

CULTIVATING CANBY

Community Outreach Summary

September 13, 2023

The City of Canby is undergoing a major update of its Comprehensive Plan and Transportation System Plan. The goal of these updates is to plan for growth and guide development over the next 20-year horizon.

As part of the planning process, the city conducted outreach to community members to understand their vision for the future. This process reached more than 178 people through Community Conversations and an online survey, gathering approximately 953 unique comments. The purpose of the outreach efforts was to ask two core questions:

1. What do you love about the City of Canby today?
2. What would you like to see change in the future?

This memorandum summarizes the key themes identified during the community outreach process. A compilation of community feedback can be found in the Appendix.

Key Findings

The following “themes” emerged from community outreach activities. Each is accompanied by a comment that exemplifies the theme:

A community for all ages- Encourage housing options for all stages of life and support entertainment and recreational activities for seniors, families, and youth.

“More activities for youth and young adults should be provided here. We have small town activities and ambiance here, but we need more things to do so that people don’t have to travel out of Canby for their entertainment. A safe place for youth that is affordable and stays open later would benefit the community.”

Small-town atmosphere- Maintain access to nature and farmland vistas, prioritize community safety, and facilitate thoughtful growth.

“Definitely preserve and invest in what’s unique about Canby: the quaint, small-town feel (including the ferry, Main Street, farm stands and u-cut farms) and recreation areas (Logging Road Trail, parks, playgrounds).”



Diverse and prosperous economy- Support existing small businesses, especially within downtown, and recruit businesses with high-paying jobs and services for local residents.

"In Canby we love the small-town atmosphere yet are afforded most of the stores, shops, restaurants, and medical facilities needed to keep us from driving long distances for such services."

Sound public infrastructure- Update power and water systems to support Canby's growth, improve OR 99E conditions and overall road congestion, and enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections.

"We'd like to see more walking and bike trails, more parks like Eco Park where folks can walk out in a natural environment, and fixing highway 99."

Strong sense of community pride- Celebrate Canby's diversity and uniqueness through local events, community celebrations, and lasting organizations.

"We know how to throw a great party! Look at all of the events we host! I think Canby lacks a strong identity. If we are going to be the "Garden Spot" then we should do more garden-related events. We are lucky enough to have the fairgrounds, too. We could take better advantage of that."

Network of connected greenspaces- Maintain and expand park facilities and open spaces, such as Wait Park and the Logging Road Trail.

"I love the public park space that includes the logging trail walking path. There's a real sense of community among people who routinely walk there. The recently added Maple Street Park Splash Pad is another great use of park space."

Additional Comments

The following are responses that demonstrate the actionable thinking and observations on the part of some Canby community members:

Quotes from Community Members

- *"Continue to nurture the Downtown area, as well as the array of services in the area as a whole. I would not like to have to leave town to get things I need regularly, including services. Continue to support the many events. I think the engagement fosters a feeling of commitment to the city. Continue to ensure that the downtown area is someplace to live, not just to shop. Having residents around the clock keeps downtown safe and helps keep residents invested in maintaining a healthy downtown."*

- *"I adore how there is always something going on in Canby. Art shows ... music in the park ... flower festivals ... plant shows ... car shows ... fairs ... Please preserve and enhance the parks, and the community events. Family events. Daytime events. There are so many SPECIAL businesses here that are invested in our community of family - preserve whatever it is that makes these types of businesses want to be here and thrive here."*
- *"Canby is special because people look out for each other. I've had strangers help me change a flat tire, people offer their place in a check-out line when I have a heavy load of groceries, and our team of first responders are very professional and personable."*
- *"We love the small-town atmosphere, quiet neighborhoods, and walking paths along the river and across town. Plus, we wanted a new home in a community a bit slower paced than we had in Washington County."*
- *"On the east side of town we need more parks and playgrounds. Save more farmlands from being developed into housing tracts. Build a tunnel or overpass under or over at least one railroad crossing to enable emergency vehicles access to the west side of town."*
- *"We would like to see more housing options, especially housing for low-income folks. Quality housing that is live/work might be interesting to add."*

Online Survey and Community Conversations

An online, open-form questionnaire was conducted from April through September 2023 to gauge what community members like about Canby and what they would like to see in the future. The survey has garnered 178 respondents. The same themes were covered in "community conversations" with community nine groups to date, including:

- Jump-In Northwest/Canby Grove
- Canby Fairgrounds
- The Canby Center
- Neighborhood Health Center
- Canby Area Chamber of Commerce
- Canby United Methodist Church
- Canby Foursquare Church
- Canby Adult Center
- Zoar Lutheran Church

What Community Members Like About Canby Today

Several important themes emerged from the survey and community conversations in regard to what the community likes about Canby today. Community celebrations, proximity

to local amenities, the slower-pace and small-town atmosphere, and access to nature are all commonly enjoyed among community members.

Community events that supported community pride and care are mentioned as aspects that make Canby special such as Music in the Park and the Dahlia Festival. Maintaining this sense of pride and celebration of the community is an important part of livability. A close proximity to local amenities is also identified as an aspect of Canby that many residents enjoy. Common amenities identified include the local Library, the Canby Adult Center, and local Schools. Respondents also noted that they enjoy Canby's location to neighboring services in larger communities such as Lake Oswego and Portland.

Participants indicated that they were drawn to Canby because of its proximity to local services and family-oriented mentality. Other respondents noted that they had moved to Canby to get away from the hustle and bustle of neighboring areas like Gresham, Oregon City, and Portland.

Canby's small-town atmosphere and proximity to nature is also frequently mentioned by respondents as something that they love about the area. Feelings of safety and a slower pace were items that community members identify as contributing to this atmosphere. Many also mention Canby's proximity to natural areas such as the Willamette River, farmland, and walking trails as reasons for locating within Canby.

What Community Members Would Like to See Change in the Future

Community members identify a variety of changes that they would like to see occur within Canby. The most frequently mentioned improvements revolve around improving road conditions, traffic safety, and connections throughout the city. Respondents brought up improvements that need to be made to OR 99E such as fixing potholes, completing sidewalks, and connecting bike lanes. Connection issues caused by the train were also mentioned as it makes it difficult to access services throughout the day if stalled on the tracks.

Community members urge slower development, first focusing on updating local infrastructure systems, such as power and water in order to accommodate future expansion. Preservation of surrounding farmland and natural areas are brought up as areas of concern under this topic. An alternate approach to design standards and a focus on historic preservation are proposed as ways to differentiate Canby from the Portland Metro Area, keeping Canby as a unique destination.

Adding or improving amenities to existing parks, while also creating new greenspaces was a frequently cited theme. Respondents demonstrate a need for more recreational activities, programming, and facilities within Canby. This need focuses on youth-centered activities, specifically after-school activities. Recreational facilities include expanding the public pool, creating another splashpad, and providing more bathroom facilities in parks. Respondents also note that Canby's tree canopy could be improved, stating how areas surrounding Canby's industrial parks and new developments have an increased heat-effect.