



City of Vancouver  
Washington 2011

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# East Old Evergreen Highway Neighborhood

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Neighborhood Action Plan

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October 2011

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# Introduction

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The purpose of this neighborhood action plan is to identify issues that are of concern to the residents of East Old Evergreen Highway neighborhood, and to devise strategies for addressing these concerns. In conjunction with broader policies and implementation measures contained within the City of Vancouver's comprehensive plan, the neighborhood action planning process is intended to protect and enhance the livability within specific neighborhoods, as well as to help fulfill the overall community vision and to create a more livable city. More specifically, neighborhood action plans are intended to:

- Educate both city government and neighborhood residents about each other's concerns and vision for the future.
- Promote collaboration between the city and the neighborhood in order to achieve mutual goals and a shared sense of responsibility.
- Create a "sense of place" within the community by identifying and developing the assets within each neighborhood.
- Initiate change, rather than simply reacting to it, by addressing specific issues and opportunities.
- Achieve sensible and coordinated project and program planning within each neighborhood and between all the city's neighborhoods.
- Strengthen neighborhoods.

## **Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan**

In general, a comprehensive plan is intended to provide broad policy direction, which is implemented through more specific development regulations and capital expenditure programs. Comprehensive plans do not, however, typically address the more immediate needs and concerns of individual neighborhoods. This is the purpose of the sub-area or neighborhood plan.

The City's comprehensive plan, entitled Vancouver Comprehensive Plan, 2003-2023, was adopted May 3, 2004. The purpose of the East Old Evergreen Highway Neighborhood Association Action Plan is to assist in integrating neighborhood needs into the City's budget process, Six-Year Street Improvement Program, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan, and other planning and funding programs. The general policy statements included in the Action Plan may also be used by the City Council to guide future decisions involving development proposals and plan amendments affecting the neighborhood.

## **The Neighborhood Action Planning Process**

The East Old Evergreen Highway Neighborhood Association was first developed in 2008. After a year of inactivity, residents gathered on February 25, 2010 at Fisher's Landing Elementary School to re-activate the Neighborhood Association Board. Prior to re-activating the Board, information was gathered in 2008 in the form of a survey which was intended to be included in this neighborhood action plan (NAP). However, only fourteen residents had completed the 2008 survey. In an effort to gather more information, attendees at the February 25, 2010 neighborhood association meeting were presented a list of neighborhood issues that had been previously identified and were asked to prioritize the issues through a dot-exercise. The result was a prioritization of issues/concerns.

1. Parks and Trails
2. Train Horn Noise
3. Traffic and Safety
4. Historic Preservation
5. Development
6. Natural Resources

Underlying the above list of concerns is Safety. Some of the issues/concerns are interrelated, such as Parks and Trails, and Traffic and Safety.

Within the last year, Committee Chairs have further outlined and developed steps to complete goals established to meet the vision for the EOEHNA. Therefore, the objectives included in this NAP touch on the majority of the issues listed above, with Safety being the overriding objective.

Critical to the success of addressing neighborhood priorities is the relationship with the adjacent neighborhood association to the west, Old Evergreen Highway Neighborhood Association (OEHNA), and collaboration amongst residents from Home Owner Associations and organized resident groups. Because both the EOEHNA and OEHNA share similar priorities, a concerted effort and collaborative approach has been shared by executive Board members and several residents from both neighborhood associations. For example, the Evergreen Highway Neighborhood Coalition is chaired by the Evergreen Trail Committee chair for EOEHNA and includes Executive Board members from both EOEHNA and OEHNA.

## **Overview of the Plan**

This Plan contains four components. The Neighborhood Profile contains a general description of the neighborhood. The Vision Statement describes the neighborhood's sense of identity and vision for its future. The Neighborhood Objectives identifies issues that are of concern to the residents of the neighborhood. The Neighborhood Action Steps include specific potential strategies for accomplishing the identified objectives. Each Action Step is prioritized and identifies the responsible parties for implementing those strategies.

## **Funding and Financial Resources**

Having the Neighborhood Action Plan does not guarantee funding. The Vancouver City Council has in the past appropriated grant funding as resources allow helping implement action steps in the plan. In addition, the neighborhood may be eligible for many private, federal, and state funding programs.

# Community Profile

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Boundaries of East Old Evergreen Highway Neighborhood Association border Old Evergreen Highway Neighborhood Association to the west (just east of I-205), Highway 14 to the north, and the Columbia River to the south and SE 192 to the east.

