Regional Access to Jobs

Transit Access to Family Wage Jobs (up to 60 minute travel time, ranked by census tract)

Methods

We analyzed employment through a series of several maps, focusing on transit access to jobs paying a living wage. The first map displays an index created by the Equity Atlas for the region based on the number of family-wage jobs in the Portland region that are accessible via transit (bus or train) within 60 minutes of travel time. Each census tract has a value from 0 to 5, with 0 having the least access and 5 having the most. Family wage jobs are defined by the income level needed to support one adult, one preschooler, and one school age child ($47,244 for Multnomah County, based on 2010 wages).

To more accurately reflect lived experience in Gresham, we also looked at transit access to jobs paying less than $1,250 and more than $3,333 held by Gresham residents, as well as all jobs held by West Gresham residents (based on 2011 estimates). We compared the current distribution of jobs to the transit network, assuming no transfers to analyze the potential for transit access challenges. Lastly, we analyzed the distribution of jobs by sector and wage level within the city of Gresham as a proxy for opportunities in the local job market.

Key Findings

Transit Access to Jobs

This map shows that based solely on transit access, the Rockwood neighborhood has the highest access to regional jobs. However, this is largely a function of the high frequency MAX line that provides a direct connection to downtown Portland. The map does not take into account the necessary qualifications of the majority of employment opportunities in Downtown Portland that does not seem to match the qualifications of most Gresham residents, based on an analysis of educational attainment at the census tract level. The mapping analysis shows that a significant share of high paying jobs held by residents (as of 2011) are located in the Columbia Corridor, as well as the Northwest Industrial district of Portland. This finding provides support for Goal 3, which calls for improved transit service, particularly for employment areas to the north of Gresham. There are several regional job centers that have little or no direct transit access from Gresham, indicating that transit dependent workers have fewer employment opportunities due to commute challenges. Reflecting this issue, 43% of transit riders reported “transportation difficulties” as a barrier to employment that they have experienced, compared to 15% of all questionnaire respondents that reported at least one barrier.

Non-spatial Barriers to Employment

A key theme from community engagement is the need to increase employment and wages for Gresham residents. There is desire to create jobs and small businesses in Gresham. Based on feedback from stakeholders, potential obstacles to local businesses include high permit fees, a complex application process, and zoning regulations limiting small business activities. These complexities have the effect of pricing out individuals and organizations with low capital.

Distribution of Jobs in Gresham

Less than one-third of survey respondents agree that their neighborhood is close to employment opportunities. Jobs are concentrated in North and Central Gresham. Manufacturing jobs are concentrated in the north, retail jobs are mainly in the city center, and health care and social assistance jobs are mostly in the central and northwest portions with several other pockets throughout. Jobs paying $1,250 or less per month are most concentrated in the central city, likely associated with the retail sector. The highest concentration of jobs paying $3,333 or more per month is north of I-84.
GOAL 5:

Increase local business ownership and employment opportunities for Gresham residents through community-oriented development.

Actions related to Goal 3 (improve transit service, particularly for north-south routes) will help improve access to both existing jobs held by residents and “good jobs” available in the region. Working with the network of workforce development partners will remain critical for helping connect residents to good jobs in the region, as described in Education/Services. In terms of increasing living wage jobs offered in the city, Gresham has a strong manufacturing base, and the traded sector economic development strategy will continue to play an important role.

To further diversify the economic development strategy in Gresham, we recommend strengthening current efforts and exploring new ways for supporting small businesses, local entrepreneurs, and community development. Locally-owned businesses help keep more income circulating in the local economy and are less likely to relocate, because they are rooted in Gresham. This reduces the risk associated with place-based investments and subsidies to outside owned corporations. Evidence shows that small businesses tend to be more nimble and responsive to market changes. It can also be more cost-effective to subsidize small, local businesses compared to large, national corporations, in terms of job creation, tax revenues, and other benefits to the local economy.

Under this approach, new businesses could contribute to the manufacturing sector, including the clusters oriented around clean technology and food, but should also address local needs for goods and services. While many jobs in the service sector do not pay a family wage, local ownership and employment in neighborhood-serving businesses have other benefits such as reducing the leakage that occurs when outside companies provide goods and services. This approach would address multiple priorities for increasing employment and meeting community priorities.

Action 5-1: Provide more direct support to local residents to start and maintain small businesses.

Action 5-2: Initiate a Community Economic Development (CED) strategy in West Gresham, leveraging the Rockwood Urban Renewal Area (URA) funding.
I don’t hear about how the city and school districts are working together. They should pool resources to better support K-12 students, and beyond.

- West Gresham Resident

Education is important for providing job opportunities that pay living and family wages. Workforce development and employment assistance programs are key resources for job training, skill building, and certifications. Health and Human services are intended to help families achieve good health, get good jobs, and succeed in school, especially for disadvantaged and vulnerable populations. However, there are barriers to accessing many of these services, including physical barriers (transportation relative to location), affordability, convenience, cultural relevance, and availability of services in one’s own language. Wrap-around services often work to address some of these barriers, including through the provision of childcare and way-finding in the healthcare system.

It is important to community prosperity that educational and health and human services are distributed throughout the city and match the populations that are in need. This means identifying areas in need and locating services with appropriate and adequate access in terms of transportation, price, and quality of service. There are many service providers and public agencies working hard to meet the needs of Gresham residents. However, many feel that they do not have the capacity financially to meet demand.
Adult Education Priority

Education Priority Areas by Census Tract and Education/Employment Services

Methods

To analyze educational opportunities and access to services, we first analyzed the spatial distribution of adult educational need (Map 7). We did this by creating an index of three measures that reflect the environment in which adult education resources are most needed and should be prioritized. The measures are based on 2008-12 ACS data and include:

- Number of adults (over age 25) with less than a bachelors degree
- Number of unemployed adults
- Number of households on public assistance

We then overlaid adult education and employment services, health and human services, youth services, and community services on the priority areas to analyze current distribution and gaps in access. Additionally, we interviewed stakeholders and community groups that organize, develop, or support many of the services noted above. The following findings are based on spatial analysis as well as anecdotal evidence from service providers and community members.

Key Findings

The City has limited influence on many aspects of service provision. Additionally, many of the existing programs in Gresham are either strapped for resources or are not located in areas that most effectively meet the needs of the population.

Adult Education

There is a lack of adult education services relative to need. For example, the most commonly reported barrier to employment on the questionnaire was “there are not enough jobs available in the industry/occupation that I want to work in.” This indicates the need for retraining and adult education/certificate opportunities that match the labor market demand. However, the Mt. Hood Community College Career Pathways Program, a successful program noted by the State, is under resourced and unable to meet the need in Gresham. In addition, the Rockwood Library is overcapacity and there is demand for more space.

Services

There are limited mental health services in Gresham, and most residents seeking treatment must travel to Portland. The current provision of the Multnomah County SUN School program is not adequate in areas of higher poverty and greater concentrations of youth, where more sites and additional staff are needed. Based on the waitlist at Mt. Hood Community College Head Start, as well as stakeholder feedback, there is a need for more affordable childcare in the city. Finding convenient childcare can be a challenge and barrier to employment and education opportunities.
Key Findings

Priority Areas
The greatest need for adult education services, based on the analysis of the three indicators noted above, is in West Gresham, Central Gresham, and Mt. Hood neighborhood. West Gresham is the highest priority area for families and individuals needing health, human, and community services. This is due to the prevalence of vulnerable populations in these areas, including youth, families in poverty, and unemployed individuals.

K-12 Education
The “quality” of K-12 education is largely a function of neighborhood-level resources, beyond in-school factors. Therefore, the provision of stable and affordable housing options throughout the city, particularly in low poverty neighborhoods, helps ensure equal access to educational opportunities for youth. Offering wrap-around services such as childcare at school sites helps families to meet their needs in a neighborhood location. The City should consider the implications on K-12 schools when siting new housing and implementing actions related to the opportunity indicators in this plan.

GOAL 6:
Promote community prosperity by increasing access to education and health promotion services.

This goal recognizes that community prosperity is largely a function of employment, and that education is fundamental to securing living wage jobs. Reducing barriers to education and health promotion services, such as childcare and transportation, is critical to increasing the incomes and well-being of Gresham residents. This is particularly true for vulnerable populations currently facing challenges such as affordability of services.

Opportunity mapping is one tool for analyzing and displaying the distribution and concentration of population groups that most need particular services, as well as highlighting the transportation connections to resources. When prioritizing efforts, it is also important to consider non-spatial challenges with accessing employment and educational opportunities, such as affordability and cultural relevance. Our analysis supports the use of the Rockwood URA Catalyst Site as a site for workforce development, additional library space, and other services. This site will not meet the entire need, however, and the City should advocate for additional resources to meet the increased need for services at the county (health, library, SUN), state (Work Systems), and federal (Head Start) levels.

