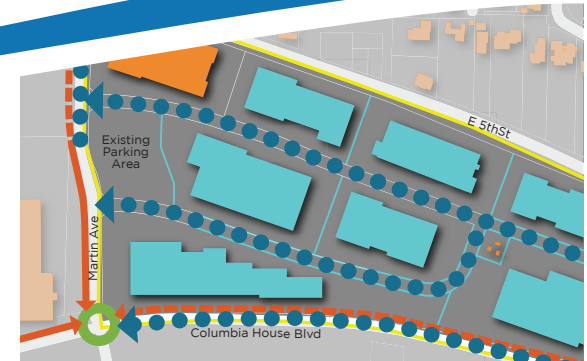
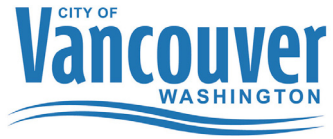


# LOWER GRAND EMPLOYMENT AREA AREA WIDE ACTION PLAN



# Acknowledgments



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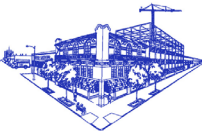
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- Appendix A: 30% Design Improvements
- Appendix B: Grant Funding Spreadsheet
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# SUMMARY

A significant shortage of developable industrial land exists throughout the Vancouver/Portland region. The City of Vancouver (city), in partnership with the Columbia River Economic Development Council (CREDC) and the community, is dedicated to the retention, efficient use, and development of industrial lands providing opportunities for higher-wage job growth.

The Lower Grand Employment Area (LGEA) in Vancouver, Washington is a valuable employment center that has not yet realized its full potential. While there are many thriving businesses in the area, deteriorating and substandard street conditions, poor drainage, deed restrictions, misalignment of property value, and real or perceived environmental impact have hindered development.

Building on the 2008 Lower Grand Employment Area Subarea Plan, the city has embarked on an Area-Wide Planning (AWP) program, which is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The AWP project has engaged with business and property owners, and other key stakeholders, to advance planning and strategic actions necessary to resolve identified infrastructure issues and inform brownfields assessment and remediation needs.

Through the AWP program, the city's primary objective is to create conditions for a thriving employment center, which it will accomplish by developing a site reuse action plan that is grounded in market feasibility and community stakeholder priorities. The plan identifies opportunities and constraints for the main focus areas of the LGEA and establishes key action items to address them. It also includes strategies for funding infrastructure improvements, identifies brownfields for assessment and remediation, and supports property and business owners in developing and promoting a positive image for the LGEA. Although the plan addresses all of the opportunities and constraints of the LGEA, primary focus was given to the Northwest Quadrant. This portion of the LGEA has the most immediate need and the greatest potential to leverage funding for additional focused infrastructure planning and design.

This AWP Action Plan is grounded in the understanding that public improvements to infrastructure can provide the needed catalyst for private development. Through productive engagement with key stakeholders, the project acted on the following goals and achieved

the following key outcomes.

## Project Goals

- Preserve industrial lands and support the growth of family wage jobs
- Identify site and business needs; create a dialogue between the city and LGEA stakeholders, leading to a prioritized action and site reuse plan
- Respect existing property and business owners' goals
- Facilitate a key stakeholder and public involvement process that provides the opportunity for all interested parties to be fully informed and engaged throughout the project
- Identify critical infrastructure improvements needed to uplift underutilized areas of the LGEA; prepare preliminary designs for identified improvements
- Identify potential brownfield properties and develop action steps for promoting remediation and redevelopment
- Create a durable plan that allows for a phased implementation over the years ahead

**For more information about this project visit the  
[PROJECT WEBSITE.](#)**

<http://www.cityofvancouver.us/ced/page/lower-grand-employment-area-infrastructure-and-brownfield-action-plan-project>

## Project Outcomes

- A multi-phased engagement process with key stakeholders in the LGEA
- A web-based, interactive GIS inventory of LGEA properties
- A topographic survey of the NW Quadrant focus area, which identified previously unknown and unresolved alignment and property boundary issues
- A 30% design package for an innovative, industrial-use street design that fully integrates low-impact design into the revised roadway alignment
- Analysis of opportunities and constraints throughout the LGEA
- The final LGEA site reuse action plan, which identifies specific implementation actions, potential future funding, and financial mechanisms
- Partnership with key property and business owners to support business retention and expansion—through the infrastructure design and targeted rezone provided by this site reuse action plan
- Leveraged public/private partnership to support a \$1.1 million stormwater grant application to the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) for construction of road and stormwater infrastructure in the Northwest Quadrant focus area. Initial approval of the application, pending funding by the legislature, was announced in January 2016.
- Identification and support of site-specific nominations for brownfield assessment funding to be submitted for EPA review

# 1 BACKGROUND

The LGEA is a valuable employment center and gateway to the Vancouver National Historic Reserve. Recent development in the area includes the Grand Central shopping center, office/ industrial buildings, and flex-industrial buildings on small infill lots. While there are many thriving businesses in the area, deteriorating and substandard street conditions, poor drainage, and real or perceived environmental impact have hindered development on many of the vacant and/or underutilized properties.

The LGEA consists of approximately 170-acres of predominantly industrial property with limited commercial development. The LGEA is bound by Pearson Field Airfield to the west, State Highway 14 to the south, and the residential neighborhoods of Hudson's Bay and Edgewood Park to the north, and Evergreen Shores to the east. The plan area is in close proximity to I-5, I-205, SR-14, and nearby industrial properties.

The 2008 Lower Grand Employment Area Subarea Plan established vision, goals, and policies to help direct revitalization and protect industrial uses in this critical employment area. In 2014, the City initiated an action plan process funded through the EPA. The purpose was to engage with business and property owners, and other key stakeholders, to advance the Subarea Plan through planning and strategic actions necessary to resolve identified infrastructure issues and inform brownfields assessment and cleanup needs. The goal is to create conditions for a thriving employment center, which will be accomplished by developing a site reuse plan for the focus areas that is grounded in market feasibility and community priorities.

The site reuse action plans for the individual focus areas are in Section 2 of this report. The plans address priority issues that were identified through the planning and stakeholder engagement process, including future improvements such as road and stormwater infrastructure, property aggregation, redevelopment, and marketing and branding. The plan for implementation identifies funding strategies for these future improvements. Additionally, this section identifies tools that the city can use to create special districts (e.g., local improvement districts and brownfield redevelopment opportunity zones) that open up opportunities for additional funding and/or raise money based on the increase of the assessed property values after improvements are completed.

## Overview of the Planning Process

The LGEA AWP project began in January 2014. A consultant team lead by Maul Foster & Alongi, Inc. (MFA) was engaged to work with LGEA property owners, city staff, and the local community to move the AWP process forward and provide all project deliverables. Figure 2 provides an overview of the planning process, which included the following tasks and deliverables:

### Community Involvement - Phase I

The first phase of community involvement for the AWP focused on defining goals and anticipated outcomes, and establishing a baseline of community and stakeholder perspectives of the LGEA. A Community Involvement Plan was generated to outline and guide all outreach activities, including development of informational materials, key messaging, and a timeline for outreach. Community Outreach - Phase I involved informational materials and initial outreach. Letters of introduction and a project fact sheet were sent to all property and business owners in the LGEA describing the project and requesting their participation. The letters were followed up by site visits to all properties to provide project information and request informal interviews to gather perspectives of area tenants, owners, and operators. A project web page was developed with a link to an online survey focused on business and property owners within the LGEA. The final step, focused interviews with key LGEA stakeholders, helped prioritize key issues for planning and engagement.

### Existing Conditions

This task included the review and analysis of existing planning documents and regulations, infrastructure conditions, transportation facilities, access to public trails and open space, and known or potential brownfield sites and related environmental conditions. A General Market Study (March 27, 2014) was prepared to identify current LGEA business and property ownership patterns, including characterization of existing property and business uses, and to review demand for added industrial, business park/flex and related office space, and retail in the study area. A web-based GIS interactive inventory of all properties in the LGEA was created to assist with identification and analysis of properties. This information, along with outcomes of the

Phase I Community Involvement activities, was compiled into the Existing Conditions Report (August 29, 2014).

