

Appendix 38 Gresham Civic Neighborhood

(Adopted by Ord. 1366 effective July 11, 1995)

(Amended entirely by Ordinance No. 1782 effective May 17, 2018)

PURPOSE AND PROCESS

Civic Neighborhood, primarily bounded by Burnside Street, Eastman Parkway, Division Street, and Wallula Avenue, is a central part of the City of Gresham. In 1995, the City of Gresham adopted the Civic Neighborhood Plan which designated Civic Neighborhood with its own plan district to provide standards and guidelines for development activity specific to the area. A design for a mixed-use plan for the area was accomplished through a collaboration with Metro, TriMet, Winmar (a property owner in Civic Neighborhood), and Portland General Electric (“PGE”). The plan outlined a vision of a transit-supported, walkable neighborhood with improved connections to other destinations within Gresham. An important purpose of the plan was to “demonstrate that development of mixed uses at relatively high densities is not only feasible in Gresham, but can offer advantages not found in conventional suburban development”.

The 1995 vision was translated into development standards and regulations that were incorporated into the City of Gresham’s Development Code (Section 4.1200). By guiding development, Civic has evolved into a transit-oriented neighborhood with multimodal connections to adjacent neighborhoods. With an active transportation network, those who live and work in Civic Neighborhood will generate fewer automobile trips than individuals elsewhere due to the proximity to light rail and the increased convenience of walking and biking to reach goods and services. In creating an active transportation network, Gresham continues to demonstrate the advantages of sustainable development and sets an important precedent for the region.

Civic Neighborhood has evolved since 1995. In 1997, the City constructed Civic Drive, a north-south connection between Division Street and Burnside Road. In 1999, the City partnered with developers to create the Gresham Station Shopping Center, a multi-tenant, multi-building shopping center that covers approximately 24 acres of the south portion of Civic Neighborhood. In 2006, Metro and a private sector partner helped create The Crossings, a mixed-use, transit-oriented development near the Civic Drive MAX station. The partially-developed Civic Neighborhood consists of several different uses and includes residential, commercial, and institutional uses such as Gresham’s City Hall.

Beginning in 1995, development in Civic Neighborhood was regulated using the Gresham Civic Neighborhood Plan District Standards, including non-discretionary design-related regulations and voluntary design guidelines. In 2008 the City designated the area as a Design District, and in 2010 Multi-family development within the district became subject to the City of Gresham Multi-Family Design Guidelines and Standards. Other design districts within the city are subject to design guidelines and standards for all uses other than single family.

2018 POLICY UPDATE

In 2016, the City began the Civic Neighborhood Vision and Design District Update project; working with residents, businesses, property owners, and other interested parties to update the vision for Civic Neighborhood and the policies to guide that vision's implementation. A series of project objectives were adopted based on work done by staff, a consultant team from MIG, Inc., and public feedback, including:

1. Revisit the vision and goals for Civic Neighborhood;
2. Update development rules to remove obstacles to development;
3. Create design guidelines and standards specific to Civic Neighborhood, consistent with vision and goals;
4. Develop new rules and processes that are clear to staff, applicants, and the general public; and
5. Set rules that balance the need for clarity, flexibility, quality design, and financial feasibility.

Project Process

In order to define what Civic Neighborhood is and what it should be, three primary project phases were undertaken starting in the spring of 2016. First, staff worked with a consultant team on research and analysis, reviewing the 1995 vision for Civic Neighborhood, evaluating current rules, and identifying issues and opportunities with existing development policies. The second phase included development of an updated vision and goals for the neighborhood based on discussions of community aspirations, the current and anticipated real estate market, and best practices in design and development. Lastly, alternate scenarios were considered for implementing the updated neighborhood vision by either maintaining current code language as-is, revising parts of existing code language, or completely revising the development regulations for Civic Neighborhood.