We recognize that finding funding is not easy and therefore, encourage partnerships and innovative programs that are not capital intensive. For example, the City should continue to be involved with workforce development partnerships and support job training for living wage career-track jobs that require less than one year of certification/training. Current partners include but are not limited to Human Solutions, Mt Hood Community College, El Programa Hispano, and the school districts serving Gresham.

Action 6-1:
Utilize the Map Gresham Opportunity Analysis as a foundation for the Community Prosperity Initiative work.
Parks are a valuable resource to communities, as they provide a place for people of all ages to gather, enjoy nature, and engage in physical activity. Locating parks and natural areas in proximity to residents and providing transportation connections to these spaces increases opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of nature, contributing to good health and quality of life. In addition to physical access, accessibility also depends on the quality of park space in terms of community-desired amenities and maintenance.

The City of Gresham maintains more than 24 parks with a variety of amenities for its residents. Since the onset of the 2008 economic recession the City has made significant cutbacks to its parks and recreation programming, including the elimination of a parks department and severe reduction in maintenance staff. As a result, the City still maintains parks but must look to other organizations to provide recreational programming.

The City of Gresham Parks Master Plan (2009) states: “Given that Gresham is the fourth largest city in Oregon, the provision of so few programming options is highly unusual. The city does not currently provide most of the programs that are typically offered by comparable communities.”

“Parks and recreation is an essential service that enhances the quality of life in the Gresham community by fostering personal health, strengthening community, preventing crime, protecting the environment, and contributing to a healthy economy.”

- Gresham Parks Master Plan, 2009

Here is a complete lack of parks and public spaces that are accessible by foot, or a short bike ride, with small children.

- Gresham Resident
Access to Parks

1/4 and 1/2 Mile Distances from Parks

This map shows buffers around city park access points based on the street network, given the limitations with City of Gresham sidewalk data. The buffers demonstrate residential areas that are within walking distance of the entrance to the park. Overlaid is the sidewalk network and city parks. Map data sources include: Metro RLIS, City of Gresham, TriMet.

Map Methodology:

Access to Parks

for Transit Dependent Residents

This map displays buffers (quarter mile and half mile) around medium and high frequency transit and rail stops in order to show which city parks are within a reasonable walking distance for transit dependent residents. The parks in bright green are not within a half mile walking distance to transit and rail stops during times when the low frequency routes are not running. Map data sources include: Metro RLIS, City of Gresham, TriMet.

Map Methodology:
Methods

In the parks maps, we show the distribution and size of developed, city parks across Gresham in order to assess whether all neighborhoods and regions of the city have equal access to city park space.

The first map shows buffers of one quarter and one half-mile distance around park access points to demonstrate residential areas that are within walking distance of the entrance to the park. The buffers are based on the street network - dark purple buffers represent a quarter mile from park access points and light purple buffers represent a half-mile. This map also shows the MAX line and sidewalks.

The second map shows an analysis of access to parks specifically for transit dependent residents. On this map, instead of buffers around the park access points, we used ESRI’s Network Analyst tool to create quarter mile and half mile buffers around transit and rail stops that are of medium or high frequency. This was done to give a clearer picture of the accessibility of city parks to transit dependent riders on weekends and evenings. The parks in bright green on this map represent the city parks that are not within a reasonable walking distance to transit and rail stops during times when the low frequency routes are not running.

Parks shown on these maps include those that are open to the public, currently maintained by the City, and are both developed and undeveloped.

Key Findings

Distribution and Pedestrian Access

There is a disparity in the amount of park space in each neighborhood. Mt. Hood residents now have 7.4 acres of park space per 1,000 people while residents in half of the city’s neighborhoods (North Central, Wilkes East, Gresham Butte, Northwest, Southwest, Northeast, Hollybrook, and Pleasant Valley) have less than two acres of park space per 1,000 people. Two neighborhoods, Mt. Hood and Centennial, contain 27% of the city’s park space.

While Gresham’s parks are generally spread throughout the city, some households do not live within a reasonable walking distance to a city park. Community engagement efforts revealed that many West Gresham residents are unable to walk to parks due to unsafe sidewalk conditions or lacking sense of safety while at the parks. These findings suggest the need for targeted improvements to ensure accessibility to parks by foot.

Transit Access

Existing public transit routes do not provide adequate service for residents to access city parks. The lower frequency of many of the north-south routes poses a barrier to residents who are transit-dependent and need to travel north-south to access a park in their neighborhood, particularly since the low frequency routes do not run on the weekends. There are seven city parks in south Gresham that are not within a quarter mile or half mile from transit routes that are either high or medium frequency, and are therefore often not accessible to transit dependent residents.

Amenities and Maintenance

There is a gap in the number of amenities provided at each park with some parks providing three to four times the number of amenities as other parks. Community engagement revealed that residents from West Gresham neighborhoods feel that their parks are not sufficiently maintained and although they do have amenities, they are not the types of amenities that residents want. These residents stated that they would use neighborhood parks more if they had the amenities that they wanted.

Programming

Community engagement efforts for this project and a previous City questionnaire revealed that residents from all neighborhoods would like to see increased recreation programming. As discussed in the Opportunity Analysis, a smaller share of West Gresham residents agreed or strongly agreed that there were things they like to do for recreation in their neighborhood, compared to respondents in the other neighborhoods. The Parks Master Plan, adopted in 2009 contains a complete analysis of the provision of recreation facilities and programs and found that in comparison to other cities of similar size, Gresham is severely lacking in the provision of these services.

The analysis of access to parks in Gresham shows that there are disparities in the amount of park space per neighborhood and the type of infrastructure and amenities in each of Gresham’s parks. The community engagement conducted for this project shows that while parks exist in most neighborhoods, it is the quality, safety, and physical accessibility by foot and transit that reduces opportunities to enjoy recreation activities in these parks.
GOAL 7:

Improve the quality of parks and support the provision of youth programming.

Recognizing the limited fiscal capacity of the City, it will be critical to actively pursue partnerships with other organizations in order to meet this goal. At this time, the City should focus on improving the quality of and access to existing city parks, as well as supporting the provision of recreation activities, rather than attempting to acquire new park space. We recommend prioritizing park improvements in areas with high concentrations of transit-dependent residents, including youth.

This goal also responds to concerns over safety, maintenance, and transportation infrastructure, which are preventing some community members in West Gresham from enjoying the many benefits associated with the city’s existing parks. This goal and its action items are congruent with the community’s vision for a sustainable parks system as outlined in the Parks Master Plan adopted in 2009.

Action 7-1:
Develop a strategy to expand community and City capacity to increase the frequency of public parks maintenance to ensure that every neighborhood has usable and enjoyable spaces for residents.

Action 7-2:
Establish a community task force and complete a “neighborhood recreation and nature assessment” in partnership with community groups to identify desired amenities and prioritize park improvement projects.

Action 7-3:
Convene a youth recreation taskforce to develop a strategy for increasing the availability of youth activities, programs, and events held in parks, schools, and other public spaces in West Gresham.

Refer to Appendix B (Implementation Matrix) for additional detail.
feel Rockwood is moving in a positive direction. We can’t be afraid of diversity, we must be willing to embrace the mix of cultures and provide activities and opportunities to meet the needs of everyone.

- West Gresham Resident

Addressing safety and crime is challenging, whether it be at the citywide or neighborhood level. However, it is important to recognize the social factors that shape and even exacerbate the effects of crime and decrease perceptions of safety. Larger structural forces that are expressed spatially across Gresham lend to increased levels of social disorganization, economic instability, and neighborhood segregation of people of color. This Framework Plan provides guidance for policy and program levers that the City could pursue to reduce structural inequities that impact neighborhood safety.

The City of Gresham has initiated a coordinated effort to address crime, holding a Gang Prevention and Enforcement Summit, at which they unveiled a Multi-Agency Gang Prevention and Enforcement Plan. This plan operates under five basic strategies: community mobilization, opportunities provision, social intervention, suppression, and organization change and development. The City wishes to develop strong involvement of residents, programs, and agencies under the principle that “no single entity can expect to achieve needle-moving change” in a problem this complex (Multi-Agency Prevention and Enforcement Plan, 2014).

There are several efforts aimed at bringing new resources to the Rockwood area, including the multi-agency Rockwood/Rosewood Enrichment Neighborhood Enforcement Workgroup (RENEW). This group intends to improve communication and coordination around safety and livability issues. Additionally, the City is partnering with various agencies and community groups to enact prevention and intervention-based strategies, recognizing that it can’t rely solely on police enforcement to reduce the impact of gangs on the community. For example, UDP staff is working on a “Parks and Trails Safety and Awareness” project.

Gresham Safety Partnerships

The City has begun to build partnerships with key agencies. Namely, Multnomah County has been a regional leader initiating innovative programs and services to reduce violence while also providing the necessary human services to address poverty and inequality. The Health Department’s Community Capacitation Center - Youth Violence Prevention program has received a federal STRYVE grant (Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere), taking a youth-centered public health approach to preventing violence before it starts. Additionally, the County’s Department of Community Justice uses a prevention approach in both adult and juvenile services in order to reduce recidivism, assisting clients “in a fair and just manner to develop skills necessary for success” (Multnomah County Department of Community Justice).