### Community Involvement - Phase II

The second phase of community involvement for the AWP project involved focused engagement with key LGEA stakeholders. The involvement consisted of two public workshops and a project-team charrette. The first workshop was hosted at City Hall; stakeholders participated in a facilitated discussion of key opportunities and constraints in the LGEA. Using input generated from the first workshop,

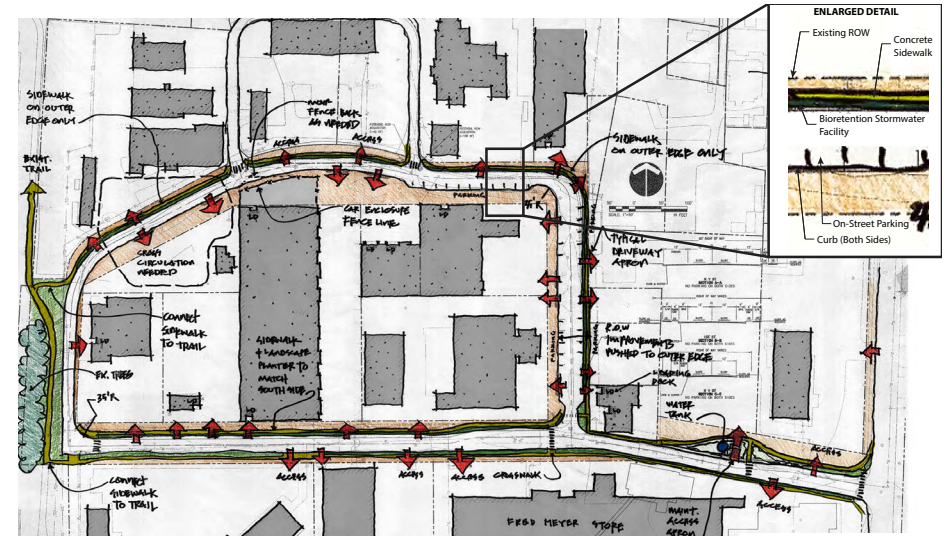


View of the WSD field and existing businesses in the north part of the LGEA

the project team met for a design charrette to program the design for improvements in the Northwest Quadrant primary focus area. The second workshop was held on-site in the LGEA and centered on presenting the proposed improvement plan, and also solicited feedback from the key stakeholders. This input was used in subsequent planning and design tasks. A project update was provided for the Evergreen Shores Neighborhood Association on June 24, 2014 and for the Dubois Park Neighborhood Association on November 5, 2014.

**Focused Infrastructure Planning.** This task focused on developing a detailed design for public improvements to the primary focus area

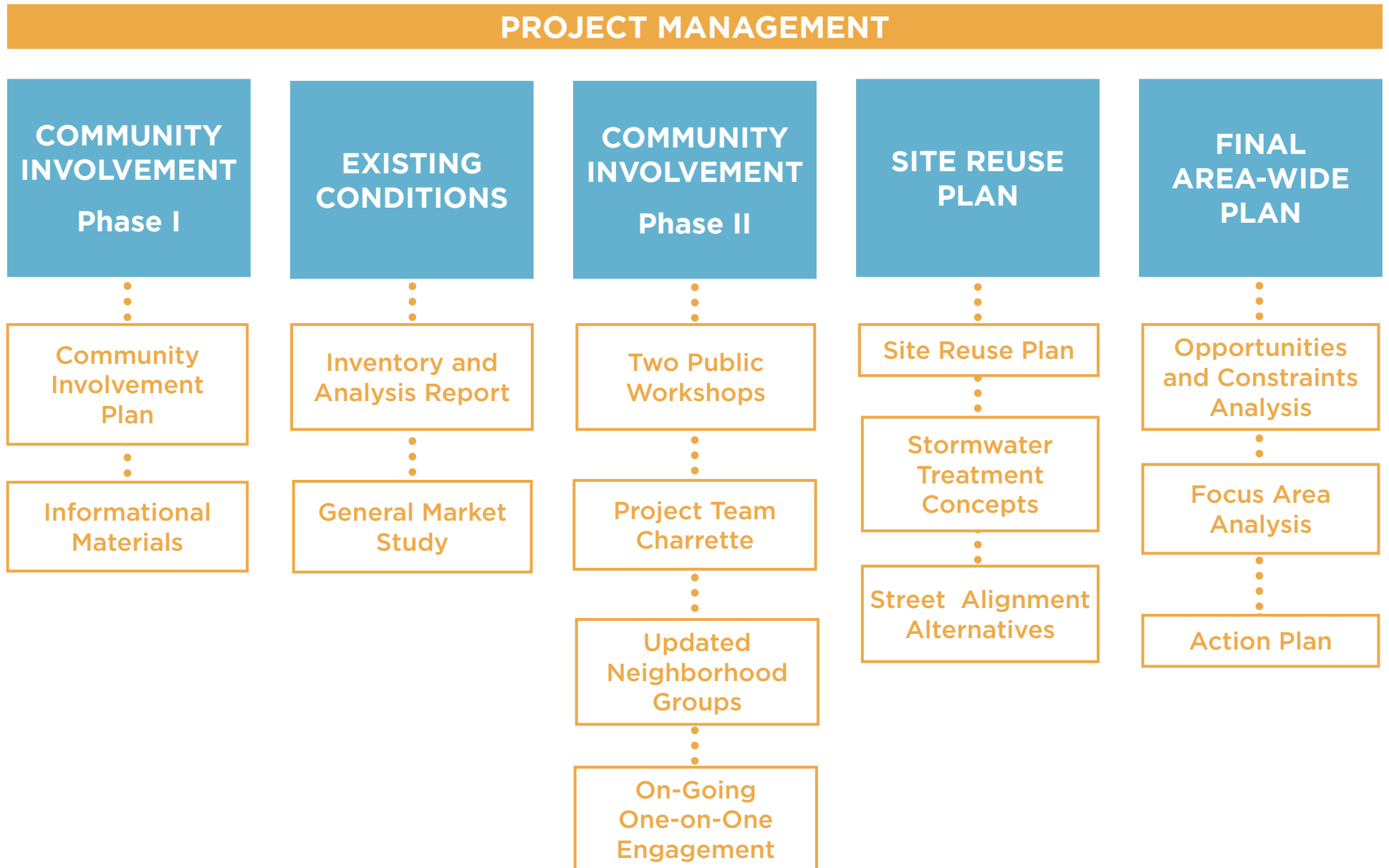
Figure 1. Lower Grand Employment Area: Opportunity Study



in the Northwest Quadrant of the LGEA. A topographic survey was completed for the right-of-way (ROW) of V, Y, 1st, and 2nd streets. This served as background for the design of an improved alignment and stormwater management system, and for discussion with property owners about improvements and impacts. A 30% design package (see Appendix A), including probable construction cost estimates, was prepared with city staff and then reviewed with affected property owners to ensure compatibility with uses and operations.

**Final Area-Wide Site Reuse Action Plan.** The Action Plan is a summary of the work completed during the AWP project and identifies strategies for next steps. This includes funding opportunities for public infrastructure.

Figure 2. Diagram of the Planning Process





## Stakeholder Engagement

### Phase I Community Involvement

Results from the Phase I community involvement activities provided the city and project team with substantial feedback on needed infrastructure improvements and preferences for engaging key stakeholders and the public for the remainder of the project. At the beginning of the project, LGEA business and property owners, and other key stakeholders such as business groups and neighborhood-area associations, had been sent an introductory letter and project fact sheet. The purpose of the mailing was to introduce the project and invite them to participate, starting with an online survey. The introductory letter was followed by site visits to businesses within the LGEA to encourage participation in the online survey, confirm contact information, and answer questions. Following the close of the online survey, project team members met one-on-one with 12 business and property owners to further explore key issues identified through the online survey and business site visits. Key themes identified in the survey and follow-up interviews include:

- Many business owners were interested in expanding their businesses either on their own property or through the acquisition of property within the LGEA.
- There was a diversity of opinions about the extent to which infrastructure improvements hurt or help business growth within the LGEA. Generally, the well-established industrial warehouse and manufacturing business owners do not believe the condition of the infrastructure has much to do with the future success of their businesses.
- Other property and business owners, particularly those located in the professional office on 3rd Loop Road, stated that road conditions and flooding are the biggest obstacles to business growth because it is difficult for clients and employees to safely access their businesses.
- The majority of property and business owners in the Northwest Quadrant of the LGEA stated that the western segment of 1st Street and all streets north of 1st Street need to be improved.
- Some of the owners indicated that as long as the area remains light industrial, only the asphalt and stormwater drainage should be improved and that curbs and other improvements are not needed in the Northwest Quadrant of the LGEA if they interfere

with vehicle or truck access.

- Flooding and road debris cause damage to vehicles and affect business access for employees and customers—most online survey respondents described flooding issues and the damage flooding causes to their company, supplier, and employees' vehicles and equipment.
- A number of interviewees in the Northwest Quadrant of the LGEA prioritized storm-drainage improvements over road improvements due to the severity of damage caused by flooded buildings and vehicles, the latter of which drive through potholes obscured by standing water in public streets.

## Existing Conditions

The Existing Conditions Report was finalized in August 2014. It evaluated the existing zoning, physical conditions and infrastructure, brownfields, market analysis and development opportunities, and stakeholder outreach.

**Zoning.** Of the 170 acres of the LGEA, 139 acres are zoned for light industrial (IL) use, 14.8 acres for General Commercial (CG) use, and 26.6 acres to the north remain zoned for R-30 residential use.

**Physical Conditions and Infrastructure.** The LGEA is generally flat, except the properties north of E 5th Street are as steep as 50% and may be an erosion hazard. Some areas within the LGEA are below the 100-year base flood elevation for the area. This is particularly noticeable within the public rights-of-way of Y Street and Grand Boulevard, where drainage problems are most prevalent, with regular flooding occurring during storms. Water, power, and sanitary-sewer infrastructure all adequately serve existing and potential future development in the LGEA.

The LGEA is accessible via various forms of transportation. It is near Interstate-5, connecting to Oregon and adjacent to State Highway 14. Buses provide access to the LGEA from different parts of Vancouver. There are bike lanes on Grand Boulevard leading from the LGEA to residential neighborhoods to the north, as well as a shared low-traffic street, E 5th Street, providing an east-west connection. There is a paved pedestrian path that connects to the northern neighborhoods, as well as the historic Fort Vancouver reserve. Many of the smaller interior streets of the LGEA are unimproved, without sidewalks, curbs, street lights, or street markings.