Public Outreach and Engagement

Public engagement with community members for the Civic Neighborhood Vision and Design District Update project was launched in early-2016, with outreach to residents of Civic Neighborhood, the Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations, the business community, the Gresham-Barlow School District, and other groups through meetings, workshops, questionnaires and social media, including a dedicated page for the Civic Neighborhood update on the City's web site. In total, the project connected with over 3,000 interested residents and neighbors (in-person or online). The following summarizes key meetings and methods of outreach:

- January 2016 – Discussion of Civic Neighborhood update with Northwest Neighborhood Association
- February 2016 – Community Forum and online survey
- September to October 2016 – Civic Neighborhood Vision Survey
- September 2016 – Stakeholder Focus Groups

- September 2016 – Community Visioning Workshop
- October 2016 – Student Workshop
- November 2016 – Design Preferences Workshop
- November 2016 to January 2017 – Design Preferences Survey
- May to June 2017– Visual Goals Survey
- January 2018 – Draft Code Survey and Community Forum

Updated Vision

The original 1995 vision for the neighborhood has evolved to incorporate common interests and ideas from the community, while building on the opportunities and advantages that exist today. The updated vision is as follows:

Gresham’s Civic Neighborhood is a distinctively urban mixture of uses and people with convenient places to live, work, and shop right next to Downtown. Inviting tree lined streets lead past high-quality buildings and lively storefronts, next to parks and plazas to meet and play, all designed around an active transportation network, with great public transit, well-connected streets and trails.

The updated Civic Neighborhood vision conforms with Metro’s Region 2040 planning program (the region’s plan for managing growth over a 50-year period), which recognizes the Civic Neighborhood, together with Downtown Gresham, as a regional center in the 2040 Growth Concept Map (September 2014). For purposes of the Metro 2040 Growth Concept, regional centers are described as follows:

As centers of commerce and local government services serving a market area of hundreds of thousands of people, regional centers become the focus of transit and highway improvements. They are characterized by two- to four-story compact employment and housing development served by high-quality transit. In the growth concepts, there are eight regional centers – Gateways serves central Multnomah County; downtown Hillsboro serves the western portion of Washington County; downtown Beaverton and Washington Square serve eastern Washington County; downtown Oregon City and Clackamas Town Center serve Clackamas County; downtown Gresham serves the eastside of Multnomah County; and downtown Vancouver, Washington, serves Clark County.

The 2040 Growth Concept Map further identifies areas as Station communities. The map designates the areas around the Civic and Gresham City Hall MAX light-rail stations as Station communities. Station communities are described as follows:

Station communities are areas of development centered around light-rail or high-capacity transit station that feature a variety of shops and services that will remain accessible to bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users as well as cars.

The updated vision for Civic Neighborhood also ties into the One Gresham initiative – a multi-year economic, urban redevelopment, and social strategy designed to strengthen and link the City’s three mixed-use centers – Civic, Downtown Gresham, and Rockwood. The One Gresham initiative identifies

Civic Neighborhood to be a living/shopping village with a community plaza, a grocery store, entertainment options, and mixed-use housing.

THE CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

The Civic Neighborhood Plan was adopted by Gresham City Council in 1995. Since 1999, when the first part of the neighborhood developed with commercial and institutional uses, it has become home to several residential and mixed-use developments. The Gresham Station shopping center, the largest development in the neighborhood as of early-2018, was approved and developed between 2000 and 2001, subject to the development standards of the adopted Civic Neighborhood Plan. It joined the three-story Gresham City Hall building, which was completed in 1999 and the old City Hall building, to its north.

Though Civic Neighborhood experienced rapid commercial and residential development soon after the 1995 Civic Neighborhood Plan was adopted, this development stalled with the 2008 economic downturn. In 2010, a second MAX light-rail station was constructed in the neighborhood at Civic Drive, joining the Gresham City Hall MAX light-rail station, which opened in 1986. The new station provided residents and workers with additional options for access to services and amenities with connections to Downtown and areas throughout the region. In 2006, as part of a public-private partnership, Metro helped to develop *The Crossings*, a 5-story mixed-use development with retail and multi-family residential spaces adjacent to the Civic Drive MAX Station.

Several large, vacant or underutilized parcels remain in the neighborhood that provide additional opportunities for transit-oriented development at relatively high densities, including several Metro-owned properties with proximity to the Civic Drive MAX light-rail station, and the TriMet owned park-and-ride at the northwest corner of NW Eastman Parkway and NW Division Street. One of the largest opportunity sites, the privately owned 'K-Mart property' at the northeast corner of the plan area, will also allow for denser development that supports the neighborhood's housing and employment goals.