Read more about safety and crime at the neighborhood and city level.
Methods

A people based approach was taken in order to understand how safety, crime, and inequality relate to opportunity, community health, and neighborhood livability. We compiled and analyzed data from the community engagement process, including:

- Interviews
- Listening Circles
- Citywide Questionnaire
- Public Safety data from Gresham

Key Findings

Safety Concerns

During our engagement in West Gresham, we found that residents perceive that their safety is compromised in their neighborhoods, particularly at parks and transit stops. Safety concerns vary across groups and include fear of gangs, homelessness, crime, and police. Some youth feel uncomfortable with the high level of surveillance and police contact that they experience and observe. Community members also expressed that there are few safe places for families and youth to gather in West Gresham. Safe gathering places that do exist such as the Rockwood Library are commonly over capacity. There is also a strong need for youth enrichment and recreation activities at the neighborhood level to provide more opportunities for involvement.

Spatial Inequality

The opportunity analysis found that degrees of spatial inequality exist for West Gresham and parts of Central Gresham. This means that indicators of inequality are concentrated spatially. For example, these areas have lower median family incomes, larger household size, a wider gap of homeownership for people of color, and lower levels of educational attainment, in comparison to the rest of the city. Given that these commonly used indicators of economic stability are also strongly associated with perceived crime and safety issues, this analysis suggests that increasing poverty and crime did not just “move” to Gresham, but rather there are structural and institutional forces driving their concentration.

Additionally, West Gresham has higher shares of people of color, with some tracts reaching shares as high as 64%. Neighborhoods in West and Central Gresham also experienced the highest number of police calls consistently from 2009 to 2013 (see table in the Opportunity Analysis). This indicates that residents in these
Key Findings

areas have the greatest contact with police and are more likely to witness the effects of crime, as compared to other parts of the city. This correlation was affirmed by comments given at listening circles and through the citywide questionnaire. The analysis shows a spatial correlation between income inequality, racial and ethnic concentration, and high rates of policing and effects of crime.

Community Engagement and Active Participation

The common thread that surfaced across groups and individuals from diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds was the idea of local community control. Listening circle and discussion group attendees, City staff, and local officials value the ability for people from Gresham to have a voice in shaping their city. Even though fear of crime and/or gang activity exists, adults and youth are resilient. They want to be a part of making their community a safer place through participating with government and non-profit partners to create local solutions. This fervent interest in civic engagement from across different demographic backgrounds indicates a strong pride in Gresham, and suggests an opportunity to guide community-wide energy towards collective action, in order to solve this complex problem.

People identified various policies, regulations, and city-provided services and programs as tools for improving safety conditions in target areas of West and Central Gresham. “Neighborliness” and a sense of community connection is what residents across Gresham desire most as a way to improve their perceptions of safety. Several residents suggested community-led neighborhood patrols to enhance feelings of security.

GOAL 8:
Foster safe and welcoming neighborhoods.

Safety concerns are preventing residents from taking full advantage of opportunities in their neighborhoods such as parks and public transit. We recommend taking a “community development” approach to address the root causes and effects of crime, including spatial inequality and isolation. Community development projects can positively affect neighborhoods by increasing the capacity of residents for self-sufficiency, while also creating a stronger identity of community that resists the effects of crime. Providing both physical spaces and programming to create opportunities for community gathering are essential to this strategy. Also critical is ensuring that these spaces and programs engage residents in a meaningful way in all stages of development from planning, design, implementation, and operation, with a particular focus on youth, low-income residents, and residents of color. The actions associated with this goal emphasize the needs of youth, which is a particularly vulnerable population with respect to neighborhood safety.

Action 8-1:
Partner to create youth-adult partnerships that address youth violence issues through the multi-agency initiative led by the Multnomah Youth Commission.

Action 8-2:
Develop community-led patrols and neighborhood watches in West Gresham, working directly with residents from diverse backgrounds.

Action 8-3:
Develop a community center in West Gresham; consider incorporating into the URA Catalyst site.

Refer to Appendix B (Implementation Matrix) for additional detail.
Chapter 4: IMPLEMENTATION

Through this engagement we have learned that there are differences in the way people experience their neighborhoods, and that many residents are eager to be more involved in shaping the quality of life in Gresham. The maps also show that varying degrees of disparities are occurring in Gresham. Taken as a whole, the evidence suggests a mutually reinforcing relationship between the spatial concentration of under-represented populations, disparities in neighborhood resources, and lower levels of public involvement in planning processes.

The actions included in this Framework Plan are recommendations for the City of Gresham to consider as ways to address the root causes of poverty and improve quality of life across Gresham neighborhoods. Addressing each indicator simultaneously will result in the greatest collective impact.

This approach encourages more explicit consideration of the relationship between various indicators of opportunity. As shown on the Indicator Matrix, many of the actions would address multiple indicators, creating synergies. For example, Action 5-2 calls for increasing local employment while meeting community needs for healthy and affordable food, housing rehabilitation, childcare, and recreation.

We believe that taking a holistic approach can lead to more effective outcomes over the long-term, compared to alternatives that focus primarily on symptoms. In addition, this intentional and integrated approach will likely result in long-term change because it is supported by community members and stakeholders.

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<th>Description</th>
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Photo: City of Gresham "If I were Mayor..." contest finalist, sponsored by the Oregon Mayors Association. 4th-12th graders were asked how they would improve their community if they were Mayor? Read more about recommended partners and their work.
In recognition of the City’s limited fiscal resources, CCP has strategically crafted actions with the intention to maximize impacts for the least amount of funding. While many of the recommended actions will require the City to seek new funds or reallocate existing funds, other actions are low-cost and work to reduce the City’s burden in the long-term by promoting partnerships with other organizations. This overarching principle is captured in Goal 9, described in the next pages. This goal encourages the strategic allocation of funds to improve outcomes in priority areas, using the opportunity framework. It also addresses funding, recognizing the potential for trade-offs and providing recommended prioritization of funds.

We also recognize that fiscal constraints will likely limit implementation of the plan in full. Although feasibility may be limited, it is important to note that implementation of a subset of actions will not have the same impact, especially if housing, transportation, and employment are neglected. These indicators relate most strongly to root causes of health and socioeconomic disparities between population groups.

Any set of actions pursued should address Goal 1, as public involvement underlies most of the recommendations. Not only do community members want to be more involved in enhancing neighborhood opportunity, but processes that integrate meaningful public involvement are more likely to result in successful outcomes that better address resident needs. Also, the process itself builds a sense of ownership, meaning people will be more likely to support and utilize any resulting programs and facilities. In financial terms, it leads to more efficient use of funds in the long-term, although it may incrementally increase costs on the front end to incorporate best practices.

The Implementation Matrix (Appendix B) includes a detailed description of the objective of each recommended action, as well as suggestions for how to implement the action and potential partnerships to consider. This plan assumes that UDP staff would take responsibility for implementing the actions, unless otherwise noted, although it may be determined that other City departments, community partners, or service providers would be more appropriate.

We also provide a list of “additional considerations” (Appendix C) to provide examples of actions that would help to further advance opportunity in Gresham.
GOAL 9:

Improve outcomes in priority areas by strategically allocating funds, using opportunity mapping as a guide.

This goal is intended to inform implementation of the other eight goals in this Plan. While it focuses on HUD funding, the principles could apply to other decision-making processes involving the allocation of local, state, and federal funds.

Using an opportunity framework means improving the quality of life in neighborhoods that have the lowest access to opportunities by strategically allocating funds to these priority areas. A key action to advance this overarching goal is updating the tool for evaluating applications for HUD funding to more explicitly account for community needs and the geographic distribution of resources.

CCP recognizes that trade-offs occur between different priorities when allocating available funds. We also recognize that housing provides the foundation for health and well-being, yet housing is typically the largest cost for households. About 44% of Gresham households pay over 30% of their income on rent or mortgage, posing significant challenges to accessing opportunities. Therefore, we encourage the City to prioritize housing construction and rehabilitation in the allocation of HUD funding, in order to help stabilize rent increases while improving the living conditions for low-income households overtime.

This goal also speaks to the need to secure a long-term source of funding for community development projects and to leverage existing and new sources of funding for transportation projects, beyond HUD funding. When allocating economic development funds through HUD, we suggest targeting community-oriented initiatives that increase employment opportunities and meet needs for neighborhood services (see Goal 5).

**Action 9-1:** Proactively allocate HUD funding to priority areas and update the tool for evaluating CDBG/HOME projects.

**Action 9-2:** Prioritize use of HUD funds for housing and community development, and seek new sources to supplement existing funding for transportation projects.

**Action 9-3:** Develop a funding strategy for the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, and community amenities on public properties.