**Brownfields.** The LGEA is known to contain multiple properties that are impacted by environmental contamination. Eight sites are included in the Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Site Index. Of these sites, two are in the process of review through the Washington State Voluntary Cleanup Program. Two sites are included on the federal National Priorities List (NPL), both of which have implemented remedies and do not present significant obstacles to development. A parallel, community-wide assessment project has identified 11 sites as known or likely brownfields. These sites are shown in Figure 12 in Section 3, Brownfields.

**Market Analysis and Development Opportunities.** Key attributes of the LGEA include the presence of long-established local industries

(e.g., JH Kelly, Kiewit, and Columbia Machine), proximity to Columbia Business Center, easy access to the SR-14, I-5, and I-205 freeways, demonstrated demand (with low vacancies but affordable space), and tax advantages of Washington over Oregon.

Issues that affect operations of existing LGEA industries include poor roadway, safety, and drainage conditions, especially for Northwest Quadrant firms. Until resolved, these conditions will likely serve as a continued disincentive to add capital investment. To address this concern, the city has focused on identifying and advancing critical infrastructure design for the Northwest Quadrant, where this issue is most prevalent (see page 10). Existing industrial business operators in the LGEA have also expressed concern about the possibility of additional commercial/retail expansion in the area, which can conflict with industrial use and would negatively affect the long-standing industrial nature of the area.

## 2 BROWNFIELDS

Decades of industrial use in the LGEA have left a legacy of environmental impact to the area. The presence of contamination has resulted in state and federal regulatory action on some properties. The perception of additional unresolved contamination has been identified by stakeholders as an impediment, at times, to potential redevelopment by others. The AWP program was created by the EPA as a tool to identify and address a range of issues that limit brownfield assessment, remediation and redevelopment, recognizing that environmental contamination on its own is sometimes not the highest barrier to redevelopment.

The AWP process envisioned and completed by the city identified market and infrastructure conditions that inhibit redevelopment in the LGEA. Through the AWP process, 11 potential brownfield sites were identified in the LGEA. Over the course of the planning and engagement process, one of these sites has been redeveloped, and another is currently in the process of obtaining city permits to redevelop. The city is highly motivated to implement this action plan and foster continued redevelopment in the LGEA.

*Figure 12. Identified Potential Brownfields*



## Priorities for Brownfields Site Reuse

The city's focus is to maintain industrial areas and increase employment in the LGEA. This reflects the city's comprehensive plan and the stated objective of the 2008 LGEA Subarea Plan. The following sections in this Action Plan help to identify the priority next steps and implementation actions to address brownfields and facilitate site reuse. This involves the following:

- Improve identified infrastructure deficiencies
- Identify sites that are eligible for assessment and perform environmental site assessments through the parallel Community-Wide Assessment program
- Work with federal, state and local funding programs to provide resources to implement the action plan
- Engage with LGEA stakeholders through expanded public/private partnerships

**Table 1. Identified Potential Brownfields Table**

Site No.*	Site ID	Focus Area	Size (Acres)	Use/Occupancy	Ecology Listed Site
1	30859000	NW Quadrant	1.85	Active warehouse	Yes
2	31053000	NW Quadrant	0.54	Underutilized	No
3	33842000	NW Quadrant	0.55	Underutilized	No
4	37521000	QBP	15.35	Vacant	No
5	30862015	QBP	3.58	Underutilized	Yes
6	31070000	NW Quadrant	0.27	Storage lot	Yes
7	33828000	NW Quadrant	1.92	Active warehouse	Yes
8	33793000	NW Quadrant	2.17	Recently built flex buildings	Yes
9	31032000	NW Quadrant	0.34	Small Building	Yes
10	33827000	NW Quadrant	1.66	Roofing company	Yes
11	33830010	NW Quadrant	0.31	Small building	Yes

\*The site number corresponds with the numbers shown on Figure 12.

# 3 FOCUS AREAS

The 2008 Subarea Plan identified six “nodes” within the LGEA. The Action Plan refined these into four focus areas: the Northwest Quadrant (same as Node 1: Northwest), the Washington School for the Deaf (WSD) Field (same as Node 3: Higher Density Residential Area), the Quad Business Park (same as Node 5: Eastern), and the Commercial and Established Business Area (combined Node 2: Southwest and Node 4: South Central). The Action Plan omitted Node 6: Southern, which is land south of Columbia House Boulevard and is almost entirely state ROW. At the time of project implementation, this area was understood

to be unavailable for development.

The purpose of this section is to identify key opportunities and constraints that frame development in each of the focus areas and to recommend actions for addressing these items. Based on stakeholder engagement and analysis of existing conditions, the Northwest Quadrant emerged as the primary focus area for the LGEA AWP.

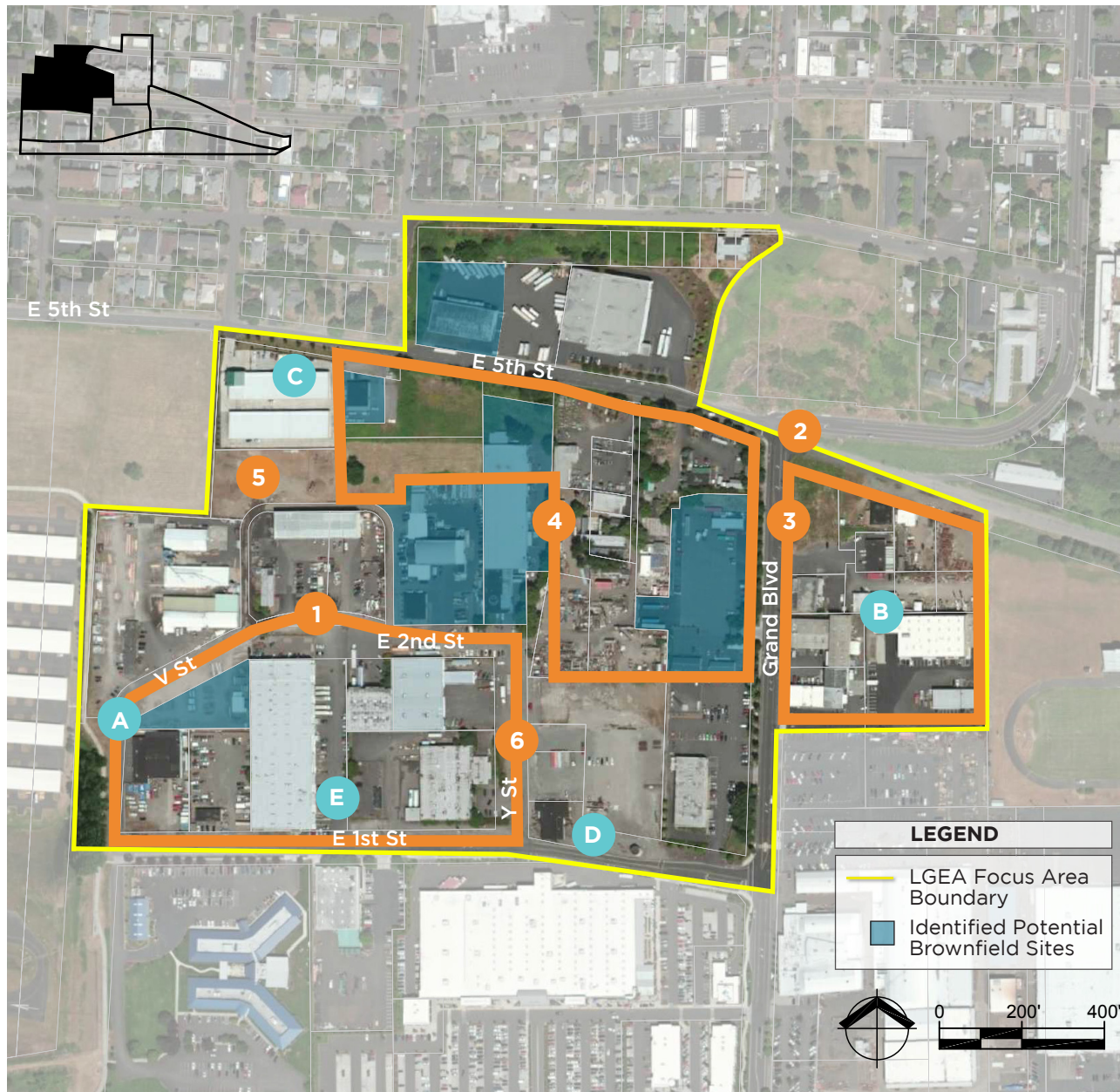
*NOTE: Opportunities and constraints are shown at individual locations for visual clarity, but may exist elsewhere in the focus area.*

Figure 3. Focus Area Overview Map



# PRIMARY FOCUS AREA: NORTHWEST QUADRANT

Figure 4. Northwest Quadrant Opportunities and Constraints Map



The Northwest Quadrant is the area north of 1st Street and west of the WSD field. This area is generally characterized by small local and regional businesses on smaller (<2 acres) parcels, undefined public roadways in poor condition with no curbs and sidewalks, poor drainage, encroachment in the ROW, and older businesses (some with shared accesses and shared utilities). Through analysis and stakeholder engagement, the Northwest Quadrant was identified in the 2008 Subarea Plan as the highest priority for improvement.

