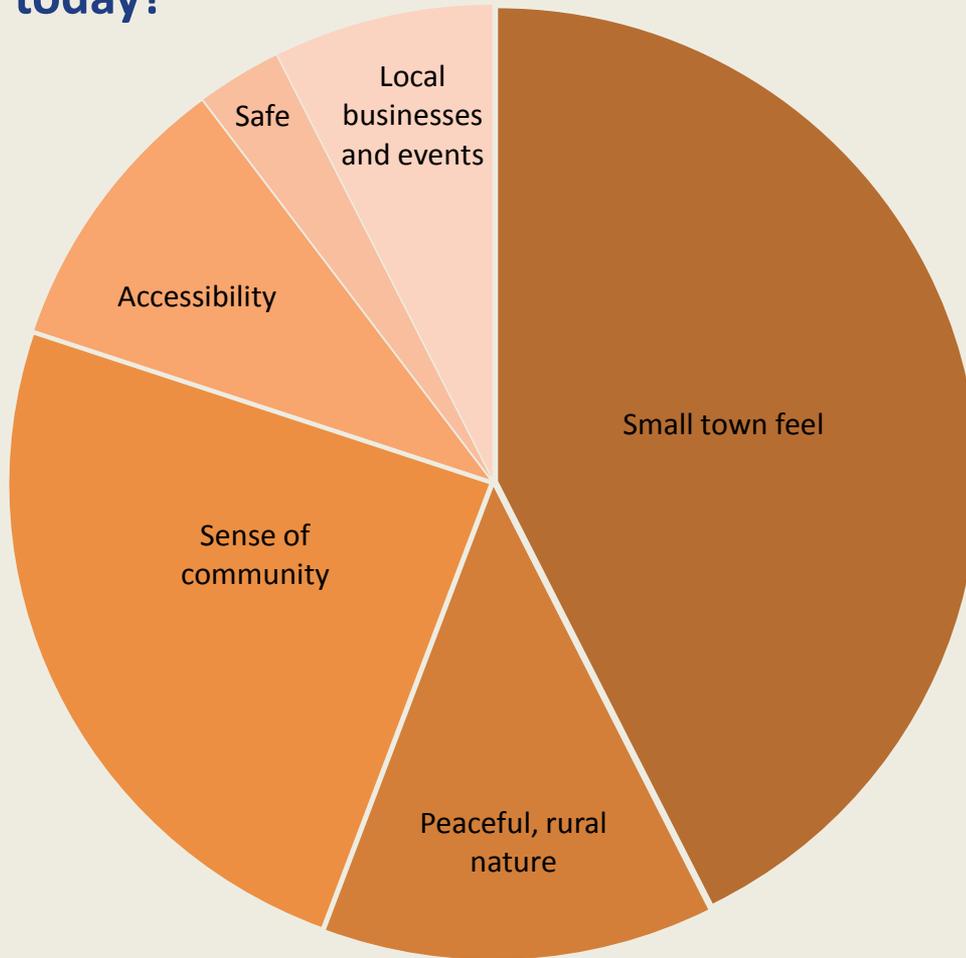
# Process



- Community conversations (3)
- Media notifications
- Media contacts
- Meeting flyers
- Electronic mailing list
- Tabling at community events & fairs

## Survey #1:

As we think about the future, what do you value most about North Plains today?