Refer to Appendix B (Implementation Matrix) for additional detail.
Opportunity mapping can be an important tool to evaluate applications, as well as to proactively target different project types that may use CDBG funds (see Project Type table to the right). This Map Gresham project identified priority areas for different opportunities that can provide a foundation for both applications. It is important to note that opportunity maps are one analytical tool and should serve as a guide. As with all tools that rely on quantitative data, maps should not be relied upon to make concrete determinations about projects. This guide is intended to serve as a starting point to implementing Action 9-1.

Project Types
It is important to consider that some project types are place-based and others are more people-based. Place-based strategies include infrastructure projects aimed at improving physical conditions. People-based strategies generally involve providing services to specific populations, although not necessarily from a particular location.

For infrastructure projects, staff can refer to the opportunity maps to rank applications, based on the project’s potential to fill a need in a priority area (i.e., a food co-op in a food access priority area). For people-based strategies, the maps are most helpful in displaying the distribution and concentration of population groups that most need particular services, as well as highlighting the transportation connections to resources. The location of facilities in relation to service populations is more important for some resources. The location of facilities in relation to transportation connections may better serve service populations is more important for some resources. The location of facilities in relation to transportation connections may better serve

The opportunity indicator maps can help staff evaluate applications as well as where new housing should be located, based on type and neighborhood opportunities. The objective of siting new housing should be to maximize access to opportunity for residents with respect to specific needs (family, elderly, disabled, etc.).

An important tension to keep in mind is that siting new affordable housing in areas of concentrated poverty (greater than 20% rate) has been shown to perpetuate disparities. Based on our analysis, we do not recommend prohibiting new affordable housing in areas of concentrated poverty in Gresham, given the overwhelming need city- and regionwide.

However, family-oriented housing should be encouraged and prioritized in areas of lower poverty, given the strong link between concentrated poverty at the neighborhood level, lower student achievement, and intergenerational cycles of low education and poverty.

When analyzing housing location, each of the indicators in this plan should be considered individually, although it may be helpful to create a composite map for specific population needs to highlight the most applicable opportunities. For example, housing projects with mainly one bedroom units would likely serve single adults or couples; therefore, one of the most important considerations would be transit access. According to this principle an existing policy, higher density and/or mixed use developments should be encouraged and prioritized in areas of “high” opportunity while improving indicators of opportunity in priority areas. It continues to account for project feasibility.

We strongly encourage the addition of attached housing types (i.e., duplexes, triplexes and row homes) that provides family living options in more areas throughout the city. Specific criteria could include:

- Areas of lower residential density to support neighborhood compatibility
- Near parks and medium/high frequency bus routes (ideally within a half mile)
- Areas of low poverty (less than 20%) to increase opportunities for children to attend well-resourced schools

Suggested Evaluation Process
We have developed a suggested three-step process for evaluating applications, adapting the existing tool and integrating advice from other opportunity mapping users. The intent of the process is to ensure that projects that most effectively meet community needs are prioritized, working to allow more housing choice in areas of “high” opportunity while improving indicators of opportunity in priority areas. It continues to account for project feasibility.

### Project Types Evaluation Proactive Targeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affordable housing construction</th>
<th>Score projects based on housing type and access to relevant opportunities</th>
<th>Seek projects that would provide high access to relevant opportunities, based on housing type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure:</td>
<td>Score projects higher that propose improvements in a priority area for a given opportunity indicator</td>
<td>Seek projects that would improve indicators of opportunity in priority areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Transportation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Commercial development and revitalization (e.g., storefront upgrades, streetscape improvements)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Parks and other community facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programs:</td>
<td>Use maps to determine proximity to and transportation connections between service populations and facilities</td>
<td>Seek projects that would improve indicators of opportunity, not necessarily in priority areas but at least considering transportation access and other potential barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Workforce development (job training, career guidance, and job matching assistance)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Small business development</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Map Gresham**

**Project Type**

| **Step 1:** Apply screening criteria against HUD requirements |
| **Step 2:** Score projects using two rating systems: |
| - Needs and Priorities: use opportunity maps to identify projects that serve areas of high need/in areas of high priority. This narrows down the projects first by need/addressing areas of low opportunity, or looking at increasing housing options in areas of high opportunity (existing rating questions: 1, 8, 9) |
| - Feasibility: use existing criteria to evaluate financial feasibility and long-term sustainability of projects, consider operational plan and experience (existing rating questions: 2-7) |

**Step 3:** Discuss the relative value and impact of the projects to determine final recommendations, prioritizing projects that serve highest needs and taking into account feasibility (existing rating question: 10)
APPENDIX A:
STEPS IN THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

| Clarify the purpose of the plan or project | This is the first step. The purpose of a project should be clear, in order to identify the right level of participation you will require, and at what points in the process. Define clear objectives for each phase and identify the public involvement tools to be used. It is important to be honest about the limitations of the process, organization, or agency when determining the purpose. |
| Identify Leaders and Connectors | Leaders are from formal organizations or agencies that are typically asked to represent a particular constituency. Community Connectors are people who know the intricacies of communities, have multiple connections, and have a broad or deep reach within a community. Both are valuable to coordinate with and include in a plan process. |
| Recognize different lenses | Be aware of the perspectives that project team brings to a project or plan. This “lens” may be different than the communities being engaged. Be open to broadening your lens, in order to grow in your understanding of other perspectives. |
| Build strong long-term relationships | Enter discussions with the intent to build a life-long relationship. Project specific engagement can occur only after an initial level of trust and respect is established. Maintain strong relationships through transparent and open communication. |
| Build capacity | Part of relationship building is providing education and tools to support communities to evolve their capacity to engage with government in meaningful ways. |

APPENDIX B:
IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

INDICATOR: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

GOAL 1: Facilitate welcoming public involvement practices that resonate with people of diverse backgrounds in all City government plans and decision-making processes.

Action 1-1: Use Multnomah County’s Equity Empowerment Lens to evaluate public involvement practices, planning processes, and policies.

Objective: Multnomah County’s Equity Empowerment Lens is a tool used across the region to critically evaluate government practices and policies. The evaluation is intended to guide planning processes and decision-making, taking an adaptive approach to better serve residents as demographics shift. As an example, CCP used the tool to evaluate the Map Gresham planning process, shown in Chapter 4 of the Community Engagement Report.

How to: Multnomah County offers training to agencies to learn how to incorporate the tool across departments, providing guidance and support to staff to ensure successful implementation. Providing training at all levels, including elected officials, department directors, and staff, will promote the capacity and comfort needed to use the tool effectively.

Potential Partners: Multnomah County Health Department

INDICATOR: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

GOAL 1: Facilitate welcoming public involvement practices that resonate with people of diverse backgrounds in all City government plans and decision-making processes.

Action 1-2: Develop new relationships with under-represented groups throughout Gresham, with a particular focus on protected classes.

Objective: The purpose of this action is to implement intercultural engagement processes that are welcoming and resonate with people of diverse backgrounds. This would involve building new relationships and strengthening existing relationships between City staff and under-represented groups, in order to increase familiarity with City decision-making processes and increase capacity for participation. This action would also involve creating an open and welcoming atmosphere at City events at the beginning and throughout City planning processes.

How to: We recommend contracting with cultural and grassroots organizations to facilitate participation with neighborhood-based planning projects, do outreach to underrepresented residents, and promote membership in Citizen Advisory Committees (see Actions 4-2, 7-2, and 9-2 for examples). We also suggest referring to Appendix A, Steps to Public In for a list of recommended public involvement steps, adapted from best practices for outreach and engagement of historically underrepresented communities developed by Washington County and Metro. These concepts are consistent with the desires expressed by stakeholders and take into account lessons learned from the Map Gresham project.

Potential Partners: Culturally specific organizations and mutual assistance groups such as Latino Network.
GOAL 2: Increase opportunities for residents to meet their diverse housing needs in neighborhoods of their choice by providing a variety of quality and affordable housing options.

Action 2-1: Construct additional housing units, prioritizing units that are affordable to households making less than 30% AMFI and between 50%-80% AMFI; use the opportunity analysis to help guide the location of residential development.

Objective: This action addresses the need of rental housing in the lowest income levels. Construction of multi-family and attached housing types are more likely to be feasible financially to fill this need. Therefore, this action involves identifying and reducing barriers to the development of affordable housing, balancing the desire for stringent design standards with the intent to provide housing that is safe, healthy, and meets the needs of many family sizes (such as outdoor gathering spaces and play areas). This action should be implemented citywide, although neighborhood context should be considered in the evaluation of housing proposals. The ultimate objective is to increase opportunities for low-income residents to live in neighborhoods that provide high access to resources, while supporting household and neighborhood stability for existing residents that want to remain in place. Part of achieving this objective is ensuring that new and existing subsidized housing remains affordable in the long-term.