## CONSTRAINTS

- 1 Roadways/ Stormwater Drainage
- 2 Intersection of Grand Boulevard and 5th Street
- 3 Parcelization
- 4 Vacancy/Underutilization
- 5 Poor Circulation
- 6 Industrial Business Retention and Recruitment

## OPPORTUNITIES

- A Innovative Street Improvements
- B Property Aggregation
- C Additional Access
- D Public-Private Partnership
- E Retention and Expansion

# OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

## Constraints

1. **Roadways/Stormwater Drainage.** The area is affected by deteriorated infrastructure conditions within the public ROW including poor road conditions and frequent flooding during storm events. In addition, the absence of clear street markings and a defined roadway has led to significant private encroachment in the public ROW, further contributing to street misalignment.

There are significant stormwater drainage problems in this area, particularly along Y, NE 2nd, and V Streets, due to inadequate stormwater infrastructure. During major storms, several inches of water pool up within the roadway. Much of the surface area is impervious and generates large flows, which overwhelm the aged and sediment-laden infiltration systems; the pooled water often remains for days, damaging equipment and otherwise affecting the day-to-day operations of the nearby facilities.

2. **Intersection of Grand Boulevard and 5th Street.** This intersection is an area of special concern because of the odd angles at which the roads intersect, varying street widths, and obstructed sight distances.
3. **Parcelization.** Much of this focus area is characterized by small parcels (less than 10,000 square feet), providing only a small amount of buildable land, which is not amenable to the types of industrial development envisioned in the IL zone and is not a city-economic development priority. Typical lot size for existing industrial properties in the LGEA is closer to 85,000 square feet.
4. **Vacancy/Underutilization.** The city has identified several parcels that meet the criteria of vacant or underutilized. These properties can contribute to a sense of blight and insecurity that has affected value and safety in the Northwest Quadrant.
5. **Lack of Access.** The northwest corner of this focus area is landlocked, with the only access to a principal arterial requiring traveling out 1st Street to Grand Boulevard.
6. **Industrial business retention and recruitment.** The condition of the area's infrastructure is a threat to retaining some of the existing businesses and is a significant disadvantage in recruiting new businesses to the area

## Opportunities

- A. **Innovative Street Improvements.** A 30% design package has been prepared for significant street improvements on 1st, 2nd, V, and Y Streets. The designed improvements have taken the needs of adjacent businesses, multi-modal transportation, and stormwater infrastructure into consideration to create a solution that benefits all parties. This plan will realign Y and 2nd Street to reflect current use and address private encroachment in the ROW.
- B. **Property Aggregation.** Through strategic property aggregation of vacant and underutilized parcels, larger parcels could be created in this quadrant to better attract regional employment opportunities to the LGEA.
- C. **Additional Access.** In order to facilitate the flow of traffic through the Northwest Quadrant, V or Y Street could be extended through to 5th Street. This would provide more direct access to a collector arterial.
- D. **Public-Private Partnership.** A successful public-private partnership between the city and LGEA local business owners is leading to full street improvements on Y Street from 1st to 2nd Street and frontage improvements on the north side of 1st Street, between Y Street and Grand Boulevard. The planning effort has provided support and is a major factor in the retention and expansion of a regionally significant industrial business. This could serve as a model for future projects in the plan area, as noted on page 12.
- E. **Retention and Expansion.** The infrastructure planning and commitment to fund improvements has influenced a significant business and employer to remain and expand in this Area.

# SITE REUSE PLAN

Figure 5. Northwest Quadrant Action Plan



## LEGEND

- Focus Area
- Existing Buildings
- Potential Infill Buildings
- Proposed Buildings
- Potential Right-of-way (ROW) Improvements
- Proposed Low Impact Development (LID) ROW Improvements
- Potential ROW Connections
- Potential ROW Intersection Improvements
- Potential Gateway Features
- Existing Trails/Pedestrian Pathways
- Potential/Improved Pedestrian Pathways
- Potential Trail Connection

### Notes:

1. Approximate Total of Potential Buildable Area: 274,000 sf



## SITE REUSE PLAN ELEMENTS

The Northwest Quadrant Site Reuse Plan diagram illustrates the following action items for improvement:

- **Design for Street Improvements:** The preparation and finalization of a 30% level design package was a major deliverable for the AWP project. The package includes street improvement plans that address roadway and stormwater drainage issues, and is discussed in detail on page 15. Funding of final design and construction for these improvements is key for further implementation. The City applied for grant funding from Ecology to accomplish this, and Ecology provided preliminary approval in January 2016 for \$1.1 million, pending legislative approval and finalization of grant terms.
- **Access to 5th Street:** The northwest corner of this focus area is largely landlocked, with no direct access to anything larger than a local street. Direct access from the northwest corner to 5th Street would facilitate circulation and enable trucks to better navigate the area.
- **Intersection of 5th & Grand Boulevard:** The city should investigate the need for potential improvements to this intersection. Possible improvements could include realignment and/or improved signalization to control vehicular flow.
- **Property Aggregation:** Strategic property aggregation of smaller parcels to achieve parcel sizes closer to 85,000 square feet, the typical size of the industrial parcels in the LGEA.

### JH KELLY REDEVELOPMENT AND REZONING

Industrial contractor JH Kelly has expressed a desire to maintain and expand its presence in the LGEA by consolidating their dispersed sites into a larger newly constructed building located at 1st and Grand, the gateway of the Northwest Quadrant. JH Kelly currently maintains offices next to Fred Meyer, and has moved forward with plans to construct a new 60,000 building on property they own north of 1st Street. This expansion is supported through partnership with the City to explore opportunities for completing street, stormwater, and sewer improvements adjacent to the redevelopment and elsewhere in the Northwest Quadrant, and is anticipated to be implemented through a \$1.1 million grant initially announced by Ecology in January 2016.

# DESIGN FOR STREET IMPROVEMENTS

A major Action Plan component of the Northwest Quadrant focus area study was a 30% design-level street improvement plan set for the Y Street, 2nd Street, V Street, and 1st Street loop. The existing loop corridor is relatively flat, which exacerbates the poor drainage of the stormwater runoff. There are no true demarcated roadway or parking areas. The existing loop also lacks sidewalks for safe pedestrian circulation.

The task began with the design of the new alignment for the loop, which attempts to minimize impacts to private properties. The relative flatness of the existing road, in combination with shallow groundwater, led to the selection of pervious concrete for the new roadway and sidewalk. Pervious concrete will provide treatment and infiltration of stormwater runoff, can be installed at relatively flat grades, and is eligible for a stormwater treatment grant from Ecology. The new design also proposes the use of road-side biofiltration facilities in some areas of the loop, and a connection to an existing storm-drainage pipe in the remaining area of the loop for overflow protection.

The 30% Design for Street Improvements is beneficial to the LGEA in terms of both the plans themselves and the improvements that will result from them. See Appendix A for the full 30% design package.

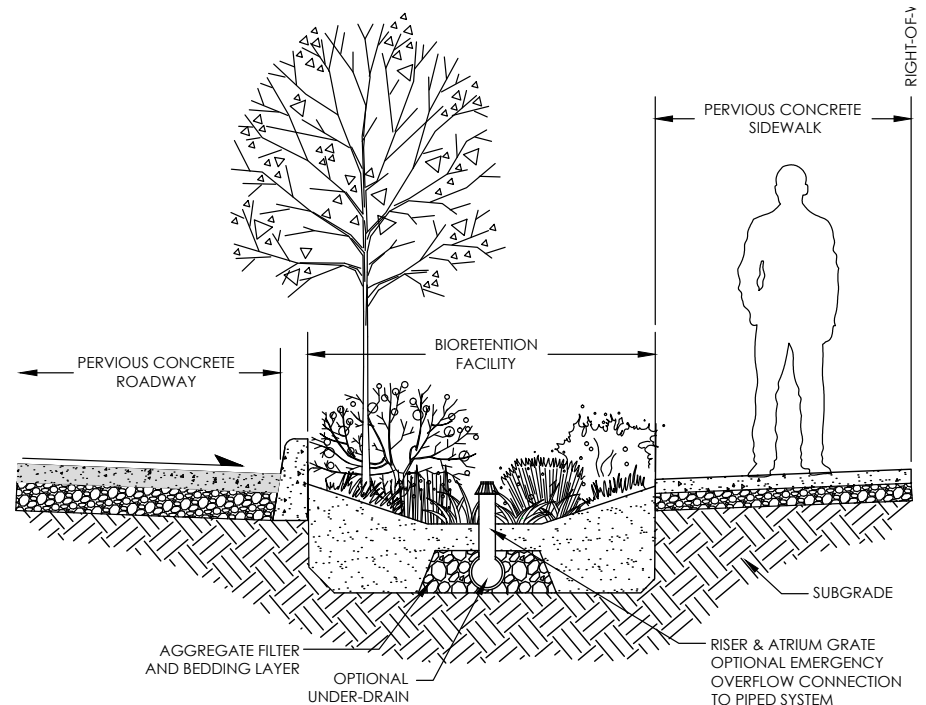
## Benefits from the Plans

- The level of specificity in these plans make it easier to estimate construction costs, thereby reducing risk for the city and private development
- This level of detail tends to be required when applying for grants, such as the Ecology Stormwater Quality Grant awarded to the City in January 2016
- Played a support role in retention and expansion of a significant regional employer

## Benefits from the Improvements

- Improved stormwater quality
- Improved access and operations for existing businesses
- Improved vehicle, bike, and pedestrian safety
- Visually and operationally enhanced supporting business retention, expansion and recruitment

## 30% Design Improvements Cross Section



Not to Scale: Example Configuration

# WA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND SURROUNDING AREA

Figure 6. WSD and Surrounding Area Opportunities and Constraints Map



The WA School for the Deaf and Surrounding Area include the WSD campus north of 5th Street, the WSD athletic field south of 5th Street, and a small multi-family building bordered by an undeveloped former gravel pit located south of 6th Street and north of Grand Boulevard. The WSD uses the field regularly, though the connection between the campus and field needs improvement.

