



Living South Town – Healthy, Prosperous & Inclusive

Contact

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Description

Living South Town is a multi-year project that has organized South Corvallis residents in support of a healthy, prosperous, and inclusive neighborhood. South Corvallis is lacking many basic resources, but has the potential to see significant new development related to food, housing, transportation, and education: a commercial neighborhood center; a regional “food hub”; off-street pedestrian/bike paths; a new elementary school; and development of new and diverse types of affordable housing. These projects are more likely to happen and be done “right,” when South Corvallis residents are involved, energized and unified by a compelling vision of their neighborhood’s future that is based on a shared commitment to inclusiveness and equity; and if the neighborhood, in partnership with city and county government and other stakeholders, can secure the right financing and development tools.

Central to that vision is development of a new mixed-use Neighborhood Center that will include shopping, offices, and housing; will serve as “the epicenter for revitalization of South Corvallis;” and will help make it a “complete neighborhood.” Residents and stakeholders are already excited, and have identified themes that build on neighborhood strengths: food and new farm-to-table businesses, design elements that make healthy choices the easy choices, the development of smaller homes designed with a commitment to sustainability, and an overall approach that celebrates a changing and inclusive neighborhood. Real change will only happen after development of new affordable housing and lease-up of the Neighborhood Center is complete.

Timeframe

A grassroots effort, Living South Town has been informally active since 2013, building awareness for the opportunities to improve south Corvallis in order for all residents to have safe and equitable access to needed resources. Real change will only happen after development of new affordable housing and lease-up of the Neighborhood Center is complete. However, we do expect to see very real but less tangible results happening within a shorter timeframe: a neighborhood that sees progress being made after a 22-year wait – residents realizing results from their collective efforts – residents continuing to be engaged on other goals and projects because their involvement matters! Total development completion for the commercial site is still roughly five (5) years away. A final product will result in prosperous commercial center that could include a financial institution, full service grocery store, medical services and WNHS’ offices.

Funding

WNHS and NeighborWorks America are currently funding the initiative. We are currently working with the City of Corvallis to establish a tax increment financing (TIF) district for the Neighborhood Center site and surrounding neighborhood.

Date Accepted: 10/03/2018

Equity and Accessibility

South Corvallis is a low-income neighborhood and one of the most diverse communities in Corvallis. Improving infrastructure and bringing resources to South Corvallis will make it safer and livable for vulnerable populations, primarily families and children. A neighborhood center and regional “food hub” will make it easier for families to access healthy foods (and reverse South Corvallis’ status as a food desert). Most shopping, banking and doctor visits for residents involve leaving South Corvallis and driving across town. For families who do not have access to a car, making what should be a simple trip to the grocery store or doctor becomes a daylong endeavor involving multiple bus rides, and navigating busy Highway 99. Working families, even those with cars, are limited due to the time it takes to travel to these resources. We believe children/families in South Corvallis should have the same opportunity to access resources that contribute to health as those in the rest of Corvallis. Having these resources in South Corvallis so that they are easily accessible will improve overall health and wellness for families. WNHS is working with community members to develop a unified vision for their neighborhood’s future based on a shared commitment to inclusiveness and equity.

Approvals

We are currently working with the City of Corvallis to establish a tax increment financing (TIF) district for the Neighborhood Center site and surrounding neighborhood. Willamette Neighborhood is represented on the Advisory Council, representing the need for more resources for low-income neighborhood, including safer streets and affordable housing. On October 15, 2018, the City Council will hold a public hearing to consider adoption of the South Corvallis Urban Renewal Plan. If the City Council adopts the Plan, it will then be referred to Corvallis voters no earlier than March of 2019.

Community Action Plan (CAP) Objectives

ES1: Well-Being and Basic Needs

ES5: Strong, Vital Neighborhoods

PC1: Mixed Use Development

PC3: Diverse and Affordable Housing

Partners

Benton County Health Department

City of Corvallis

Benton County

Linn-Benton Health Equity Alliance (LBHEA)

Casa Latinos Unidos

Samaritan Health Services

Corvallis School District 509J



Which sections of the Climate Action Plan does your Initiative address?

Land Use and Transportation
Health, Social Services & Community Well-Being

Action Type: Adaptation

What direct impact will your project have on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and/or preparing community members to adapt to the impacts of climate change (drought, wildfires, flooding, etc.)?

Bringing more resources to South Corvallis will reduce the need for South Corvallis residents to travel by car across town for groceries and other necessities. Having resources close by, street improvements/calming measures and bicycle paths will make residents more comfortable walking and riding their bike.

Does your project have any co-benefits (e.g. healthy local economy and local self-reliance, energy efficiency and greater energy independence from fossil fuels, sound economic investments, community livability, environmental quality and ecosystem resiliency, public health and well-being, equity and accessibility for low income/disadvantaged community members)?

- Community livability
- Public health and well being
- Healthy local economy and local self-reliance
- Equity and accessibility for low income/disadvantaged community members

What type of help, if any, do you need from the members of the Climate Action Advisory Board?

Contacts with City of Corvallis staff

Suggested partners