Development along the west and northwest side of the neighborhood, adjacent to NW Wallula Avenue is primarily moderate-density residential, which includes two- and three-story apartment, condominium, and townhouse developments as well as a few single-family residences. The area is also characterized by a moderate elevation change from the Civic Drive MAX station up to NW Fanning Way and NW Burnside Road, which allows for excellent views from the residences along Fanning Way to Mount Hood to the east and Gresham Butte to the south.

The Wallula Avenue street frontage is characterized by a mature tree canopy of cedar and Douglas Fir trees, with a number of spruce and coast redwood trees also found along the street. The variety and size of the trees enhances the overall appearance of the primarily residential street. At the northeast corner of the intersection of Wallula Avenue and NW Division Street is one of the largest undeveloped parcels in the neighborhood. The 7.85-acre site includes several mature trees, and a significant grade change that presents challenges for future development. However, its location adjacent to the Gresham Station shopping center and excellent transit access present an opportunity for high-density, residential and mixed-use development.

A portion of the updated 2018 Civic Neighborhood Design District and Plan District boundary extends south of Division Street, capturing approximately 4.5 acres of area at the southwest corner of Division Street and Eastman Parkway. These properties are partially developed with commercial uses. The location of these properties provides an opportunity to establish an attractive 'gateway' to Civic Neighborhood by providing high quality development at an important intersection that borders Downtown to the east.

The neighborhood is currently served by two MAX Blue Line light-rail stations, connecting east to Downtown Gresham and the Gresham Transit Center and west to Rockwood and the Gateway Transit Center (which provides transfers to Portland International Airport and Clackamas Town Center) then west into Portland. The neighborhood is also served by frequent service bus lines on Division Street and Eastman Parkway.

The neighborhood also includes bicycle infrastructure, with dedicated bicycle lanes present on Civic Drive, Division Street, Burnside Road, and Eastman Parkway. Wallula Avenue includes a shared bicycle/vehicle lane. The Wy'East Way Path, running adjacent to the MAX light-rail tracks, provides a dedicated pedestrian/bicycle trail connecting the city's three centers: Downtown Gresham, Civic Neighborhood, and Rockwood. The paved pathway is envisioned to connect through Downtown Gresham to NE Hogan Drive where it will eventually connect to a multi-use pathway system that intersects with other trail systems in the city.

HISTORY OF CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD: LOCATION AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Civic Neighborhood Plan area, as adopted in 1995, was bounded primarily by NW Burnside Road to the north, NW Eastman Parkway to the east, NW Division Street to the south, and NW Wallula Avenue to the west. The Plan District boundaries and the original Civic Neighborhood Design District boundaries from 1995 do not match. The original Design District boundaries extend across Burnside Road to the northwest corner of Burnside and Eastman Parkway, capturing a triangular piece of land occupied by a small shopping center (Burnside/Eastman Crossing) and restaurant.

The original plan area boundary also extended south of NW Division Street, capturing sites with frontages on Burnside Road between Eastman Parkway and NW Florence Avenue. These properties are developed with single-family detached and multi-family residential uses between NW Norman Avenue and Florence Avenue; and commercial uses between Norman Avenue and Eastman Parkway.

The 2018 revised Civic Neighborhood Plan District boundary removes the properties north of Burnside Road and the residential properties south of Division Street, but maintains three lots, and an access only portion of a fourth, at the southwest corner of the intersection of Division Street and Eastman Parkway, linking Civic Neighborhood with Downtown Gresham. The Civic Neighborhood Design District boundary was updated in 2018 in order to match the 2018 Plan District boundary, thereby aligning the two areas' rules and processes to fulfill the vision and goals for the neighborhood. The revised neighborhood boundaries encompass approximately 136 acres, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: 2018 Civic Neighborhood Plan District and Design District Boundary



The majority of land in the district is used for commercial uses, including retail uses such as the Gresham Station shopping center and the K-mart site; commercial and medical office uses adjacent to Civic Drive; and personal services, such as the LA Fitness gym at Civic Drive and Burnside Street. The neighborhood also includes institutional uses including Gresham City Hall, the TriMet park-and-ride facility, and the Center for Advanced Learning (CAL).