## CONSTRAINTS

- 1 Underutilization
- 2 Grading Conditions
- 3 Poor Connection Among WSD Facilities
- 4 Unknown Environmental Issues

## OPPORTUNITIES

- A Creative Redesign of the Field and Potential Parcel Utilization
- B Phase I Analysis

# OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

## Constraints

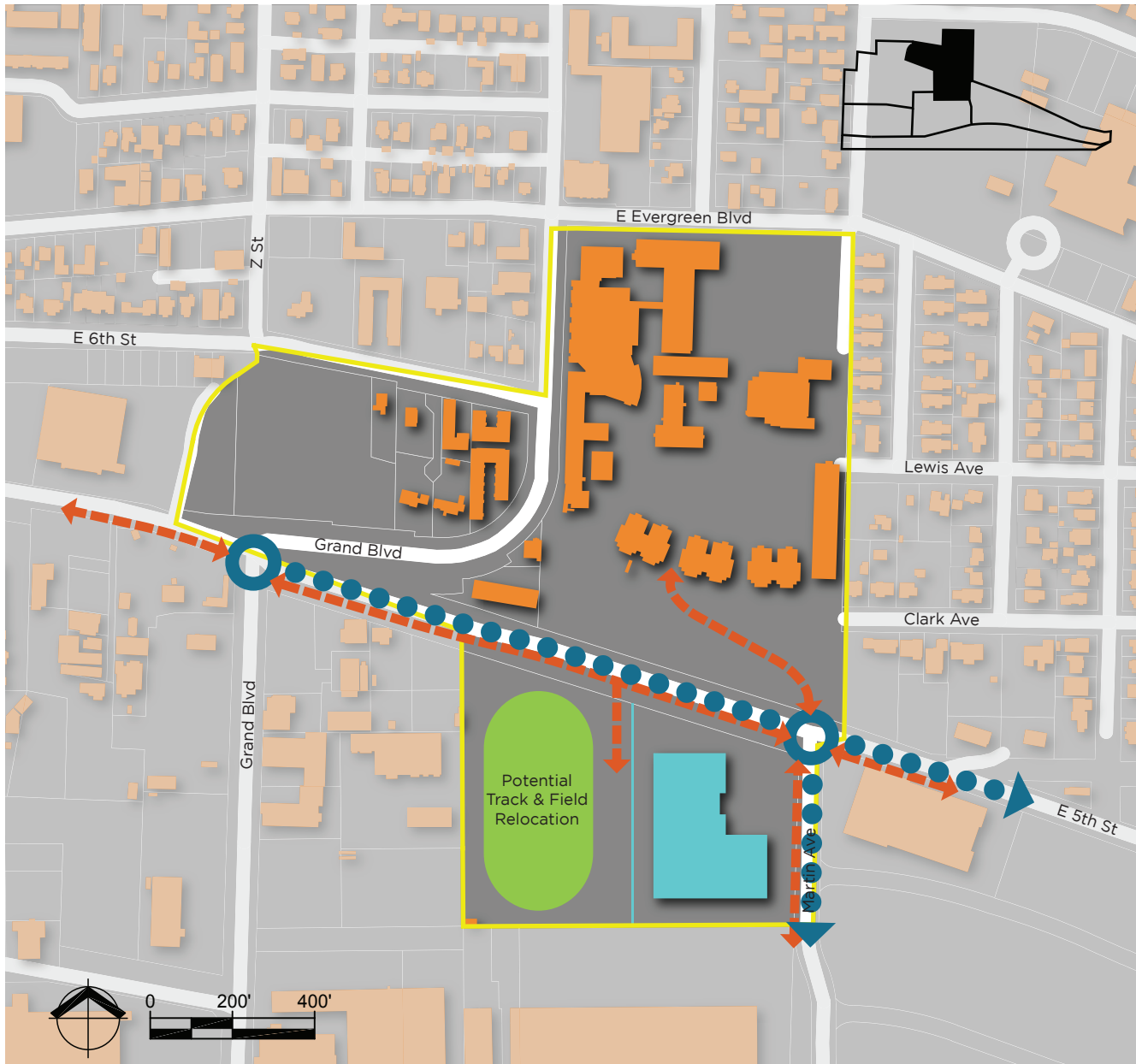
- 1. Underutilization.** The city has identified the WSD sports field as an underutilized property. The site is occupied by an aged sports field and track, surrounded by several acres of vacant land. Although the current use of the property is out of place with the rest of the LGEA, WSD has indicated that they intend to retain the property and its primary use.
- 2. Grading Conditions.** The steep grade and rough terrain in this area limits reuse options.
- 3. Poor Connection among WSD Facilities.** Connections between the WSD and its field are poor, especially for non-auto transportation. The current pedestrian pathway crosses 5th Street at an unmarked and non-signalized location, and then requires students to walk along 5th without sidewalks. If the school plans to regularly use the field, pedestrian connections between the main campus and field should be enhanced.
- 4. Unknown Environmental Issues.** There are potential environmental issues on the Hidden site, where there is currently a gravel pit. Such issues may disincentivize developers to build on this vacant lot.

## Opportunities






- A. Creative Redesign of Field and Potential Parcel Utilization.** The WSD sports field property could be redesigned and laid out to accommodate continued recreational use of the property, while also opening up several acres on a portion of the property for infill development.
- B. Phase I Analysis.** A Phase I analysis of this site could shed light on whether or not any environmental issues exist. Whether or not issues do exist, this analysis will provide a picture of what next steps need to be taken.

# SITE REUSE PLAN

Figure 7. WSD and Surrounding Area Action Plan



## LEGEND

-  Focus Area
-  Existing Buildings
-  Potential Infill Buildings
-  Potential Taxlots
-  Potential ROW Improvements
-  Potential ROW Connections
-  Potential ROW Intersection Improvements
-  Potential/Improved Pedestrian Pathways

## Notes:

1. Approximate Total of Potential Buildable Area: 130,000 sf

## SITE REUSE PLAN ELEMENTS

The WSD Field Site Reuse Plan diagram illustrates the following action items for improvement:

- **Track-and-Field Relocation:** The location and orientation of the current track facility prevents any additional development from occurring on the site. By reorienting the track to face north-south, the other half of the site would be open for another use. This could occur via a private-public partnership, as described below, in which a company could pay for the rebuilding of the track-and-field facility in exchange for ownership of the other half of the parcel.
- **Public-Private Partnership:** A strategic public-private partnership could bring a new developer to the area who can both finance the track-and-field relocation (above) and make utilization of that parcel more efficient. The partnership could be mutually beneficial by providing the WSD with an improved sports facility and the private entity with an inexpensive sale price or reduced lease rate on the developable portion of the property.
- **Improved Pedestrian Crossing:** As shown in the Site Reuse Plan diagram, improvements to the existing pedestrian crossing are needed to provide safer access for WSD students, such as sidewalks. If a public-private partnership is established as described above, general street improvements could be included as part of creating new development on the east side of the WSD field parcel.
- **Potential Brownfield Assessment:** As shown on the Site Reuse Plan diagram, property immediately north of the intersection of Grand Boulevard and 5th Street should be assessed to determine brownfield status.

### ASTORIA SPORTS COMPLEX ASTORIA, OR

In 1978, the Oregon State Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) had ordered the City of Astoria to close and cap the 12.5 acre landfill. The City successfully closed the landfill but were financially unable to proceed with DEQ's requirements for official landfill closure. For more than 30 years, the landfill was an ongoing cost, liability, and risk potential for the City of Astoria.

Meanwhile, Columbia Memorial Hospital, one of the largest institutions in Astoria, needed to expand and found limited local options. The local high school's outdated football facility, Warren Field, was located immediately to the hospital's west. A strategic plan was formulated between Columbia Memorial Hospital, the City of Astoria, and Astoria School District to do a land swap with the school district for the old football field in order to have land to expand the hospital campus. In return, Columbia Memorial Hospital would provide the bulk of the \$8 million required to not only officially close the landfill for the City, but to redevelop the old municipal landfill as a new 17-acre athletic fields complex to serve the school district and the entire community.



# QUAD BUSINESS PARK

The Quad Business Park is located on the eastern edge of the LGEA. A small portion of the site has been developed for an industrial office building and associated parking. Much of the remainder of the property appears suitable for development, but is not actively marketed to developers or tenants. This section identifies some of the known obstacles to redevelopment of the Quad Business Park.