How to: The City can support construction of multi-family and attached housing types by providing subsidies to private developers and affordable housing providers. Another way in which the City can encourage a spectrum of housing sizes and types is to evaluate the Development Code and remove significant barriers to housing development. Possible changes could include: streamlining the permit process, revising the fee structures, and adjusting incentives. The code should also ensure that multi-family design standards provide for sufficient communal and outdoor space, as well as facilities for wrap-around services (see Section 3.6). The opportunity analysis prepared for the Map Gresham project can help staff evaluate housing proposals and determine zoning for different residential types, based on neighborhood opportunities (see the attached “HUD Tool”). Gresham should ensure 60-year minimum terms for new affordable housing (in line with the City of Portland) to reduce the risk of involuntary displacement. If needed, we suggest increasing staff capacity as subsidized housing is constructed, in order to accommodate for the additional time required to administer and track paperwork.

Potential Partners: Human Solutions, Home Forward

GOAL 2: Increase opportunities for residents to meet their diverse housing needs in neighborhoods of their choice by providing a variety of quality and affordable housing options.

Action 2-2: Increase HOME funds for rental housing rehabilitation and redevelopment that property owners can utilize, targeting outreach to properties that have the most complaints through the Rental Housing Inspection Program.

Objective: Our analysis found that there is a need for rehabilitation of low quality housing in certain areas of the city. This action is intended to promote the upgrade of deteriorated but structurally sound housing, as well as the maintenance of high quality housing, consistent with the City’s Housing Rehabilitation/Revitalization Policies.

How to: The City can undertake outreach efforts to property owners interested in updating their housing structures but who lack funds to make the necessary upgrades. One potential source of incentive funding already allocated for the 2014-2015 fiscal year is $6,909 in the Development/Contingency funds allocated to the City of Gresham.

Potential Partners: Human Solutions, Home Forward

GOAL 2: Increase opportunities for residents to meet their diverse housing needs in neighborhoods of their choice by providing a variety of quality and affordable housing options.

Action 2-3: Increase awareness of and resources to existing renter assistance programming, tenant education, and landlord training.

Objective: The City's Rental Housing Inspection Program (RHIP) is a model program in the State of Oregon, implementing mandatory and complaint driven inspections of rental units throughout the City. Some tenants in Gresham are unaware of the program and/or fear unknown implications of filing complaints, such as raised rents or eviction. This action is intended to increase awareness and use of the program among renters, especially low-income and vulnerable populations, in order to ensure enforcement of tenant rights and protection of the health and safety of renters.

How to: We suggest for the RHIP to work with the City’s communications team and Office of Neighborhood Involvement to advertise the program at multi-family housing properties, TriMet transit stops, SUN schools, Head Start locations, and other spaces commonly frequented by low-income populations. We also recommend translating materials into more languages and increasing landlord and tenant education offerings, partnering with other organizations that offer eviction prevention assistance.

Potential Partners: Community Alliance of Tenants, Human Solutions, Home Forward, Multnomah County Health Department, faith based organizations

GOAL 2: Increase opportunities for residents to meet their diverse housing needs in neighborhoods of their choice by providing a variety of quality and affordable housing options.

Action 2-4: Partner with Home Forward to redevelop properties that are beyond repair with subsidized housing.

Objective: This action specifically addresses the risk of displacement resulting from redevelopment that involves the demolition of existing housing units. Redevelopment of residential properties should include subsidized units to result in no net loss of affordable units. The intention is to ensure that residents are able to remain in the neighborhood, while improving the quality of housing available to low-income renters.

How to: We recommend partnering with Home Forward to redevelop residential properties because federal law requires tenant relocation assistance if federal dollars are used. Additionally, the City can track redevelopment and rehabilitation in areas with vulnerable populations (based on the housing cost burden map and other income measures) to help make sure subsidies are used to minimize involuntary displacement and the destabilizing effect on families.

Potential Partners: Home Forward
**INDICATOR: TRANSPORTATION**

***GOAL 3: Improve transit service and walkability.***

**Action 3-1:** Advocate for transit service improvements in Gresham through TriMet’s Transit Enhancement Plan process.

**Objective:** City staff is aware of the need for improved transit service, based on previous studies such as the recent TSP update process. Staff has a working relationship with TriMet, who is actively seeking to collaborate with local jurisdictions and residents as part of the Enhancement Plan process. Therefore, the objective of this action is to improve the quality of transit service throughout Gresham, prioritizing West Gresham and connections to high schools, affordable grocery stores, and employment uses north of I-84.

**How to:** City staff and TriMet can use the findings from the opportunity analysis to demonstrate a need for the following improvements:
- increased frequency of existing bus route headways, particularly for north-south transit service on 181st/182nd Street;
- addition of weekend and evening service to existing low frequency routes;
- more shelters, seating, and lighting at bus stops; and
- addition of new routes to improve coverage and reduce walking distance to stops.

**Potential Partners:** TriMet, Metro, Multnomah Youth Commission, Organizing People, Activating Leaders (OPAL)

**INDICATOR: TRANSPORTATION**

***GOAL 3: Improve transit service and walkability.***

**Action 3-3:** Develop a tool for evaluating improvement projects listed in the Transportation System Plan (TSP).

**Objective:** The City currently makes decisions on where to fund minor transportation improvement projects based on priorities set forth in the Transportation System Plan (TSP) and other planning documents, as funds become available. Developing and utilizing an evaluation tool would help ensure that funds are distributed equitably across Gresham. Given limited resources for pedestrian-oriented projects, prioritizing funding to areas with vulnerable populations would be the most cost-effective use of funds in terms of benefiting the most people.

**How to:** The tool should take into account specific criteria related to: existing infrastructure, safety concerns such as traffic accident hot spots, and concentration of populations that rely on walking, biking, and transit as their primary modes. These populations include: low-income, low vehicle per household, youth, seniors, and disabilities. The tool could incorporate or refer to demographic maps made for this opportunity analysis.

**Potential Partners:** Multnomah County Health Department, OPAL, TriMet

**INDICATOR: FOOD**

***GOAL 4: Improve access to affordable healthy and culturally appropriate food in high priority areas.***

**Action 4-1:** Examine and enact zoning code changes that would permit better development of community food assets in priority areas.

**Objective:** The intent of this action is to improve access to affordable healthy food by allowing the development of community food assets in priority areas. Examples of community food assets include: food co-ops, open air markets, farm stands, community gardens, and market gardens. These forms of economic exchange may help residents support themselves financially when they first arrive in Gresham.

**How to:** TriMet, Metro, Multnomah Youth Commission, Organizing People, Activating Leaders (OPAL)

**Potential Partners:** Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Rockwood Food Co-op, Rockwood Food Justice, Outgrowing Hunger, Rockwood Urban Renewal Area Food Incubator.
### GOAL 4: Improve access to affordable healthy and culturally appropriate food in high priority areas.

#### Action 4-2: Provide financial and technical assistance to support the development of community food assets, including locally-owned grocers that provide access to affordable healthy food and pay living wages to employees.

**Objective:** This action aims to develop a community-based food economy that serves diverse needs in Gresham’s priority areas. This involves assisting residents and groups who wish to start small food-based projects and businesses. The assistance should target organizations that are not already well-capitalized and have not received funding in the past to reach populations most in need of economic stimulus. Incentives to attract grocery stores in priority areas should address community needs for living wage jobs and fresh produce at affordable prices, as well as preferences for community-owned or worker-owned businesses.

**How to:** Technical assistance could involve helping groups to find sources of start-up capital and to learn business and fundraising skills required to build a vibrant food landscape in their neighborhoods. It could also include providing clarity regarding how to access City funds to increase chances of obtaining this financial assistance. Other forms of support might include tax exemptions, loans, help with local advertising, or special permitting provisions. When providing financial incentives to attract grocery stores, the City should engage low-income residents who face the greatest barriers to food access, in order to ensure that subsidies are serving community needs related to affordability and cultural diversity.

**Potential Partners:** Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

#### Action 4-3: Work with small neighborhood retailers to help provide the resources and assistance necessary for them to sell healthy and affordable food.

**Objective:** This action is intended to provide a greater variety of healthy and affordable food to residents in high priority areas, recognizing the role of small neighborhood retailers and convenience stores in providing grocery options. The action would involve identifying barriers that are currently preventing retailers from selling more fresh produce, determining what is needed to overcome these barriers, and exploring innovative ways of increasing the sale of fresh produce.

**How to:** We recommend that the City engage with local store owners, possibly via the Rockwood Business Coalition, to assess barriers and possible solutions. This might help include advice on how to source wholesale foods or financial assistance for purchasing equipment such as refrigerators for produce, in order to reduce the cost burden of selling healthy food options in a small store. The City should consider working with Multnomah County’s Healthy Retail Initiative, which offers similar forms of support. The City should also partner with community groups that are already working on promoting healthy retail in Gresham neighborhood stores.

