

Downtown Sherwood Streetscape Master Plan

Prepared for

City of Sherwood
Engineering Department

Prepared by

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T. Keyes

Overview | Master Plan Philosophy

Streets and roads mold a community's character. They enliven daily life or deaden it. They foster human contact or frustrate it. They broaden people's choices or limit them to a narrow range of experiences.

Phillip Langdon,
A Better Place to Live, Reshaping the American Suburb

Something Different

How do we rebuild a successful downtown? Do we start with the streets and infrastructure or the bricks and mortar of buildings? Do we spend time planning our ideal downtown, hoping others will build it, or do we skip the time-consuming planning phase and jump right into construction?

These are questions faced by hundreds of fading towns and neighborhoods throughout America. Questions that are the subject of numerous books and seminars, but questions that so far have evaded a simple answer.



Anna Tennent



Greater State Street Business Association

The most successful downtowns and neighborhood centers seem to evolve, as if an invisible hand is guiding them toward success. Many Portland neighborhoods, such as Northwest 23rd and the Hawthorn district, are successful in spite of a measure of benign neglect from the city. Europe exhibits thousands of bustling downtowns that are successful due to uncoordinated events over the past 500 years.

Sherwood has not been so lucky. For years, it has languished, with small businesses coming and going, although mostly going. The fastest growing city in one of the fastest growing states has a downtown that somehow has not benefited from the massive growth around it. How can this be? Can this pattern change?

This plan is an effort to kick-start the process of creating a successful downtown Sherwood. It is an effort to create something different—a downtown that stands out as unique in a sea of suburban monotony.

How is the plan different? It turns the streets over to pedestrians and makes cars visitors in a pedestrian environment. The plan uses lessons learned from European towns where people, bikes, cars, buses and trucks peacefully coexist within the downtown street realm. It is a concept that is so alien to American culture that the European term for it, *woonerf*, meaning *street for living*, is unknown to most Americans.



T. Keyes

Because this concept is so foreign to America, especially in the suburbs, the Streetscape Master Plan uses multiple techniques to slow cars so they do not destroy the pedestrian environment. Gateway entrances, narrow travel lanes, curbless streets, unusual pavement materials and tight corners with large trees present subtle obstacles in the automobiles' normal haven—the street.

Why go through all this trouble when many people just want the potholes filled? Because, as most business professors will tell you, making something different, i.e., creating your own niche, is the key to success for a small enterprise. Sherwood is a small enterprise and this type of downtown is a niche that few cities have exploited.

Allan B. Jacobs, in his book *Great Streets*, sums up this approach most eloquently:

There is magic to great streets. We are attracted to the best of them not because we have to go there but because we want to be there.

This sums up what we are trying to create in this plan. We are trying to create great streets that will attract people to a downtown that is a hidden gem in the suburban sprawl surrounding it.

Terry Keyes, P.E.
Sherwood City Engineer

Overview | Master Plan Process



A street becomes alive and vibrant when shops can display their goods outside their storefronts.

The Downtown Sherwood Streetscape Master Plan was developed over a six-month period in 2003. The design consultant team was comprised of landscape architects, civil engineers and lighting designers. The consultant team also relied on the services of a railway engineer. The design team worked through concepts and technical issues with the Sherwood Engineering Department staff. Throughout the design process, a number of goals were established that guided the development of the Streetscape Master Plan.

The three primary goals were:

- To provide a pedestrian-friendly environment;
- To create a design that is unique to Sherwood; and
- To create vibrant streets.

As design iterations were developed, each of the goals was tested against the design options. The conceptual design was presented for two days at the Robin Hood Festival and before the Friends of Old Town, the Sherwood Urban Renewal Policy Advisory Committee (SURPAC), the Sherwood Planning Commission and the Sherwood City Council. The presentations were well received, and comments were incorporated into the plans. The City and the design team also met with ODOT Rail Division and Portland Western Railroad to discuss the railroad crossings and future use of the railway.



A generous sidewalk width can accommodate outdoor seating and enliven the street with activity.



Concept boards presented to public at Robin Hood festival

The Downtown Sherwood Streetscape Master Plan is fresh in its approach and vision. It rethinks the typical cross section of sidewalk and street to create a single, unified space from building to building. This space becomes a multi-modal plaza

that accommodates the auto but celebrates the pedestrian. The pedestrian space is enlarged and enriched with amenities to create a vibrant and rich outdoor experience.