Residential uses are primarily located at the northwest corner of the neighborhood. The plan area contains approximately 693 dwelling units, with three-quarters of those being apartment units. The remaining land, approximately 21 acres, is vacant.

The 1995 plan classified land in the Civic Neighborhood Plan District into four land use categories: Transit Development District – Medium Density (TDM-C); Transit Development District – High Density (TDM-HC); High-Density Residential – Civic (HDR-C); and Moderate-Density Residential – Civic (MDR-C). The properties adjacent to the two MAX light-rail stations and the light-rail tracks were zoned for the most intense level of development. The TDM-C land use district allows slightly less intense development due to adjacent lower intensity residential uses, with the HDR-C and MDR-C allowing primarily residential development with no minimum FAR required.

Prior to 2018, land within the Design District, but outside the 1995 Plan District, south of NW Division Street was within the Station Center (SC), Transit Low-Density Residential (TLDR), and Corridor Mixed-Use (CMU) land use districts. The triangular piece of land north of NW Burnside Road, located within the original Design District boundary, was within the Community Commercial (CC) land use district. In 2018, these properties were reclassified from the Civic Neighborhood Design District to the Corridor Design District.

2018 CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN UPDATE

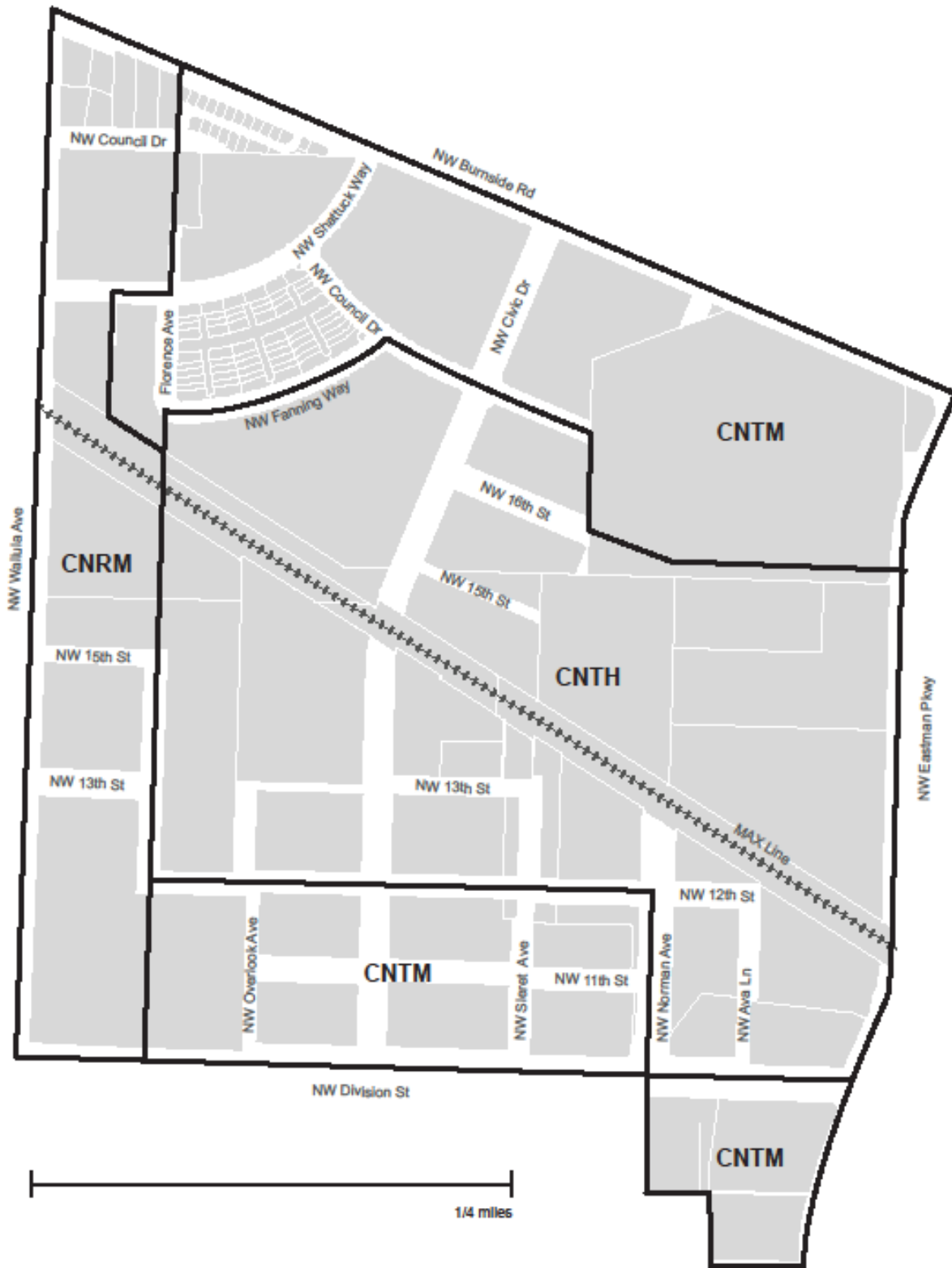
Civic Neighborhood Plan Land Use Sub-Districts