*“The small town feel, open space and community involvement”*

*“Keeping all the core needs within walking distance”*

*“Close to major cities”*

*“Friendly neighbors”*

# Community Conversations: describe a positive memory or experience you associate with North Plains

## Community Events

Garlic Festival

Fourth of July

Movie nights at Jessie Mays

BBQ Competition

## Places

Opening of the Library

Visiting the pumpkin patch

Attending church

Kids playing in the park

## People

Family

Neighbors

Church groups

Active school groups

*“Events like the Garlic Festival”*

*“Working with the community to raise funds, design and build a library”*

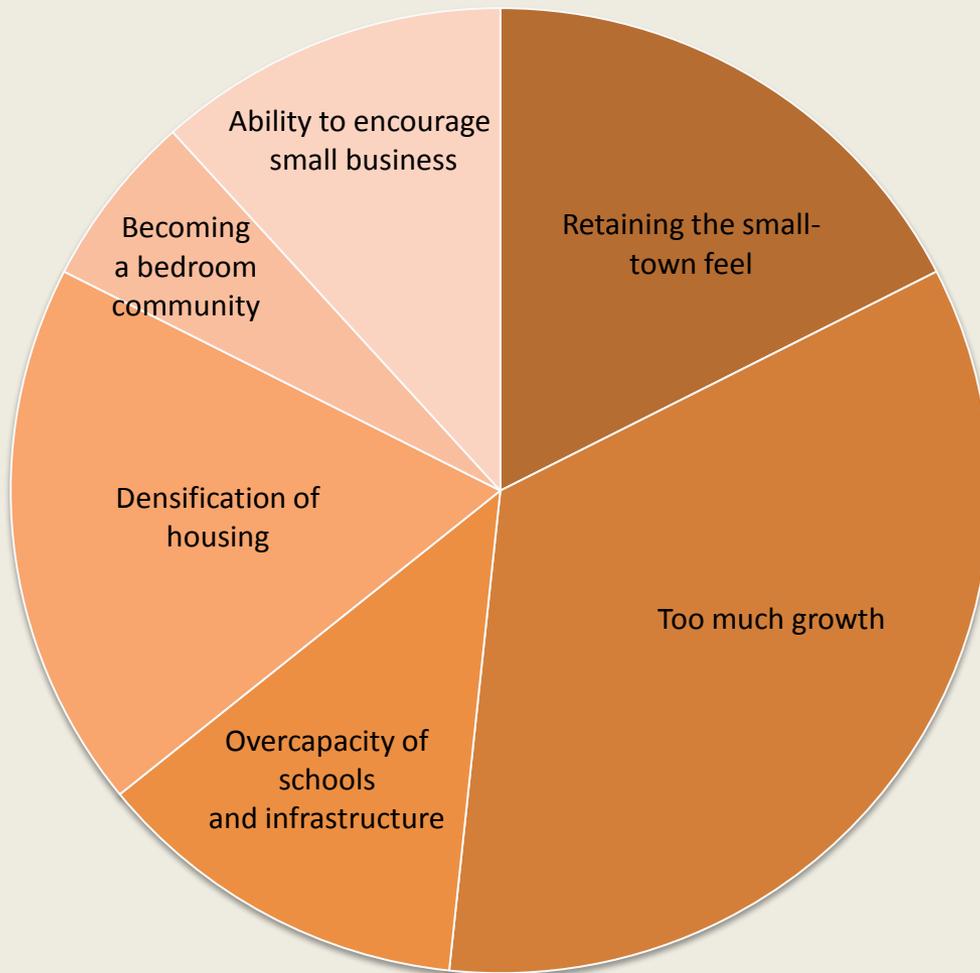
*“Taking walks around town with my family”*

# Survey #1: What would make North Plains a better place?

- Streetscape improvements
- Grocery store
- More restaurants and shops
- Improved park facilities and trails
- Upgraded school facilities
- Expansion of the library
- Well planned housing
- Preserving open space



# Survey #1: What concerns do you have about North Plains?



*“Growing too large and losing a sense of community”*

*“Developing disconnected subdivisions that don’t add value to the community”*

*“I know it will grow and expand, but I’m worried that it isn’t attracting worthwhile businesses”*

# Findings & Core Values

Sample from Vision Steering Committee Kickoff



# Workshop #1: Which of the following would enhance North Plains?



# Current Draft Vision Statement

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# Goal

# Community



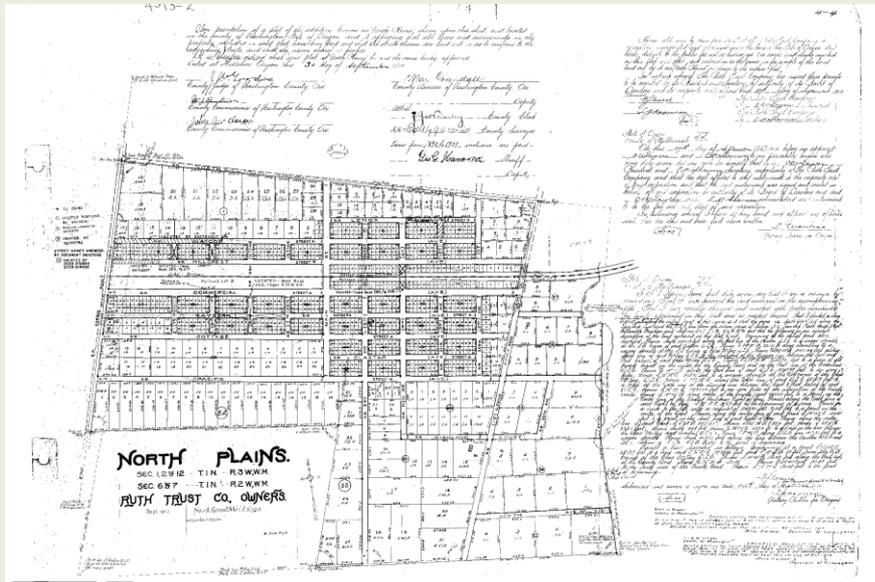
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# Heritage & Natural Resources



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# Immediate Next Steps

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## Discussion of Vision and Priorities

THANK YOU!