Overview | Study Area & Existing Land Use



Aerial view of study area



Existing land use

Study Area

The Master Plan addresses approximately 14 blocks north of the Portland Western Railroad and includes the future mixed-use cannery development south of the railway. 3rd Street bounds the study area to the north, Ash Street to the East, Willamette Street to the south and Park Street to the west. For simplicity, the Master Plan document

refers to project cardinal directions aligning with the downtown's diagonal street grid. True north is approximately 22 degrees from project north.

Existing Land Use

Land use within the study area is a mix of residential, industrial, office and commercial.

The office and commercial area is located between 1st and Railroad Streets and along Pine Street. Residences extend outward from the commercial core and the industrial area includes the vacant cannery site and businesses along Oregon Street. The public parks are Veterans Park inside the study area and Stella Olsen Park northwest of the study area.

Legend

- Residential
- Commercial/service
- School
- Government
- Industrial
- City park
- City-owned property

Overview | Sherwood History

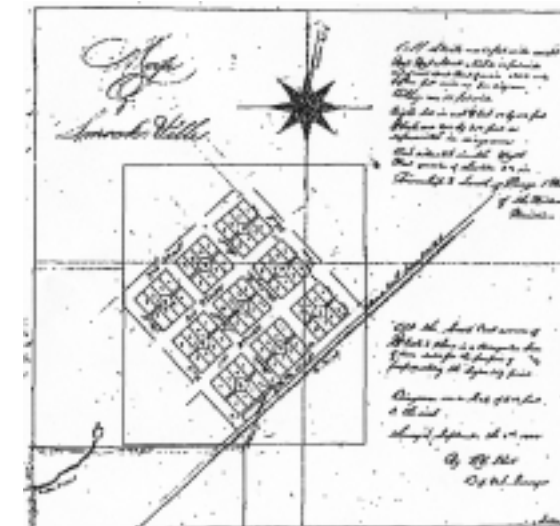


Smock House



Old Sherwood Hotel, circa 1920

Washington County Historical Society



Historic plat map of Smockville (Sherwood)

History

The City of Sherwood was established by a donation land claim by A.Z. Hall in 1853. The town's beginnings were primarily agricultural with the establishment of a small saw mill and grist mill. J.C. Smock purchased the site of what was then known as Smockville from his stepfather in 1868. The Smock house, the oldest structure in Sherwood, was built in 1868 and moved in 1889 to its current location on 1st Street between Main and Washington Streets.

Like many small towns in the west, it was the railway that was a major catalyst for development in Sherwood. With the construction

of the railroad through town in the 1880's, the town suddenly grew to include boarding houses, general stores and warehouses. In 1885, J.C. Smock platted out the first nine blocks of Sherwood which form the core of the study area. In addition to the railroad, the construction of a brick manufacturing plant at the existing cannery site operated between 1890 and 1893 and had a significant effect on the growth of the town. The town experienced continued growth through the early 1900's and was temporarily setback by several large fires within the downtown core. The Graves Cannery was built in 1918 on the location of the old brickyard and processed a variety of fruit until it closed in 1971.



Sherwood streetscape, circa 1880

Washington County Historical Society

Overview | Proposed Downtown Development



Aerial view of cannery and future civic building site

Proposed Downtown Development

As of mid-2003, proposed development within the project area includes a mixed-use development on the site of the old cannery, a new civic building, a field house, and the relocation of the Smock house.