**Potential Partners:** Multnomah County Health Department, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

#### Action 4-4: Conduct a feasibility study on how distribution channels could better link the region’s local farms and food producers with neighborhood retailers in priority areas.

**Objective:** We recommend that the City partner with Multnomah County and other regional actors to conduct further research on how to create the economies of scale necessary for neighborhood stores to sell healthy food at a price that is comparable to that of larger supermarket chains in the region. The ultimate goal is to increase access to low priced produce, while supporting the working conditions and viability of the region’s agricultural sector.

**How to:** This study should consider how a regional food distribution co-operative could be created to link the region’s many farms and producers with small neighborhood grocers and retailers. This study might also determine how much money residents would save on transportation-related costs such as car-ownership by improving access to fresh food within walking distance. Lastly, it should examine the multiple benefits of local sourcing, including environmental sustainability, job growth, skill development, and increased local economic prosperity.

**Potential Partners:** Ecotrust, Oregon Food Bank

### GOAL 5: Increase local business ownership and employment opportunities for Gresham residents through community-oriented development.

#### Action 5-1: Provide more direct support to local residents to start and maintain small businesses.

**Objective:** Supporting small, locally-owned businesses is intended to help keep more income circulating in the local economy and increase opportunities for low capital entrepreneurs to start and run small businesses. Increasing the relative support they receive would reduce risk associated with providing incentives to large, outside owned corporations, which tend to be more foot-loose. Priority should be given to organizations that are democratically owned such as cooperatives and businesses with an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) to maximize the social benefits resulting from public subsidies.

**How to:** We recommend that the Community Development and Economic Development departments collaborate to provide additional support to small businesses. This could include maintaining an inventory of vacant commercial properties that local entrepreneurs could pursue. In addition to staff time, we also suggest allocating a greater share of financial incentives to small business development. In accordance with the principles of accountable development, the City should also track and analyze the effectiveness of incentive programs based on long-term job creation, wages, and other community goals, to ensure benefits are realized over time. We also suggest the UDP staff evaluate policies and processes for potential barriers to low capital entrepreneurs such as food carts, short-term sales, and home occupations. Possible changes may include simplifying the permit review process (to reduce the need for consultants) and allowing more flexibility in zoning regulations for micro-businesses or non-profit organizations seeking to occupy vacant or underutilized properties (also reducing costs).

**Potential Partners:** Rockwood Business Coalition, Gresham Chamber of Commerce, Mt. Hood Small Business Development Center
INDICATOR: EMPLOYMENT

GOAL 5: Increase local business ownership and employment opportunities for Gresham residents through community-oriented development.

Action 5-2: Initiate a Community Economic Development (CED) strategy in West Gresham, leveraging the Rockwood Urban Renewal Area (URA) funding.

Objective: This action aims to address community needs and enhance employment opportunities in West Gresham, which our analysis found to have a high concentration of underemployed adults. The perceived lack of stores and services in West Gresham, relative to the rest of Gresham, presents an opportunity for new local-serving businesses. We recommend taking a community economic development (CED) approach to revitalization of the Rockwood URA, in order to increase social benefits of economic activity and to create capital and wealth from within communities. A CED approach would involve increasing the share of URA funding to entrepreneurs, cooperatives, and community organizations, as well as filling gaps in the provision of neighborhood goods and services. Leveraging URA funding in this manner is intended to maximize benefits to local residents. When combined with Action 5-1, encouraging commercial and/or community use of vacant or underutilized properties in the URA would address desires for more social gathering space, aesthetic enhancements, and safety (through more eyes on the street).

How to: Based on other findings related to community needs, we also suggest pursuing opportunities for local residents to provide services related to food, construction/housing rehabilitation, and recreation. There is a strong desire for the local food system to be grounded in community resources (see Goal 4). Construction is an industry with potential career tracks, and the CED strategy should prioritize local businesses and workers to implement housing rehabilitation and redevelopment projects (see Goal 2). Given that youth programming and parks maintenance are other top priorities in the community, the Redevelopment Commission should seek ways to address these goals while increasing local employment. This recommendation builds upon the current approach of utilizing the URA Catalyst site to address existing community needs for additional job training and library resources, as well as incubator and retail space for local entrepreneurs.

Potential Partners: Ecumenical Ministries, Rockwood CDC, Human Solutions, El Programa Hispano, Rockwood Business Coalition

INDICATOR: EDUCATION & SERVICES

GOAL 6: Promote community prosperity by increasing access to education and health promotion services.

Action 6-1: Utilize the Map Gresham Opportunity Analysis as a foundation for the Community Prosperity Initiative work.

Objective: The Community Prosperity Initiative is a 2014 Council Work Plan item that entails exploring the role of the City in addressing poverty with a specific focus on challenges and gaps in providing services to Gresham’s most vulnerable residents. This action is intended to build upon the data collection efforts completed for the Map Gresham project and provide supporting information for this initiative in a cost-effective manner. Continuing to engage service providers and community groups in the identification of service gaps would lead to a deeper understanding of issues and more cost-effective solutions in the long-run. In addition to partnering with stakeholders to complete the CPI, we recommend referring to the opportunity analysis and associated maps to identify gaps in service relative to demand.

How to: The maps are most helpful in displaying the distribution and concentration of population groups that most need particular services, as well as highlighting the transportation connections to resources. The location of facilities in relation to service populations is an important factor for some services such as childcare, while transportation connections may be needed to better serve residents with respect to resources such as adult education. Services used less frequently, such as medical clinics, are not as dependent on location, although transit connections are still essential. The CPI may also refer to findings related to non-spatial challenges with accessing employment and educational opportunities, such as affordability and cultural relevance.

Potential Partners: Human Solutions, Mt. Hood Community College, El Programa Hispano, and Gresham school districts

INDICATOR: PARKS

GOAL 7: Improve the quality of parks and support the provision of youth programming.

Action 7-1: Develop a strategy to expand community and City capacity to increase the frequency of public parks maintenance to ensure that every neighborhood has usable and enjoyable spaces for residents.

Objective: According to the 2007 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment completed by the City, the allocation of parks improvement funds is based on physical access to parks, population density, park capacity, median income, and poverty levels. We recommend revising the tool to ensure the equitable distribution of park improvement funds in the long-run. To increase the frequency of maintenance, the City should pursue formal partnerships with community groups and non-profit organizations to provide additional human power for parks maintenance, supplementing City staff.

How to: Based on CCP’s research, there are two other measures that we recommend adding to the tool for prioritizing parks maintenance: 1) the concentration of youth, and 2) vehicle ownership or transit dependency. Based on the existing and proposed demographic criteria, West Gresham would be the highest priority for increased maintenance. In terms of a funding strategy, a low-cost idea to consider is a parks stewardship program, in which residents, homeowner associations, neighborhood associations, community groups, or businesses could volunteer their time or resources to sponsor park clean-up days, raise funds for parks facilities maintenance, or “adopt” a park or trail.

Potential Partners: SummerWorks, Northwest Youth Corps, Oregon Youth Conservation Corps, and Americorps VISTA, community-based organizations, E-ROC, People for Parks

Action 7-2: Establish a community task force and complete a “neighborhood recreation and nature assessment” to identify desired amenities and prioritize park improvement projects.

Objective: This action is intended to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the city’s nature and recreation facilities to help prioritize improvement projects based on need and interest. Creating a task force to complete the assessment aims to more directly incorporate community considerations into funding decisions. This approach would help ensure that investments are spent on resources that the community needs and wants.

How to: We recommend convening a task force composed of residents of all ages, income levels, and racial/ethnic groups and representing each neighborhood. The task force would assess the number, types, and conditions of facilities to determine which parks are in the poorest condition, which neighborhoods have the lowest number of amenities, and which additional amenities are most desired by community members. The City should refer to the assessment when allocating and applying for funding for park maintenance and improvement projects. The City may want to explore similar community-driven models such as the Sellwood Gap project, Living Cully’s BioBlitz project, and Let’s Grow Cully Park. The City could consider partnering with community groups and non-profit organizations involved with parks and recreation to facilitate the assessment process.

Potential Partners: People for Parks, Gresham Neighborhood Associations
**GOAL 7: Improve the quality of parks and support the provision of youth programming.**

**Action 7-3:** Convene a youth recreation taskforce to develop a strategy for increasing the availability of youth activities, programs, and events held in parks, schools, and other public spaces in West Gresham.

**Objective:** This action is intended to increase recreational opportunities for youth, addressing the finding that West Gresham has a relatively high concentration of people below the age of 18, yet its residents are less likely to have the resources needed to participate in many of the youth programs offered in the region. This action also aims to reduce fears of unsafe activities occurring in parks through community-led and volunteer-based programming, which would help build social capital, as well as a constituency to help support funding efforts for parks and recreation.