In addition to the realignment of the Plan District and Design District boundaries, the 2018 update replaced the previous four land use designations with three new designations: Civic Neighborhood Residential Mid-Rise (CNRM), Civic Neighborhood Transit Moderate Density (CNTM), and Civic Neighborhood Transit High Density (CNTH). The consolidation of the four land use districts into three, along with the simplification and clarification of development rules for these districts was intended to simplify regulations and reduce obstacles to development, as identified in the project goals.

The 2018 update maintained the most intense level of development adjacent to the MAX light-rail stations and tracks, in the CNTH land use district. Properties adjacent to NW Burnside Road, NW Eastman Parkway, and NW Division Street include the next highest level of development, in the CNTM land use district. The mostly residential properties adjacent to NW Wallula Avenue are within the CNRM land use district.

The 2018 land use districts depicted in Figure 2 below, are further elaborated as follows.

Figure 2: 2018 Civic Neighborhood Sub-District Boundaries



Civic Neighborhood Residential Mid-Rise (CNRM)

The predominantly residential sub-district supports a transition between the lower-scale neighborhood west of Wallula into the more urban scale at the core of the Civic Neighborhood. Areas designated CNRM are moderate to high density residential uses, with a lower scale fronting Wallula. Typical forms of housing include row houses, garden apartments, condominiums, and multi-family apartments. Commercial uses are allowed to locate on sites fronting an Arterial Street.

Civic Neighborhood Transit Moderate Density (CNTM)

The CNTM sub-district includes convenient access to arterial streets as well as local and regional transit routes including light rail stations, bus lines, and bike and pedestrian paths. This sub-district is intended to evolve over time from a shopping center largely organized around automobile trips and parking, into a full-service area with a diverse mix of jobs, housing, and commercial opportunities. The sub-district allows for the widest range of intensities in the neighborhood, supporting diverse projects with varied uses, scales, and ownership structures.