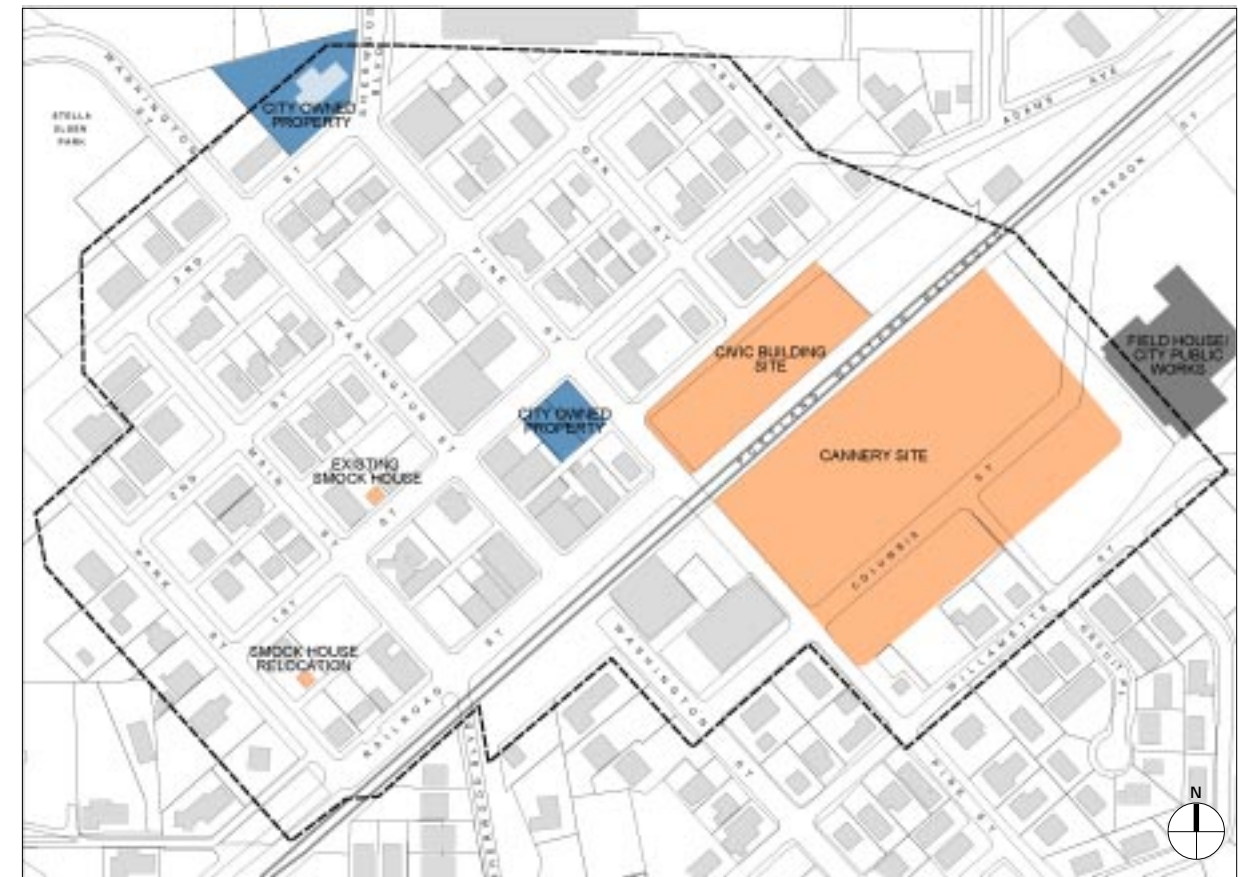
The cannery development will comprise most of the historic cannery site and may include an anchor grocery store, housing, office, retail and parking. The site for the new civic building is on Pine Street north of the railway. The City is currently working with a design team to prepare preliminary plans for the new civic building which will include a parking lot.

Construction is underway for the new field house that will house a regulation size soccer field and offices for the Sherwood Department of Public Works.

The historic Smock house is in the process of being moved one block west adjacent to the Morback house within Veterans Park. Plans are underway to use the Morback house as an historical resource center and museum. A master plan for Veterans Park will be completed as a future project, most likely including removal of the alley parking lot and expansion of the grass area as a civic green.



City-owned schoolhouse parcel at North Sherwood Boulevard and 3rd Street



Proposed development

The remaining significant properties that the City owns for future development include the old schoolhouse parcel at the north-west corner of North Sherwood Boulevard and 3rd Street and the quarter block at the corner of 1st and Pine Streets where the Robin Hood Theater once stood.

Downtown Transportation System Plan | Vehicular Access



Pedestrian unfriendly intersection at Pine and 3rd Streets

Successful downtowns require convenient and logical access by many modes of transportation. To attain this goal, the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan is closely coordinated with the new Sherwood Transportation System Plan (TSP), currently under development. Street realignments, pedestrian/bike path connections and changes in mass transit routing proposed by the Streetscape Master Plan were tested and incorporated into the TSP.

Vehicular Access

Through some quirk of circumstance, and unlike most small towns, a major highway does not sever downtown Sherwood. Instead, the two major regional highways, 99W and Tualatin-Sherwood Road, are