**How to:** Working with the existing youth activity providers in Gresham (such as the new Boys and Girls Club), the City should determine what youth recreational needs remain and how the City can best partner with organizations to fulfill the demand. The City can also engage individual residents and smaller community groups in this process in order to provide volunteer-based programming in parks (e.g., teaching workshops in parks, running an activity for a day, or sponsoring a special event). We strongly advise making this a youth-driven project.

**Potential Partners:** Boys and Girls Club, Gresham residents, community-based organizations, E-ROC, People for Parks

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**GOAL 8: Foster safe and welcoming neighborhoods.**

**Action 8-2:** Develop community-led patrols and neighborhood watches in West Gresham, working directly with residents from diverse backgrounds.

**Objective:** Youth-Adult partnerships (Y-AP) is the practice of youth and adults working together, over a sustained period of time to find action-based solutions to a community issue in a way that promotes social justice. Multnomah County has used this model over the last three years to develop a youth-led action plan to address youth violence issues using policy and program interventions. Youth learn new skills that support their development, while adults learn core skills to understand how to work inter-culturally; both then translate this learning into effective transformative practices for governance and the community. The ultimate aim of this goal is to reduce youth violence.

**How to:** We recommend that the City adopt a Y-AP model to develop and implement policies and programs that have broad community impact related to public safety and youth empowerment. A key principle of Y-AP is the authentic empowerment of participating youth through creating a climate of reciprocal learning for both adults and youth. Modeling after Multnomah County’s program, youth leaders in Gresham could work directly with students and adults from various agencies and community groups to identify actions to reduce violence. This action would involve providing City staff time to coordinate planning and implementation with youth, schools, and community organizations.

**Potential Partners:** Multnomah Youth Commission (MYC), Multnomah County STRYVE, City Gang Prevention Initiative, Gresham Youth Advisory Council, and E-ROC

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**GOAL 8: Foster safe and welcoming neighborhoods.**

**Action 8-3:** Develop a community center in West Gresham; consider incorporating into the URA Catalyst site.

**Objective:** Residents in West Gresham expressed a great desire to create and maintain neighborly connections to increase feelings of safety, suggesting community-led neighborhood patrols as a strategy. Parents and grandparents are already doing this informally, escorting youth and children to bus and MAX stops. This action honors the differing experiences of policing that residents from West Gresham have expressed. It also creates a partnership with residents from protected classes and Gresham Police, addressing the desire to build more trusting relationships with new residents.

**How to:** The City can potentially capitalize on the energy generated during the Map Gresham and other community-oriented projects, by providing additional coordination and encouragement for resident-led strategies. One consideration could be expanding on the existing neighborhood watch program to ensure the success of the community-led patrols. This action builds upon current efforts to collaborate around safety and livability issues in West Gresham, including UDP’s Parks and Trails Safety and Awareness project and TriMet’s Renew the Blue project.

**Potential Partners:** City Gang Prevention Initiative, Rosewood Initiative, RENEW, Neighborhood Associations, Office of Neighborhood and Community Engagement, Latino Network, and other community-based organizations

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**INDICATOR: SAFETY & LIVEABILITY**

**GOAL 8: Foster safe and welcoming neighborhoods.**

**Action 8-1:** Partner to create youth-adult partnerships that address youth violence issues through the multi-agency initiative led by the Multnomah Youth Commission.

**Objective:** This action directly addresses the need for family-friendly spaces that are created in partnership with community members and groups. Adults also want more social spaces, especially for youth, while youth want safe spaces that also have enriching activities that build skills and prepare them for the future. The URA Catalyst site is an ideal property to incorporate a community center because it is centrally situated in the West Gresham area, and the co-location of retailers, businesses, and social services would create a vibrant space for gathering.

**How to:** The City should consider the URA Catalyst site and/or leverage URA funding to pursue the development of a community center in West Gresham. While there is apparent desire for youth programming and meeting space, the design and programming should be completed through a community-driven process. This recommendation builds upon the success of the Rockwood Library and the current vision for the Catalyst site to co-locate community-serving uses.

**Potential Partners:** Urban Design and Planning, Gresham Redevelopment Commission (GRDC), Multnomah County STRYVE and Libraries, Mt. Hood Community College, Work Systems, Rockwood Community Development Corporation, Rockwood Business Coalition, and Latino Network

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**INDICATOR: SAFETY & LIVEABILITY**

**GOAL 8: Foster safe and welcoming neighborhoods.**

**Action 8-2:** Develop community-led patrols and neighborhood watches in West Gresham, working directly with residents from diverse backgrounds.

**Objective:** Youth-Adult partnerships (Y-AP) is the practice of youth and adults working together, over a sustained period of time to find action-based solutions to a community issue in a way that promotes social justice. Multnomah County has used this model over the last three years to develop a youth-led action plan to address youth violence issues using policy and program interventions. Youth learn new skills that support their development, while adults learn core skills to understand how to work inter-culturally; both then translate this learning into effective transformative practices for governance and the community. The ultimate aim of this goal is to reduce youth violence.

**How to:** We recommend that the City adopt a Y-AP model to develop and implement policies and programs that have broad community impact related to public safety and youth empowerment. A key principle of Y-AP is the authentic empowerment of participating youth through creating a climate of reciprocal learning for both adults and youth. Modeling after Multnomah County’s program, youth leaders in Gresham could work directly with students and adults from various agencies and community groups to identify actions to reduce violence. This action would involve providing City staff time to coordinate planning and implementation with youth, schools, and community organizations.

**Potential Partners:** Multnomah Youth Commission (MYC), Multnomah County STRYVE, City Gang Prevention Initiative, Gresham Youth Advisory Council, and E-ROC

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**INDICATOR: SAFETY & LIVEABILITY**

**GOAL 8: Foster safe and welcoming neighborhoods.**

**Action 8-3:** Develop a community center in West Gresham; consider incorporating into the URA Catalyst site.

**Objective:** Residents in West Gresham expressed a great desire to create and maintain neighborly connections to increase feelings of safety, suggesting community-led neighborhood patrols as a strategy. Parents and grandparents are already doing this informally, escorting youth and children to bus and MAX stops. This action honors the differing experiences of policing that residents from West Gresham have expressed. It also creates a partnership with residents from protected classes and Gresham Police, addressing the desire to build more trusting relationships with new residents.

**How to:** The City can potentially capitalize on the energy generated during the Map Gresham and other community-oriented projects, by providing additional coordination and encouragement for resident-led strategies. One consideration could be expanding on the existing neighborhood watch program to ensure the success of the community-led patrols. This action builds upon current efforts to collaborate around safety and livability issues in West Gresham, including UDP’s Parks and Trails Safety and Awareness project and TriMet’s Renew the Blue project.

**Potential Partners:** City Gang Prevention Initiative, Rosewood Initiative, RENEW, Neighborhood Associations, Office of Neighborhood and Community Engagement, Latino Network, and other community-based organizations

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FUNDING:

GOAL 9: Improve outcomes in priority areas by strategically allocating funds, using opportunity mapping as a guide.

**Objective:** The City currently uses a rating system to evaluate applications for HUD funding through the CDBG and HOME programs. We recommend using opportunity mapping to: 1) evaluate applications for housing and infrastructure projects using HUD funds, and 2) determine areas to target various types of projects that advance livability goals. The aim would be to more explicitly account for the geographic distribution of resources and areas of highest needs, as well as to use funds to proactively increase access to opportunity for low-income residents.

**How to:** Proactively seeking housing projects in areas of “high opportunity” would involve reaching out to housing developers and affordable housing providers, assisting with finding funding sources beyond HUD, and providing additional support to organizations that have not received federal funding in the past through the grant application process. Please refer to the Opportunity Mapping Guide in the plan which includes recommendations on how to use the opportunity mapping as a guide for these various purposes. City staff, led by the Community Development department but including all divisions that utilize HUD funding, should facilitate a process to update the tool. The update would consider HUD requirements, City policies, and community priorities such as those identified in this Framework Plan. In accordance with Goal 1, the process should involve Citizen Advisory Subcommittees and community leaders from under-represented populations in Gresham. We also suggest seeking assistance from other jurisdictions in the region that have completed opportunity mapping such as Washington County, the City of Portland, and Clackamas County.

**How to:** Proactively allocate HUD funding to priority areas and update the tool for evaluating CDBG/HOME projects.

**Objective:** This action recognizes the potential trade-offs between different priorities when allocating HUD funds. We recommend prioritizing housing because it provides the foundation for health and well-being. About 44% of Gresham households pay over 30% of their income on rent or mortgage, posing significant challenges to accessing opportunities. Following housing, we encourage allocation of funds towards community priorities for economic and community development, as identified in this Framework Plan and through on-going public involvement processes. This prioritization of funding may squeeze remaining HUD funds that could be used for transportation.