## CONSTRAINTS

- 1 Market Expectations
  - 2 Existing Stormwater Constraints
  - 3 Municipal Potable Water Well Station
  - 4 Potential Brownfield and Uncertain Fill
- 5 Deed Restrictions
  - 6 Access Constraint

## OPPORTUNITIES

- A Feasibility and Phased Master Plan
- B Brownfields
- C Marketing

Figure 8. Quad Business Park Opportunities and Constraints Map



# OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

## Constraints

- 1. Market Expectations.** Despite a strong real estate market and demand for industrial land, approximately 34 acres of the Quad Business Park remain vacant. Most of the area has not yet been master planned or subdivided for development; there are known restrictions on development (see below) and uncertainties remain regarding site conditions.
- 2. Existing Stormwater Constraints.** A large stormwater facility expands over approximately six acres of the central southern area of the property. The area has been graded to capture and treat runoff from other properties within the LGEA during large storm events, and discharge the stormwater through an outflow to the Columbia River.
- 3. Municipal Potable Water Well Station.** Buffers associated with wellhead protection area will put restrictions on development.
- 4. Potential Brownfield and Uncertain Fill.** A large amount of fill was placed in the central-north part of the Quad Business Park property to bring the surface grade above the elevation of the floodplain. The suitability of this fill has not been determined.
- 5. Deed Restrictions.** Deed restrictions resulting from the historic re-zoning of the Quad properties from agricultural to industrial use remain in place and restrict the scale and layout of development on the property. New development on the Quad properties is restricted to 50% maximum lot area coverage. Typical lot area coverage is around 75%. Access to the Quad property is prohibited from 5th Street, which limits options for site layout and access.
- 6. Access Constraint.** Access to the location of the district stormwater facility, access to the Quad property from Columbia House Boulevard is currently limited to the western and eastern edges of the property. Additional access could be provided through future master planning.

## Opportunities










- A. Feasibility and Phased Master Plan.** The Quad Business Park property offers approximately 34 acres of undeveloped industrial land, with ready access to freeways and the airport serving the growing Vancouver/Portland region. This is a unique opportunity for a future, regionally significant industrial development. A future, more specific feasibility and phased master plan should be initiated to promote the development of this significant site.
- B. Brownfields.** The Quad Business Park is a priority site for assessment through the city's grant and could also make use of the Brownfield Redevelopment Opportunity Zone financing tool.
- C. Marketing.** Although somewhat known in the local commercial and industrial broker community, the Quad property is not marketed for sale or development, despite a high demand in the region for development-ready land. There are local and regional partners available to help Quad position the property to best take advantage of the current real estate cycle.



# SITE REUSE PLAN

Figure 9. Quad Business Park Action Plan

## LEGEND

-  Focus Area
-  Existing Buildings
-  Potential Infill Buildings
-  Potential Taxlots
-  Potential ROW Improvements
-  Potential ROW Intersection Improvements
-  Potential Gateway Features
-  Existing Trails/Pedestrian Pathways
-  Potential/Improved Pedestrian Pathways

**Notes:**

1. Approximate Total of Potential Buildable Area:
  - 687,066 sf (50% Maximum Lot Coverage)
  - 1,030,600 sf (75% Maximum Lot Coverage)



## SITE REUSE PLAN ELEMENTS

The Quad Business Park Site Reuse Plan diagram illustrates the following action items for improvement:

- **Industrial Master Plan:** This Site Reuse Plan includes a highly conceptual layout of a new light industrial/office development on the Quad property. Although highly conceptual, this plan demonstrates that a significant amount of development is possible in the LGEA, and suggests that the potential of the property could be best understood through a comprehensive master plan process.
- **Marketing Disposition Strategy:** The city and CREDC can help facilitate a significant development at the Quad Business Park by working collaboratively with Quad Investments to identify targeted uses and working to recruit appropriate business opportunities.

# ESTABLISHED COMMERCIAL AND BUSINESS PARK

This focus area is located west of Grove Street and south of 2nd Street. It includes Columbia Machine, New Edge Networks, and Tensolite, which have standard industrial buildings and provide work for 75% of the LGEA employees. To the west of Grand Boulevard there is a large commercial development called Grand Central with a grocery store, restaurants, and some shops. Businesses have expressed some concern about the mixing of industrial and retail traffic in this area; however, they also recognize that it provides an amenity to LGEA employees.

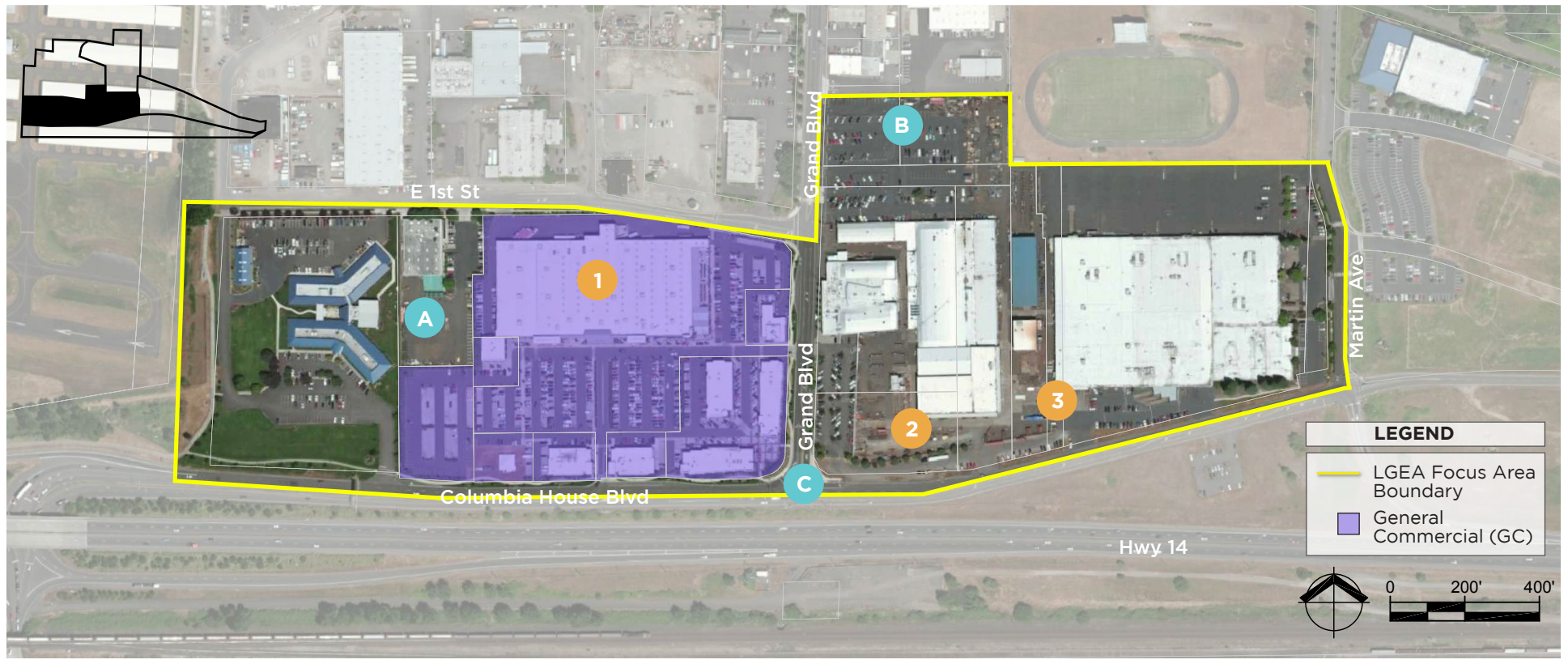
## CONSTRAINTS

- 1 Limit Commercial Development
- 2 Legacy Environmental Issues
- 3 Limited Option for Expanded Uses

## OPPORTUNITIES

- A Targeted Infill or Ancillary Development
- B Mixed-Use Marketing
- C Significant Intersection

Figure 10. Established Commercial and Business Park Opportunities and Constraints Map



# OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

## Constraints

1. **Limit Commercial Development.** City policy and established industrial businesses in the LGEA support the area to remain light industrial. Industrial-land conversion to commercial may be a challenge in the future.
2. **Legacy Environmental Issues.** There is on-going monitoring of environmental conditions on the Columbia Machine property. Any infill development on the property will need to address the historic impacts and ensure that conditions are suitable for reuse of the impacted portions of the property.
3. **Limited Option for Expanded Uses.** The Established Commercial and Business Park focus area is essentially built-out, and infill opportunities are most likely best suited to ancillary and non-industrial uses.


## Opportunities

- A. **Targeted Infill or Ancillary Development.** Within the Grand Central commercial area west of Grand Boulevard and south of 1st Street, additional targeted infill commercial activities could be located, including within the newly rezoned JH Kelly property, adjacent to the Fred Meyer store. Within the industrially zoned areas east of Grand Boulevard, there are opportunities for new small-scale industrial development or ancillary commercial uses. Within existing industrial developments, Vancouver zoning standards allow eating and drinking establishments to account for up to 10% of the square footage, or general retail uses to account for up to 20%.
- B. **Mixed-Use Marketing.** Many LGEA employees are pleased to have the commercial development nearby, including a grocery store, restaurants, salons, and a coffee shop. The convenience of having it nearby should be included as part of a marketing strategy for new development in the LGEA.
- C. **Significant Intersection.** The intersection of SR-14 and Grand Boulevard is a gateway point into the LGEA and to other neighborhoods and amenities in Vancouver.