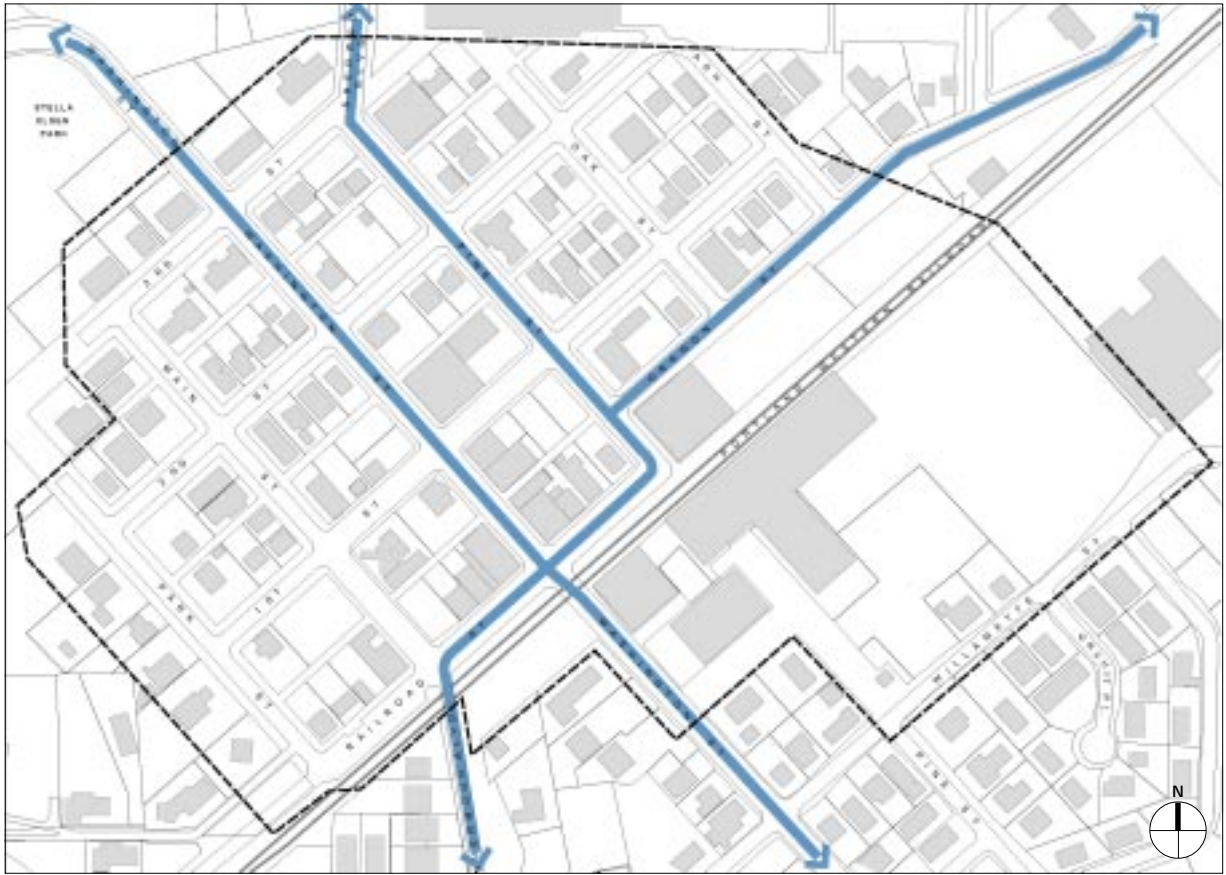
located half a mile from downtown. In fact, these two roads, in conjunction with Oregon Street, Murdock Road and Sunset Blvd, form a natural bypass around downtown Sherwood. This means that the streets in downtown Sherwood do not need to be designed to carry large volumes of pass-through car or truck traffic. This fact forms a key foundation for many aspects of the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan.

Currently, the majority of traffic enters downtown on N Sherwood Blvd. Secondary collectors leading into downtown include Oregon Street, S Sherwood Blvd, Washington Street from Meinecke Road, and Washington Street from Washington Hill. Once traffic is downtown, Pine and Railroad Streets serve as the primary connectors between the various entry streets. A number of problems exist with this current traffic pattern including:

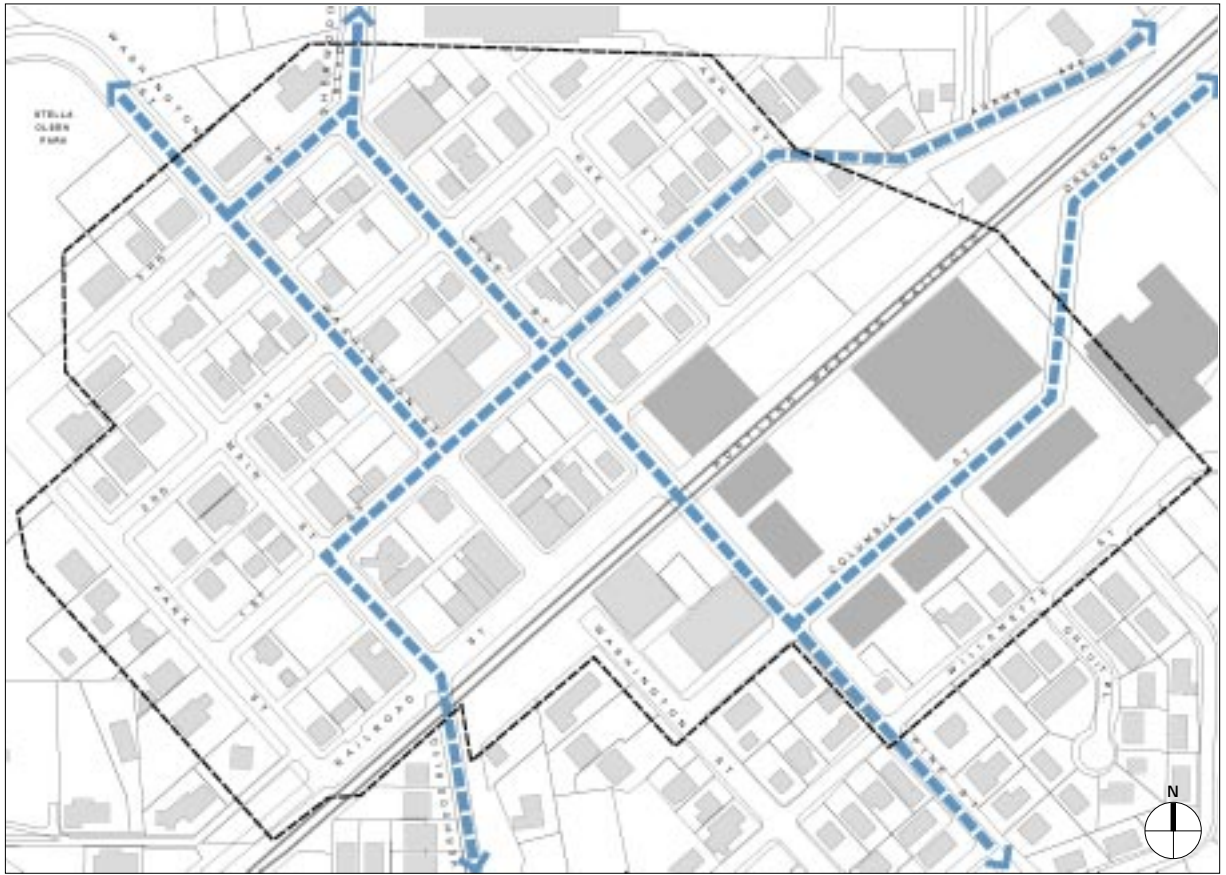
- An awkward intersection at Pine and Oregon Streets, which will soon necessitate a traffic signal;
- An unsafe "S" turn on Washington Hill at Washington, Division and Pine Streets;
- Unsafe major intersections adjacent to the PNWR railroad (Railroad-Washington and Railroad-S Sherwood-Main);
- Poor access to the cannery site, which hampers development of the site;
- Extensive right-of-way purchase needed to connect the future Adams Avenue to Oregon Street; and
- An inability of school buses to use the railroad crossings at S Sherwood and Washington due to the four-way stops at these intersections.



Proposed regional vehicular access into downtown Sherwood (dotted white lines represent major pedestrian/bicycle corridors)



Existing primary vehicular access routes



Proposed primary vehicular access routes

To correct these problems, the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan and Transportation System Plan (TSP) are proposing a number of changes to the street patterns near and in downtown. These changes include:

- Relocating the Washington Street railroad crossing to Pine and improving Pine Street to Sunset Blvd, allowing it to function as a second collector (in

- Closing the Oregon Street railroad crossing, except for emergency vehicles leaving the fire station, and building a new Oregon Street through the cannery site to the intersection of Columbia and Pine;

- Constructing Adams Avenue from Century Drive to the intersection of 1st and Ash and widening 1st Street from Pine to Ash; and
- Reconstructing Oregon Street as a pedestrian/bicycle greenway from Pine to Ash Streets.

Under this new street alignment, Pine Street will have three stop signs downtown (3rd, 1st and Columbia). The Adams-1st-Main-Sherwood collector will have two stop signs (Pine and Main-1st). All downtown collector streets will be two lanes with no left turn lanes and no traffic signals. These scenarios have been tested as part of the TSP and will function adequately through the year 2020.