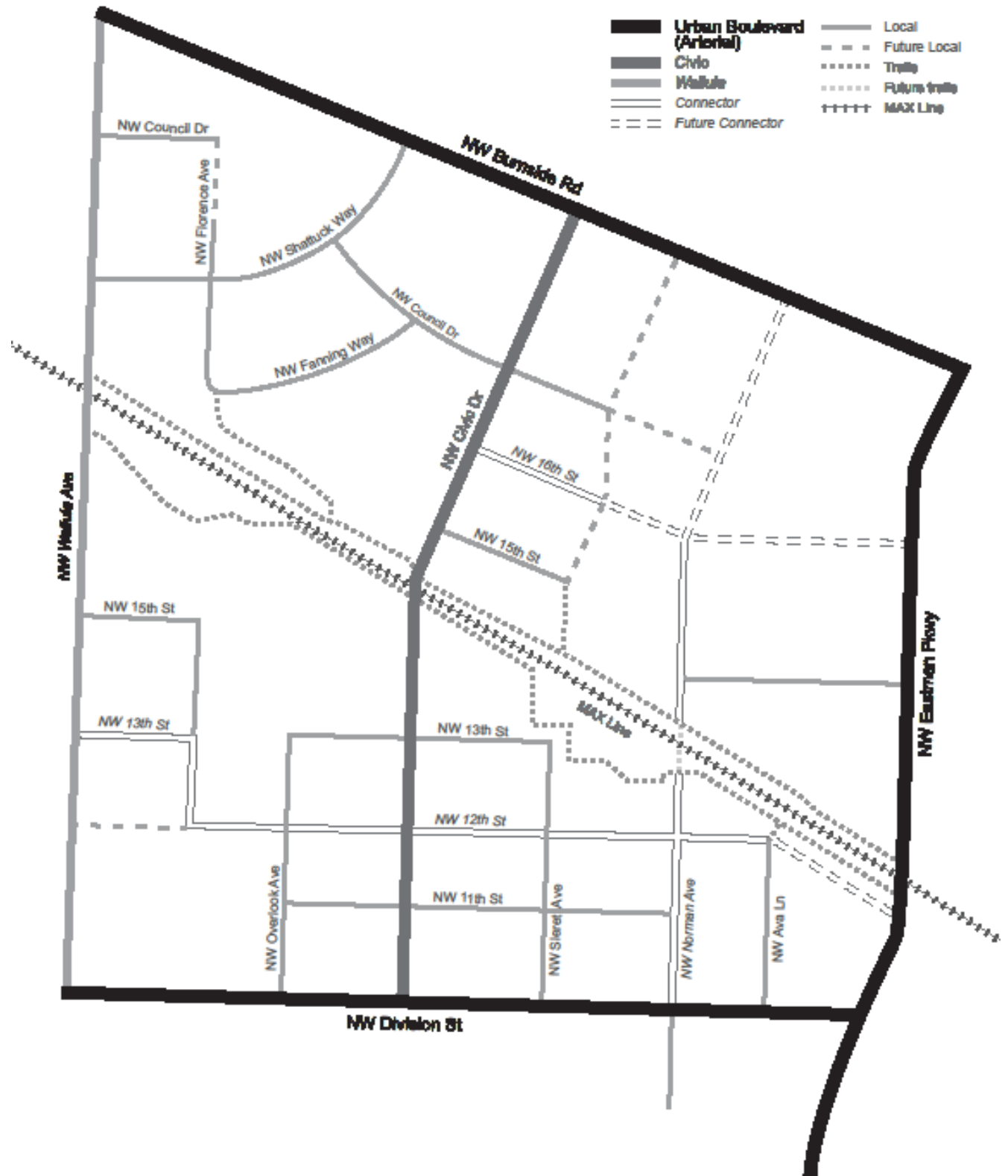
Civic Neighborhood Transit High Density (CNTH)

This sub-district is the core of the Civic Neighborhood, centered around the two light rail stations, and permits the highest intensity of development. This walkable, urban center includes a range of public spaces, paths, and amenities connected by active street fronts and multi-modal paths. The CNTH sub-district includes an active, engaging mix of uses – retail, service, office, and residential that will help create a vibrant area that is active all day and through the evening.

Civic Neighborhood Plan Street Types

The 2018 update included an update of street types specific to the Civic Neighborhood. Streets within Civic Neighborhood include specific standards for how buildings and sites interface with the public right-of-way (e.g., building orientation, building setbacks, etc.). Certain streets may also require a higher level of building transparency in order to create a more pedestrian friendly environment. The street types, described below, are identified in Figure 3.

Figure 3: 2018 Civic Neighborhood Street Types and Future Street Plan



Urban Boulevard (Arterials)

This street type, which includes Burnside Road, Eastman Parkway and Division Street, is typified by the widest cross-section; with two vehicle travel lanes in each direction, in addition to dedicated bike lanes, an optional parking lane, and sidewalks with ample amenity strips for street trees and street furniture.

Civic Drive

The existing Civic Drive right-of-way that runs north-south through Civic Neighborhood has its own street type. The street includes a single vehicle travel lane in each direction, dedicated bike lanes, a parking lane on each side of the street, and wider sidewalks with amenity strips for street trees and street furniture.

Wallula Avenue

Wallula Avenue is also a unique street type within Civic Neighborhood. The cross-section for the street includes one travel lane in each direction, bike lanes, and a sidewalk on each side with wider amenity zones to accommodate the existing mature trees present along the street frontage. The sidewalk and amenity zone are structured to provide flexibility in width, design, and location in order to maintain the streets characteristic mature trees, where possible.