# SITE REUSE PLAN

Figure 11. Commercial and Established Business Park Action Plan

## LEGEND

- |   |                               |   |   |
|---|-------------------------------|---|---|
|  | Focus Area                    |  | Potential ROW Intersection Improvements |
|  | Existing Buildings            |  | Potential Gateway Features              |
|  | Potential Infill Buildings    |  | Existing Trails/Pedestrian Pathways     |
|  | Potential Taxlots             |  | Potential/Improved Pedestrian Pathways  |
|  | Potential ROW Improvements    |  | Potential Trail Connection              |
|  | Proposed LID ROW Improvements |   |   |

**Notes:**

1. Approximate Total of Potential Buildable Area: 172,00 sf



# SITE REUSE PLAN ELEMENTS

The Established Commercial and Business Park Site Reuse Plan diagram illustrates the following items for improvement:

- **Targeted Commercial Development:** The Grand Central complex is a significant amenity for industrial business employees and visitors. There is an opportunity to rezone a small underutilized parcel surrounded by the commercial development, from industrial to commercial, expanding upon the existing commercial amenities. Additional ancillary uses are allowed with future industrial development.
- **Industrial Infill:** There are lots in this focus area that are underutilized. Some strategic infill of industrial buildings could make a more efficient use of space.
- **Entryway/Gateway improvement:** The intersection of Grand Boulevard and Columbia House Boulevard is a primary entry point into the LGEA and to other parts of Vancouver. As part of the branding and marketing strategy, it would be beneficial to create an improvement (e.g., a sign, arch, or other feature) at this intersection.

# NEXT STEPS & IMPLEMENTATION

There are various resources and funding mechanisms available to public agencies in Washington State to support development of transportation facilities, infrastructure, stormwater, property aggregation, redevelopment, and marketing and branding. A detailed listing of all the grant and loan programs in the state, what projects they support, and their funding timelines is available in Appendix A of this report.

## STREET IMPROVEMENT & TRANSPORTATION

The primary sources of street improvement and transportation funding are through state-level departments and local organizations, such as the Department of Commerce Public Works Board (PWB), the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB), and the regional transportation planning organization. Most grants that are available provide funding for projects that support alternative transportation infrastructure; however, there are funding programs that aim to promote development so long as certain issues (e.g., safety, connectivity, complete streets, and job creation) are addressed. The PWB Construction Loan Program provides low-interest loans for local governments to finance public infrastructure construction and rehabilitation. Individual elements of street improvements can be funded separately through targeted programs. For example, the TIB provides funding for sidewalk construction through the Urban Sidewalk Program. Programs to fund construction are typically loans.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Funding for infrastructure is available from the state, specifically the PWB and the Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB). The PWB Construction Loan Program is a good source of funding for public infrastructure improvements. CERB will fund project-specific feasibility and pre-development studies for projects that will advance community economic development goals for industrial-sector business development. Funding for construction is available from both the DOC and CERB in the form of a low-interest loan.



## STORMWATER

Funding for stormwater quality-improvement projects is available through the Ecology Water Quality Combined Financial Assistance Program. This program combines grants and loans from state and federal funding sources to provide support for projects that address water quality in communities throughout the state. Most of the funding available through the state is in the form of low-interest loans. The CERB grant program for project-specific feasibility analysis would also apply to this category so long as the project contributes to economic development goals. In January 2016 the City received initial approval from Ecology for a \$1.1 million water quality grant for final design and construction of stormwater and road improvements in the Northwest Quadrant focus area.



## PROPERTY AGGREGATION

There are no specific grant or loan programs for property aggregation. Instead, financing tools that provide funding for planning activities will be most beneficial to this cause. Such tools include community-renewal areas, community-revitalization financing, and public-development authorities. The latter two of these are the most beneficial for the purposes of the city, since renewal areas are usually established as places experiencing high levels of crime and physical dilapidation.

## BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT

Public funding is available to support remediation and redevelopment activities for brownfield properties in the LGEA. At the federal level, funds are available from the Environmental Protection Agency for assessment, cleanup, and planning. The city currently has a Community-Wide Brownfield Assessment program, funded through the EPA brownfield program, and can use these funds to assess environmental conditions and plan for redevelopment of targeted properties in the LGEA.

Ecology provides funds for assessment, planning, and remedial action through the Remedial Action Grant, established through the state Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). The RAG program includes grants and low-interest loans for property assessment, contamination characterization and feasibility analysis, cleanup and remediation, as well as redevelopment planning through the Integrated Planning Grant program.

A Brownfield Redevelopment Opportunity Zone (ROZ) can be established in an area where at least half of the properties are brownfields (see below for additional information on the ROZ). This zone establishes Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to oversee the ongoing project, and gives the area priority for funding through Ecology.

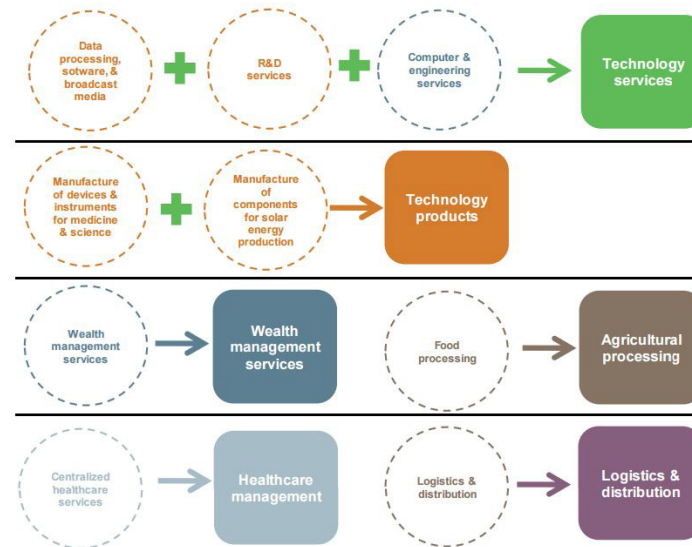
## BRANDING & MARKETING

There are few funding sources specifically for branding and marketing efforts. Instead, most of this work could be wrapped into financing tools that allow for planning activities, such as community renewal areas and public development authorities. However, community-revitalization financing allows for both planning and promotion efforts within the designated area, and is the best way to channel funding to branding and marketing projects.

The CREDC works with the city to promote economic development in the region, recruit businesses, and market opportunities for development and employment expansion. In meetings with staff, CREDC is aware of the LGEA and its potential. The city will continue to work with CREDC to promote and connect opportunities.

### Proposed target industries

*Industries with job growth potential that also suit Clark County's capacity*



*Vancouver's proposed target industries as identified in the 2011 CREDC Economic Development Plan. All of these industries have manufacturing components around which the LGEA could create a branding and marketing strategy.*



### **Industrial expansion and business enhancement**

A strategy focused on encouraging and facilitating the plans for added job-creating investment by existing LGEA firms. Priority emphasis on improved utilization of existing sites followed by expansion on suitable vacant LGEA sites.

#### Key Issues to Address

- Understand existing business and property owners' plans
- Address infrastructure deficiencies, especially in the NW Quadrant

#### Implementation Requirements

- Firm-specific development plans for industries with planned expansion coupled with city street and drainage improvement plan

### **Industrial/flex development on vacant parcels**

A strategy that assumes aggressive marketing coupled with supportive public infrastructure improvements to attract new firms for which there could be demonstrated competitive advantage for the close-in LGEA location. Development of industrial or flex space for other users not currently located in the LGEA.

#### Key Issues to Address

- Potential brownfield issues on vacant and underutilized properties
- Completion of master planning for vacant properties east of Grand Boulevard and Quad Business Park

#### Implementation Requirements

- Assess environmental contamination on targeted properties and support remediation as warranted
- Master plan for build-out of Quad Industrial Center
- Joint private-public marketing of priority vacant sites
- Distinguish between needs of large and small users with marketing strategy

### **General office / infill potential**

The City's zoning code allows for general office within the Light Industrial zone and allows for ancillary commercial retail and services within the Light industrial zone.

#### Key Issues to Address

- Determine the role of marketing all allowed uses in promoting the LGEA opportunity

#### Implementation Requirement

- Develop a marketing strategy

# PUBLIC FINANCING TOOLS

## Community Facility District

Allowed per RCW 36.145, CFDs create special assessment districts that can finance infrastructure improvements. They require a petition with participation from all of landowners that would be included in the district boundaries. The terms of the petition set the district boundaries, describe specific facilities to be financed, list the property owners that will serve on the CFD board, propose a method of assessment, and propose the method of security for timely payment of assessments and bonds. The bonds can be used to finance water, sewer, storm drainage, road, sidewalk, and lighting improvements.

## Community Revitalization Financing

Allowed per RCW 39.89, CRFs can be created by adoption of an ordinance designating an increment area (IA) and specifying the proposed public improvements. Revenue comes from property taxes within the IA, based on increases in value created by improvements. Public improvements listed must be expected to encourage private development and increase fair market value of real property within the IA. Funds can be used to fund roads, water and sewer systems, sidewalks, streetlights, parking, stormwater and drainage management systems, environmental analysis, professional management, planning, promotion within the IA (retail-trade activities), historic preservation activities, and provide maintenance and security for public/common areas.