The heart of the East Old Evergreen Highway neighborhood is the historic Old Evergreen Highway itself, which parallels the mighty Columbia River to the south, and is full of rich history. The neighborhood includes two Homeowner Associations; Steamboat Landing and Rivercrest. Several other organized groups exist within the neighborhood though they are not officially recognized by the City of Vancouver but are heavily involved in committees established by the current EOEHNA Board. Property values are some of the highest in the City of Vancouver.

The uniqueness along Evergreen Highway gives way to experiencing a landscape that is visually pleasing because of vistas of the Columbia River, towering evergreens along the highway with views of Mount Hood, and the presence of historic homes. Most residences have well-tended landscaping and maintain lush natural vegetation. Wetlands and tributaries are situated all along the highway, giving way to habitat for flora and fauna. For example, Mimsi Marsh, a natural wetland approximately ¼ mile long and up to 200 yards wide supports mallards and wood ducks. The character of the Evergreen corridor remains rural despite the residential development. Several homes are documented architectural and historical significance. In the middle of the neighborhood is Fisher's Cemetery, a small pioneer cemetery and perhaps the oldest settlers' burial ground in Clark County, with a headstone dating back to 1850. Today the cemetery is administered by the Fishers Cemetery Association. East of the Cemetery approximately 1 mile is a mill. In addition, the neighborhood includes one of the Northwest's earliest sawmills. The roadway of Evergreen Highway traces its history back to the dawn of the age of the automobile, with many of the concrete sections adorned with date stamps back to 1918. Today Evergreen Highway remains a popular bicycle route in Clark County and is heavily used to by-pass traffic congestion on Highway 14 during peak hours.

Paralleling Evergreen Highway to the south is a railroad owned and operated by Burlington Northern. There are many private railroad crossings for homes located south of the railroad, which has resulted in accidents and deaths over the years. The majority of undeveloped lands are located east of the Fisher's Cemetery.

Crime within the neighborhood has seemed to increase along the Evergreen corridor, specifically at the bottom of 164<sup>th</sup> and the river where gang and drug activity has been noted. Several homes have had landscaping fixtures stolen, houses burglarized, and cars broken into.

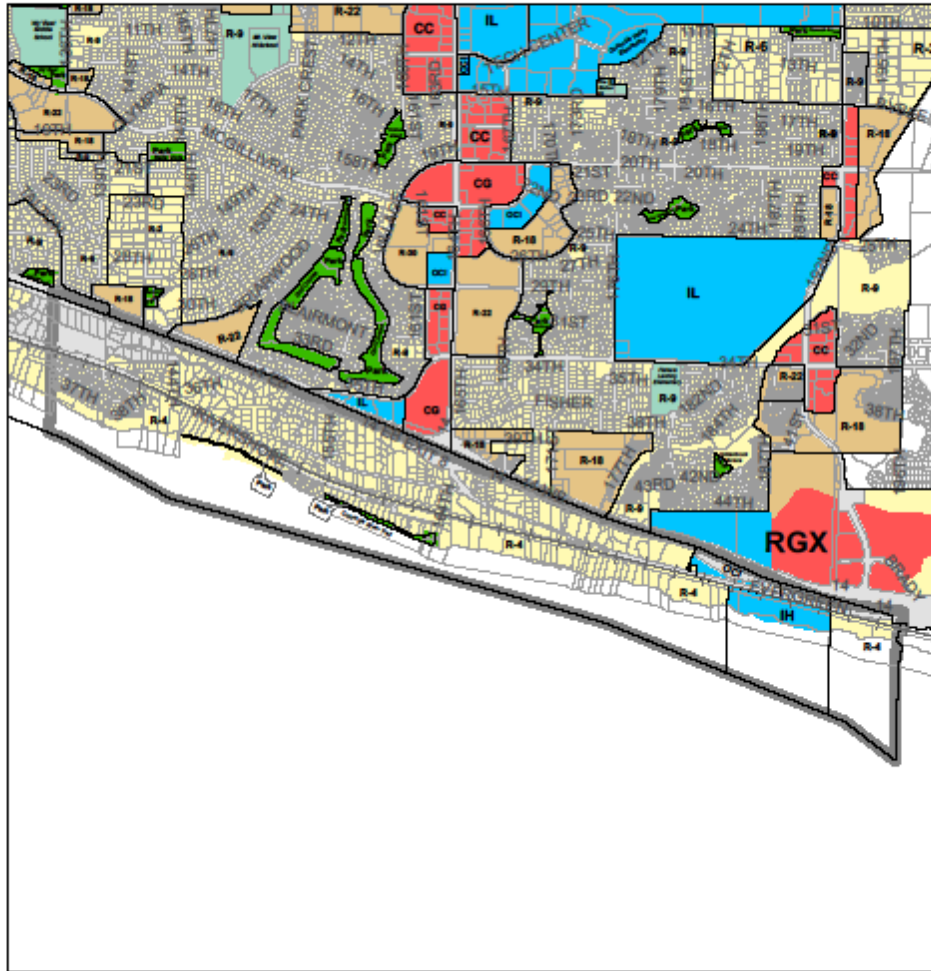
Few businesses exist within the neighborhood. A private access exists from Evergreen Highway going north under Highway 14 to a rock quarry and business located in Camas and essentially on the boundary of the neighborhood. This site is famous for holding Dozer Days and heavy traffic is experienced along Evergreen Highway on these particular days.