Civic Neighborhood Connector

The Civic Neighborhood Connector is envisioned as the primary north-south and east-west street type through the northeast, south east, and southwest quadrants of the neighborhood. The cross-section for the street includes two narrow vehicle travel lanes, with bike lanes and parking lanes on each sides of the street. The street design includes an amenity zone with optional storm water planter, and a wide sidewalk to encourage pedestrian activity on the street.

Civic Neighborhood Local

This street type is envisioned as the most common street type in Civic Neighborhood, with most new streets (not including the Connectors) designed to the standards for Local streets. The Local street is designed to prioritize pedestrian movement and safety. The street's cross section includes two narrow travel lanes and optional on-street parking lanes on each side of the street. When on-street parking is provided, curbed bulb-outs are to be provided at street intersections allowing for shorter pedestrian crossings. The design also incorporates a sidewalk and amenity zone or storm planter area.

Non-Public Street Types

The Civic Neighborhood is also envisioned to include primary internal drives that appear similar to a Local street-type, but are privately owned and maintained. The primary internal drive will serve to break up larger blocks and large parking areas. The design of the primary internal drive may be scaled up to accommodate emergency vehicle access, at the discretion of the Manager.

New development may also include pedestrian pathways, which are intended to be privately owned and maintained paths that bisect larger blocks, providing through-connections for pedestrians and bicyclists. Pedestrian pathways are differentiated from trails, such as the Wy'East Way Path, which are publicly owned and maintained.

Future Street Plan

In addition to the 2018 updates to street types in Civic Neighborhood, the update includes a modification to the future street plan "Street Modifications" process. Prior to 2018, the Civic Neighborhood Plan District standards allowed for only limited lateral shifts of proposed future streets, with more significant changes requiring approval of City Council under a Type IV process.

In order to bring the future street plan process into alignment with other areas of the city, the 2018 update allows future street plans in Civic Neighborhood to be subject to Section 9.0700 standards for Neighborhood Circulation and Future Street Plans. Per the standard, a new future street plan or revision to an approved future street plan may be approved by the Manager under a Type II procedure when it is applied for concurrently with a land division or site plan review application. The Future Street Plan for Civic Neighborhood is outlined in Figure 3 above.

Open Space, Parks, and Trails

Development of the vacant and underutilized properties in the neighborhood is envisioned to include new public spaces in the form of a neighborhood park in the northeast quadrant of the neighborhood, one or more plazas in the neighborhood, and maintenance of the existing Wy'East Way Path and public path system adjacent to the MAX light-rail tracks.

The new neighborhood park is envisioned to include both active and passive spaces with significant landscaping, including shade trees and grassy areas for recreation. The park shall also include play areas for children of various ages and other amenities typically found in urban parks.

Development of the property directly to the north of the Civic Drive MAX light-rail station is identified to include a public plaza and open space between a half- to one-acre in size. The Civic Neighborhood Station Plaza will sit adjacent to the MAX platform and will serve as a focal point for the neighborhood, contributing to its identity and sense of place. The plaza components will be required to integrate with and take advantage of the site's existing slope; such as the extension of plaza elements up the hillside to Fanning Way via a pedestrian path constructed in 2017. The plaza will also integrate and complement the existing Wy'East Way Path that runs adjacent to the MAX light-rail tracks.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the vision and policies outlined in this document requires the development and adoption of principles, regulations, and design guidelines and standards for development in the Civic Neighborhood Plan District. This multi-component strategy will ensure that the vision and goals identified herein can lead to the development of high-quality buildings and successful and sustainable urban spaces that will benefit current and future residents of the city.

The next steps in the implementation of the 2018 Civic Neighborhood vision and the policies that will guide the vision's implementation are identified below:

1. Adoption of the updated policies found in Volume 2 – Section 10.318 Gresham Civic Neighborhood.
2. Evaluation of their effectiveness with future Development Code revision and update projects.

The goals, objectives, and action measures – including development principles – are described in more detail in Volume 2 – Section 10.318 Gresham Civic Neighborhood.