## Transportation Benefit District

Transportation Benefit District (TBD): Under RCW 36.73, TBDs are quasi-municipal corporations and independent taxing districts that can raise revenue for acquiring, constructing, improving, providing, and funding transportation improvements included in a local, regional, or state transportation plan. Such projects include the construction, maintenance, and operation costs for roads, public transit service, sidewalks, and demand management. In November 2015 the City of Vancouver established a citywide TBD, which implemented an initial \$20 vehicle license fee planned to increase to \$40 in two

years. Approximately 75% of funds generated will preserve existing pavements and upgrade substandard arterial corridors citywide, and compete for grant resources to leverage local dollars. TBD funds will also go towards improving mobility, accessibility, and neighborhood projects citywide. LGEA transportation improvement projects meeting these objectives would be eligible to compete against other projects citywide.

## TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT DISTRICT FERNDALE, WA

Ferndale's TBD was established in 2012 when residents approved a two-tenths of one percent sales tax increase in order to fund necessary transportation improvements. In 2014, the TBD generated \$392,177 and was able to conduct several projects including repaving, installing ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps, and a range of infrastructure and utility improvements.



# PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

## Local Improvement District

Allowed per RCW 35.43 through 35.56, LID is a method of financing capital improvements constructed by the city that provide a special benefit to the properties within the boundary of the LID. LIDs can be created by property owners through petition or initiated by city council through a resolution. In preparation for the LID formation hearing, detailed cost estimates must be made including publication fees, interim finance interest, financing fees, bond printing, and other relevant expenses. This should be completed by the project engineer and the LID administration team. It is also advised to complete environmental reviews (SEPA and NEPA, if applicable) before adoption of the LID formation ordinance. These reviews must be completed before awarding the construction contract. Some initial assessment calculations should also be done to ensure that proposed projects will meet the assessment criteria described below.

The city council will need to first adopt a resolution declaring its intention to order the LID improvement and set the date for a formation hearing on the proposed LID. Unless the resolution of intention is a standard form previously approved by bond counsel, the resolution should either be prepared by, or be reviewed and approved by, bond counsel. Notice of the resolution and the date of the formation hearing must be published in two consecutive issues of the official newspaper, the first of which must be 15 days before the hearing date. A more detailed notice that includes project details, estimated costs, and individual-estimated benefits to the parcel must be sent by mail to the property owners within the LID that are specially benefited. Finally, the ordinance forming the LID may be prepared by, and should be reviewed and approved by, the bound counsel. The city council may pass the ordinance at the formation hearing.

Once created, parcels within the LID must be assessed in accordance with local statutes. When creating the boundaries of the LID, it is important to consider the strict assessment criteria. Mainly, statutes require that the assessment per parcel must not exceed the special benefit of the improvement to that parcel, which is defined as the fair market value of the property before and after the local improvement

project. Secondly, LID assessments must be proportional to the special benefit derived. Within an LID, there may be a number of special benefit districts, each using a different assessment method in order to meet the above criteria.

These improvements are financed and paid for over a period of time through assessments on the benefiting properties within the LID that establish the basis for an annual payment by the property owners. LID funds must be used for water, sewer, and storm-sewer facilities. Road Improvement Districts (RIDs) are essentially the same as LIDs in the way they are formed and the funding mechanism, but funds may only be used for road and street improvements.

## Latecomer Agreements

Latecomer Agreements are allowed per RCW 35.91. They are also referred to as recovery contracts or reimbursement agreements, latecomer agreements allow a property owner who has installed street or utility improvements to recover a portion of the costs of those improvements from other property owners who later develop property in the vicinity and use the improvements. This is essentially a cost sharing mechanism to build the utility infrastructure to which the parcel connects. The Latecomer Agreement is meant to be more equitable to the 'first-in' developer(s), and includes an equitable cost structure for any benefiting parcel that connects to the new utility improvements.

## LOCAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT SEATTLE, WA

In 2008, the City of Seattle created an LID in order to fund the South Lake Union Streetcar project. The LID was able to raise approximately over \$25 million, or half of the project cost, while the rest was funded by federal and state grants and the sale of City surplus properties. The streetcar carries riders through a once abandoned industrial district that is now home to high-density housing, commercial, and biotech companies. In May 2011, a third streetcar was added to reduce headway from 15 minutes to 10 minutes. It currently serves over a quarter million riders per average weekday.



## COMMUNITY RENEWAL AREAS

Municipalities may declare an area to be a community renewal area (CRA) in areas considered to be blighted, as evident by disproportionate levels of crime, disease, and physical dilapidation to the extent that it is difficult for the local municipality to provide adequate fire, police, accident, hospitalization, and other forms of public protection services and facilities. The powers given to the municipality specific to the CRA must be for public uses and purposes and enacted in the public interest. The powers of the municipality within the CRA include the following:

- Sell or trade city-owned property for private development
- Acquire and sell property, raze blighted buildings, develop plans, and solicit redevelopment proposals for private property
- Plan for and finance major infrastructure improvements
- Assess hazardous soils and facilitate site cleanup on private property
- Consider “planned actions” and the creation of special zoning districts

- Designate parks and plazas and other open space

Specific financial tools that become available to the municipality as part of establishing a CRA.

- The ability to borrow and accept financial assistance from the federal government, the state, the county, or any other public body, or from any public or private source, including fed-block-grant-backed loans
- Forming loans or grants programs for job creation or retention
- Forming local improvement districts to finance improvements
- Relocating people or providing assistance to property owners and tenants affected by the CRA
- Issue-tax exempt, non-recourse revenue bonds that are backed by the revenues generated by the development to pay for the cost of public improvements in the blighted areas; these bonds are not subjected to the statutory or constitutional debt limits of the municipality

# PUBLIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Public Development Authorities (PDAs) may be established by cities, towns, and counties for the purpose of improving the administration of authorized federal grants or programs, improving governmental efficiency and services, or improving the general living conditions in the urban areas of the state. PDAs are most often created for a specific project or undertaking that becomes reflected in the PDA's charter. While PDAs cannot have authority beyond what could lawfully be performed by the creating city or county, they tend to be more entrepreneurial than their sponsoring municipality by involving private sector participants as board members or partners. PDAs allow municipalities to participate in projects that they may be otherwise disinclined to partake in due to project risks and competing priorities of the municipality.

According to RCW 35.21, PDAs have the following powers:

- Own and sell real and personal property
- Contract with a city, town, or county to conduct community renewal activities
- Contract with individuals, associations, corporations, the State of Washington and the United States
- Sue and be sued
- Loan and borrow funds and issue bonds and other instruments evidencing indebtedness
- Transfer funds, real or personal property, property interests, or services
- Engage in anything a natural person may do
- Perform all types of community services
- Examples of projects where PDAs have been successful include the Seattle Chinatown-International District Preservation and Development Authority, Foss Waterway Development Authority, and Seattle Art Museum Development Authority. These PDAs have taken on the issues of affordable family housing, creation of public amenities, senior housing, health and social services, brownfield development, and expansion of a museum.

## FOSS WATERWAY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TACOMA, WA

The Tacoma City Council founded the Foss Waterway Development Authority (FWDA) in 1996 to oversee development and marketing of the publicly-owned Foss Waterway properties. The FWDA has set precedents in planning, engineering, and other development activities in cooperation with regulatory agencies and public input has been implemented. Today, the mixed-use community includes housing, retail, and restaurants as well as recreation and education opportunities.



## BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY ZONE

According to RCW 70.15D.150, “A city or county may designate a geographic area within its jurisdiction as a redevelopment opportunity zone” (ROZ) so long as the following determinations and commitments are met and the city council adopts a resolution attesting to this fact:

1. At least 50% of the upland properties in the zone are brownfield properties, whether or not they are contiguous
2. The upland portions of the zone are comprised entirely of parcels of property either owned by the city or county, or whose owners have provided consent in writing to have their property included within the zone
3. The cleanup of brownfield properties will be integrated with planning for the future uses of the properties and is consistent with the comprehensive land-use plan for the zone
4. The proposed properties lie within the incorporated area of a city or within an urban-growth boundary

To complete the establishment of the ROZ, the following steps must occur. First, documentation of the proposed boundary of the ROZ, and a table of all properties within the ROZ with information supporting evaluation against the eligibility criteria. Second, the eligibility criteria must be deemed as met. Written consent must be obtained from all property owners within the ROZ. Lastly, city council approves the ROZ by resolution. The ROZ designation does not carry a significant amount of operational or management requirements. Rather, it provides eligibility for use of innovative policy and funding tools for properties within the ROZ, though Ecology does not require a specific tool to be used. The benefits of establishing a ROZ are detailed below.

## EPA BROWNFIELD COMMUNITY-WIDE ASSESSMENT GRANT

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Brownfields Program is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. EPA provides technical and financial assistance for brownfields activities through an approach based on four main goals: protecting human health and the environment, sustaining reuse, promoting partnerships, and strengthening the marketplace. Assessment grants provide funding for brownfields inventories, planning, environmental assessments, and community outreach.

Community-wide proposals are appropriate when a specific site is not identified and the applicant plans to spend grant funds on more than one brownfield in its community. A city may request up to \$200,000 from the hazardous substances funding for sites with potential contamination of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants and up to \$200,000 from the petroleum funding for sites with potential petroleum contamination. Applicants may either combine requests for hazardous substances funding and petroleum funding into one proposal if both types of funding will address the same target community for a total not to exceed \$400,000; or applicants may submit separate proposals requesting up to \$200,000 each for hazardous substances and petroleum funding. An applicant that submits a combined community-wide assessment grant proposal or two separate community-wide assessment grant proposals may also apply for a site-specific assessment grant. Assessment grants funding may be used to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to brownfields sites.

# IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