Heavier traffic is experienced all along Evergreen Highway from one end of the boundary to the other because of morning traffic. This poses a significant safety concern for residents exiting their driveways

in the morning or children waiting for school buses. Traffic speed limits during rush hours are not followed and are a huge concern for all residents within the neighborhood.

On the north side of Old Evergreen Highway, just east of the I-205 bridge, lies Columbia Springs. Located on 82 acres of urban greenspace, and laced with trails open to the public, Columbia Springs offers environmental educational programs for school children and adults. Columbia Springs is also home to an active fish hatchery operated by Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. The hatchery was originally built in 1938 as part of a Works Progress Administration project. Today, the hatchery raises trout for local sport fishing.

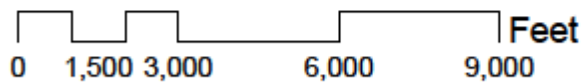
# Neighborhood Zoning Map



## Legend

- Zoning Boundary
- Urban Lower Density Residential
- Urban Higher Density Residential
- Commercial & Mixed Use
- Industrial
- Public Facility
- Open Space

## East Old Evergreen Hwy





# Vision Statement

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Residents of East Old Evergreen Highway embrace our neighborhood for its semi-rural feel adjacent to the mighty Columbia River. We wish to preserve and improve the quality of our neighborhood within this unique geographic location in SW Washington. Current qualities include naturally serene surroundings, low-density attractive well-tended historic and new homes, a scenic road, and breathtaking views of the Columbia River and islands. We envision a neighborhood where quietness prevails, where it is safe to walk, jog, and bike, where neighbors feel connected, where we are safe and secure, where neighbors are concerned about each other, and where neighbors are involved in working together to preserve and improve these qualities.

In order to fulfill this overall vision for the neighborhood, the following general goals have been identified (not necessarily in order of priority):

- Ensure any development remains low-density, serves many age groups, and provides an adequate amount of parks and trails accessible to all residents along East Old Evergreen Highway to 192nd;
- Ensure that single-family residential remains the predominant use in the neighborhood;
- Promote a safe trail or walking pathway along East Old Evergreen Highway to 192nd where it is safe to go for a family walk, bike ride, or jog at any time of the day;
- Promote a safe neighborhood park that families can enjoy;
- Promote the establishment of a Train Noise Quiet Zone in our neighborhood to ensure the low sound of passing trains is but a quiet reminder of the world outside our homes;
- Promote security, aesthetic appeal, and enhance overall livability;
- Promote safety for all on the scenic road; and
- Value the historical significance of our neighborhood.

# Objectives and Action Steps

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The following recommended action items identified as having a "high" priority are considered by the Neighborhood Association to be most important. "Medium" priority action steps are somewhat less important. "Low" priority action steps are considered least important.

Priority has been assigned by the Neighborhood Association for each action step without regard for the time frame within which the recommendation can realistically be accomplished (short-range, long-range) and without concern for whether funding sources can be practically identified. Accordingly, it is possible that a "High" priority item may not be realized for many years. In contrast, some "Low" priority items could be potentially accomplished in a relatively short amount of time without significant capital expense.