**How to:** One consideration is adopting a City policy to commit a minimum of 25% of CDBG funds to “housing development and rehabilitation.” We also suggest pursuing new sources of funding to implement pedestrian-oriented transportation projects (Goal 3). The TSP lists various sources of transportation funding, and Safe Routes to Schools is an example of a funding source for walkability projects in residential areas. Consistent with the actions in Goals 4 and 5, we recommend targeting economic development funds from the URA and HUD toward local business ownership and employment opportunities, including community food assets in priority areas. In accordance with Goals 4 and 7, we also suggest that remaining funds for “public facilities and improvements” be allocated to park improvements and community gardens, until a long-term-funding strategy is adopted (see Action 9-3).

**How to:** One consideration is adopting a City policy to commit a minimum of 25% of CDBG funds to “housing development and rehabilitation.” We also suggest pursuing new sources of funding to implement pedestrian-oriented transportation projects (Goal 3). The TSP lists various sources of transportation funding, and Safe Routes to Schools is an example of a funding source for walkability projects in residential areas. Consistent with the actions in Goals 4 and 5, we recommend targeting economic development funds from the URA and HUD toward local business ownership and employment opportunities, including community food assets in priority areas. In accordance with Goals 4 and 7, we also suggest that remaining funds for “public facilities and improvements” be allocated to park improvements and community gardens, until a long-term-funding strategy is adopted (see Action 9-3).

**How to:** The funding strategy may involve re-establishing a Parks and Recreation Special District as a long-term, stable funding source. In the interim, we recommend that the City seek grant funding to implement park improvements and community development projects and partnering with non-profit, grant eligible organizations (see Actions 7-1 and 7-2).
Public Involvement:

Continue to create mechanisms for community involvement

Gresham can continue to build upon its public involvement efforts by creating mechanisms that allow staff to follow up on community input and evaluate community processes (e.g., evaluation tools and checklists). Additionally, the City should continue to partner with Portland State University, University of Oregon, and local colleges to provide technical assistance for planning and research projects that advance opportunity-related goals. In addition to assistance with the recommended actions in this plan, examples of possible projects include: demographic research, equity analyses, and health/social impact assessments. Community-based participatory research could be used as a tool for identifying local priorities and building capacity for community to engage in decision making processes.

Housing:

Work towards regional housing solutions

Scarcity of affordable housing is a regional issue, and all cities need to take responsibility for housing low-income people. One step that Gresham can take is to advocate for regional solutions to affordable housing through Fair Housing networks. There are several active players in the housing world that Gresham can work with, including Washington County’s Community Development office, the Portland Housing Bureau, Clackamas County, and Metro.

Evaluate barriers to affordable housing

The Fair Housing Council of Oregon has developed an evaluation tool that city planners, policy makers, and other practitioners can use to examine local land use through a fair housing lens. The tool suggests clear and straightforward actions that jurisdictions can take to both comply with fair housing law and affirmatively further fair housing. By going through this exercise, Gresham can also identify barriers to affordable housing. While fair housing and affordable housing are related, they are distinct concepts. However, many individuals who are members of protected classes with respect to fair housing also need affordable housing (although not all). The guide primarily focuses on ways land use plans and implementing codes can affirmatively further fair housing, but also contains suggestions relevant to supporting the development of affordable housing. The guide is available through the Fair Housing Council website, and an updated version is expected to be released in the summer of 2014.

One barrier that is mentioned in the tool is the permitting process for new housing. We suggest the city assess the potential for streamlining the permitting process for new multifamily housing, including design standards that might increase the provision of common areas (e.g., green space, play areas, multi-functional community rooms). This includes considering changes to system development charges (SDCs) to encourage the construction of market-rate housing that is affordable to lower incomes. We recognize the need to balance the goal of increasing the affordable housing stock with the intention of SDCs and permitting processes to ensure adequate provision of urban infrastructure and services and of safe, well-designed housing.

Promote minority homeownership

The city should seek ways to close the homeownership gap for people of color in Gresham. One suggestion is to work with the Shared Appreciation Mortgage (SAM) Program (2014-2015) funds to provide homebuyer assistance to minority households. Currently, there are not parameters set for this program. If this program continues, it can be a viable source of assistance to minority homebuyers and their families.

Food:

SNAP and WIC Benefit Programs

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program are federal programs that serve as a critical food assistance resource to low-income, qualifying families. In addition to providing a nutritional benefit to enrolled individuals and families, the programs also bring federal dollars to Gresham’s local economy. If residents spend their benefits in stores and markets outside of Gresham, than those federal dollars “leak” from the community. Ensuring that all grocery stores and farmers’ markets in Gresham accept SNAP and WIC dollars is one way the City can maximize the capture of federal funds. This is especially important for stores selling fresh, healthy produce. Therefore, the City should consider mandatory database of stores and markets that accept federal benefits, building upon CCP’s Market Basket Survey, and provide information and encouragement to stores that currently do not. Further, the City could also consider partnering with Multnomah County Health Department and the Oregon Department of Health and Human Services to study the inflow and the outflow of these benefits in the city’s neighborhoods, to help identify ways to capture additional benefits.

Food Policy Council and Food Access Plan

Over the course of this research, we have identified numerous organizations and residents who are very eager to collaborate with the City in developing new policies and approaches to improving food access. The City of Gresham should continue to collaborate and partner with these local organizations, as well as those that work with Gresham’s culturally diverse communities. A food policy council might assist the City of Gresham with identifying and implementing specific food access improvements in high priority areas, building upon the findings of this Opportunity Framework Plan.

Community Gardens Program

The City operates three of the community gardens in Gresham (whereas the others are operated by private organizations). Currently there are about 60 families participating in the City’s community gardening program, and the gardens are at or nearing capacity. There is a short wait list for the City Hall community garden, indicating unmet demand. The City should consider expansion of this program to other underserved areas of the city that face the greatest barriers to food access, consistent with Action 4-2.

Employment Opportunities:

Encourage “accountable development” practices

The City should consider preparing a written economic development plan to help ensure linkage between budgeting process and economic development priorities. This would involve evaluating economic development policies in relation to community priorities and “accountable development” practices. Accountable development includes transparent negotiation processes and written agreements with monitorable and enforceable conditions. Where possible, agreements should address local needs such as living wage jobs accessible to the local population, health benefits, training and advancement opportunities, child care services, public spaces, and/or workforce housing. The planning process should involve regional and local partners, as well as residents.

Education and Services:

Assess child care needs and solutions

An additional step the City might take in addressing barriers to employment and educational opportunities is to look for model programs in cities similar to Gresham that have public support for the provision of affordable and quality child care. We recommend considering possible implementable strategies for Gresham including cooperative childcare organizations; this would help meet community needs, while supporting local employment and economic activity.

Parks:

Increase street trees in underserved neighborhoods

The City has experienced an increase in the amount of street trees in underserved neighborhoods (see Citywide Urban Forestry Management Plan, 2011 for maps). While street trees cannot replace the presence of a well-maintained city park, they are a less expensive way for the City to add aesthetic and environmental health benefits to communities. When considering the addition of street trees, the City should prioritize neighborhoods with the lowest share of the city’s of urban canopy cover, as identified in the City’s Neighborhood Canopy Maps. Street trees also signal public investment in a place, encouraging other types of private investment in the built environment.
Increase access to parks and ensure long-term availability of parks
As discussed in the Transportation section, the connectivity and quality of the sidewalk network limits access to parks, particularly in West Gresham. As such, we recommend developing a system for tracking sidewalk improvements specifically with regard to park access, supplementing Action 3-1. In order to help ensure the long-term availability of park space for Gresham residents, CCP recommends that the City include a designation for parks in the zoning code.

Assess environmental quality in Gresham
Due to limited time constraints, CCP was unable to complete an in-depth analysis of environmental quality across Gresham neighborhoods. However, this is a very important issue to consider when determining access to opportunity, as poor environmental quality can lead to serious health risks. For example, air pollution contributes to respiratory ailments. Based on a brief overview of the City of Gresham’s urban canopy maps, compiled for the Urban Forestry Management Plan, and a review of the Department of Environmental Quality’s (DEQ) Portland Air Toxics Solutions project, it is apparent that there are disparities between neighborhoods with regards to urban canopy cover and exposure to toxic air pollutants. In addition, Map 17 in the Opportunity Analysis also shows an uneven distribution of asthma rates. The City should further investigate the level of risk to residents and determine how they can partner with other organizations such as the DEQ to mitigate these risks.

Safety and Livability:
Create and implement community solutions to neighborhood safety
There are several ways in which the City can partner with community to increase safety and livability in Gresham’s neighborhoods. First, Gresham can create a joint community-city task force to build stronger community-led policing strategies that de-escalate violence and increase safety at the neighborhood level. To inform strategies for reducing disproportionate minority contact, Gresham could also consider collecting and tracking data (i.e. policing rates, criminal justice system rates, and prisoner reentry rates).

The mission of Camassia Community Planning is to advance social equity and community health. We strive to help people build their capacity to engage actively in civic life and public decision-making processes. We are committed to using engagement strategies that empower those who have traditionally experienced social and economic barriers, in order to ensure that all community members get to be active co-creators of public policies.

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