

Highland Drive Corridor Master Plan

By City Council and City Staff

The City is considering creating a Master Plan for the Highland Drive corridor from 3900 South to I-215 to supplement our existing General Plan. This area has never been studied, though Holladay incorporated in 1999 and the west side of Highland Drive annexed into Holladay in 2005.

Much of the existing zoning in the area comes from the County and consists of large residential lots mixed with higher-density residential/office uses. These uses do not reflect good planning nor the current or future uses for the area. Several large residential lots remain undeveloped because there is no demand for such lots on a four lane boulevard. There has been some small-scale residential development, mostly on side streets, such as on Cecilia. There, the council recently updated the zoning to allow for six single family dwellings rather than the four duplexes (eight dwellings) previously allowed by the County.

The City Council felt that Holladay needed a comprehensive plan for the corridor that reflected current and desired uses. The Master Plan will not change zoning directly. Rather, it will allow individual property owners to apply for zone changes that are currently unavailable. Each application would be considered and recommended on a case-by-case basis by the Planning Commission and then approved or denied by the City Council.

Concerns that the corridor will turn into a commercial strip or that the City is planning on using eminent domain to acquire property are unfounded. The city is not contemplating widening the right of way, with the possible exception of creating left-turn lanes at intersections which lack them.

The plan calls for preserving functioning residential uses and allowing some residences to be used for low-impact offices. Some (not all) corners could be rezoned for Neighborhood Commercial (NC) uses. Protections for pedestrians and adjoining neighborhoods are also included.

The NC zone was created to allow for appropriately sized, low-impact uses that are compatible with residential areas, such as professional offices, restaurants, small retail stores, nurseries, etc. The new Café Madrid on Spring Lane is the first example of the NC zone.

Some residents have recently expressed concerns that this effort was being conducted without citizen input. The process started over two years ago with a comprehensive corridor study of Highland Drive by staff, which was then reviewed by a Steering Committee of experts commissioned by the City. The Steering Committee met from Dec. 2009 to April 2010 and made significant input to the study.

Public Open Houses and Workshops were held in February and June of 2010. Invitations were mailed to all 570 property owners along Highland Drive and published in the Valley Journal. Dozens of people attended and offered many helpful suggestions to form a future vision of Highland Dr.

A Final Draft Report was presented to the City Council and Planning Commission in September of 2010. Two Public Hearings by the Planning Commission were noticed and held in May and October of 2011. No members of the public offered comments at either meeting. The Planning Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the proposed plan.

The City Council publicized and held a Public Hearing on January 19, 2012. Again, no comment or input was received from the public. The City Council is evaluating the input received to date. During February, the council will discuss any final changes and then bring the revised proposal forward for adoption.

In the meantime, we encourage citizens and business owners to examine the current draft plan online at www.cityofholladay.com or at City Hall and to submit comments and suggestions to the council.

The City Council has determined that “Future Road Option #2”, which would create a center median, is economically unfeasible and is not under consideration.