Listed below are abbreviations for the various responsible parties used throughout the document:

## ABBREVIATIONS:

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>BC</b>     | <b>Business Community</b>                                  |
| <b>BNSF</b>   | <b>Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad</b>               |
| <b>CITY</b>   | <b>All Responsible City Departments</b>                    |
| <b>CMS</b>    | <b>Community Mediation Services</b>                        |
| <b>CPU</b>    | <b>Clark Public Utilities</b>                              |
| <b>CTRAN</b>  | <b>CTRAN</b>   |
| <b>DRS</b>    | <b>Development Review Services</b>                         |
| <b>DVP</b>    | <b>Developers</b>  |
| <b>EHNC</b>   | <b>Evergreen Highway Neighborhood Coalition</b>            |
| <b>EOEHNA</b> | <b>East Old Evergreen Highway Neighborhood Association</b> |
| <b>FRA</b>    | <b>Federal Railway Administration</b>                      |
| <b>OTH</b>    | <b>Other organizations</b>                                 |
| <b>OWN</b>    | <b>Neighborhood Property Owners</b>                        |
| <b>PMG</b>    | <b>Property Management Groups</b>                          |
| <b>PS</b>     | <b>Postal Services</b>                                     |
| <b>VCC</b>    | <b>Vancouver Code Compliance</b>                           |
| <b>VCPRD</b>  | <b>Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Department</b>     |
| <b>VCD</b>    | <b>Vancouver Community Development Department</b>          |
| <b>VFD</b>    | <b>Vancouver Fire Department</b>                           |
| <b>VON</b>    | <b>Vancouver Office of Neighborhoods</b>                   |
| <b>VPD</b>    | <b>Vancouver Police Department</b>                         |
| <b>VPW</b>    | <b>Vancouver Public Works</b>                              |
| <b>VSWS</b>   | <b>Vancouver Solid Waste Services</b>                      |
| <b>VUF</b>    | <b>Vancouver Urban Forestry</b>                            |

## I. Community Pedestrian Pathway

### Objective #1.

Raise \$5 million of actual or committed funds by December 31, 2012. The Evergreen Highway Neighborhood Coalition has drawing plans and cost estimates to build a pedestrian pathway for a total of \$6 million dollars. One million has been raised to date. The remaining funds need to be committed by December 31, 2012 to ensure a construction start date by 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2013.

| Action Steps  | Priority | Responsible Parties |
|---|----------|---------------------|
| Conduct one on one visits with high net worth, high profile community individuals to solicit donations.   | H        | EHNC                |
| Write requests for large corporations via their website request for proposal (RFP) process to raise funds   | H        | EHNC                |
| Conduct monthly awareness receptions at the Homewood Suites for community groups to create awareness and solicit funds  | M        | EHNC                |
| <h3 style="text-align: center;">Objective #2.</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">Identify trail location from Wintler Park to 192<sup>nd</sup>, determine material to make the trail determining an accurate cost for the project.</p>   |          |                     |
| Work with a Civil Engineer firm and the City of Vancouver to ensure Objective #1 above is completed.  | H        | EHNC                |
| Educate and inform residents about the importance of properly maintaining their landscapes and property. Promote tree preservation and proper tree pruning, specifically encouraging residents not to top their trees to keep the historic character of neighborhood.   | H        | VUF, EOEHNA         |
| <h3 style="text-align: center;">Objective #3.</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">Ensure federal grant funds are not lost and used as soon as possible. EOEHNA would like to receive milestone reports on the project from the City of Vancouver to ensure grant dollars are managed per the grant requirements for purposes of ensuring they are not forfeited by missed timelines or mismanagement.</p> |          |                     |
| Ensure the City of Vancouver and  | H        | EHNC                |

|  |   |        |
|--|---|--------|
| the Evergreen Highway Neighborhood Coalition agree on how to best utilize these funds and apply for the funding by the end of December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2011                 |   |        |
| Objective #4.<br>Garner community support.   |   |        |
| Ensure bicycle and running clubs throughout Vancouver and Portland know of the project via presentations at their club events.   | M | EHNC   |
| Objective #5.<br>Continue to garner neighborhood support.  |   |        |
| Conduct bi-annual neighborhood association meetings to ensure all neighbors are aware of the progress of the project.  | M | EOEHNA |
| Objective #6.<br>Ensure the community and residents of the Old Evergreen Highway have additional communication methods to keep informed of what is happening with the project. |   |        |
| Update website with funding advances and current information monthly   | M | EHNC   |
| Create Facebook page and garner friends for this vehicle   | L | EHNC   |
| Objective #7.<br>Ensure consistent representation at the Neighborhood Traffic Safety Alliance (NTSA) monthly meetings.   |   |        |
| Attend monthly NTSA meetings   | H | EOEHNA |

An additional goal not included in this NAP is the Train Horn Noise Reduction. Though it is premature to include the objectives and tasks for this committee, a significant amount of progress and support has been made to date and continues as a result of the East Vancouver Train Horn Quiet Zone committee members. We anticipate including the Train Horn Noise Reduction in the next reiteration of the NAP.