

2040 Planning and Development Grant Application | Concept Planning

Project: Alternatives Analysis for Local Governance

Funds requested: \$125,000

Project purpose and need

1. Describe the geographic area to be concept planned and the housing or employment land need that the concept plan area is intended to fulfill. Correlate the housing or employment need to your documented future growth needs and how the plan will meet the long-term vision for the city. Describe how urbanization of the reserve area [**unincorporated area** in our response] relates to any specific community plans and goals and maximizes existing community assets. Explain the desired timeline for an urban growth boundary expansion [**annexation/incorporation** in our response].

Geographic Area

The core area of focus is the unincorporated area between the cities of Milwaukie and Gladstone, the Willamette River, and the Oatfield Ridge (generally the area serviced by Oak Lodge Water Services District).

Project Overview

This project will study the economic and governmental potential to incorporate a large suburban area into a new and/or existing city. We believe incorporation will empower community members to shape a sustainable model of governance that will give our community agency to develop governmental and economic strategies designed to meet the specific needs of this particular area. This includes bolstering development and increasing employment opportunities, particularly on the McLoughlin corridor, between the Cities of Milwaukie and Gladstone, including primarily the unincorporated communities of Oak Grove and Jennings Lodge. In addition, it will allow the area to shape housing and public policy reflective of the community's values and to develop a comprehensive plan to manage the projected population influx over the next two decades.

Without a city government, the unincorporated urban area of Oak-Lodge has long struggled to implement solutions that deliver equitable outcomes unique to our residents. While the two community planning organizations for the area (Oak Grove Community Council and the Jennings Lodge Community Planning Organization) maintain a relatively active and robust membership, even the most dedicated of volunteer advocacy groups can't match the resources and influence that would be available through a city government. At the most basic level, we lack the funding, organization, authority, and expert-knowledge base to make substantive inroads on most large-scale issues facing our community, including economic policy development and affordable housing solutions. We want to shape a more sustainably just community and our CPOs lack the necessary power to affect this goal.

The following are a few recent examples of resident advocacy that attempted to achieve more equitable and sustainable outcomes but essentially struggled/failed due to lack of effective local agency:

- ERC / infill development - We've seen numerous single family neighborhoods be developed in a manner that decimates existing trees and topography/hydrology. The most significant of these was the ERC where despite the community's best efforts, we could not affect any standards and modifications to the development that would have included a mix of housing types and preserve key open space for a much needed park.
- Active transportation infrastructure - This urban area has long lacked continuous pedestrian sidewalks and bikeways providing connection within our community and beyond. Not only does this cause safety issues for people who don't have access to

cars, it essentially forces more people to own cars or suffer lack of access to schools, essential services, mass transit, and employment.

- McLoughlin Blvd - a woefully under-developed corridor, McLoughlin represents a huge missed opportunity for housing, employment, services and a tax base essential to our community. There is an enormous disconnect between zoned housing capacity and the actual / projected needs. Current development patterns ignore the available transit access and consist mainly of car lots changing over. The most recent SNAFU is a new storage facility located in the heart of our community where housing and services should be. None of this contributes in terms of local economic productivity, employment opportunity, or social cohesion.

We recognize that our community is requesting a significant financial investment from Metro. As we look towards strategies for future community engagement, we need to be prepared with data to establish the case for need. We expect the economic and governmental analyses to provide clear evidence to our community, allowing informed conversations around potential incorporation.

Housing & Employment needs

Metro, 2014 Urban Growth Report:

- 205,780 new housing units within the urban growth boundary by 2035
- 113,325 (55%) apartments, condos, duplexes, row houses and townhomes in Portland
- = 92,455 housing units including all housing types outside of Portland and detached single family houses in Portland

Clackamas County, [2019 Housing Needs Analysis](#):

- 8,175 new housing units needed by 2039
- there is inadequate land capacity (current zoning) to meet these needs in all plan designations
- More than 30% of existing households are cost burdened or severely cost burdened showing an immense need for affordable housing

Current Demographics

The rate of persons in poverty for Oak Grove and Jennings Lodge (12.9%) is substantially higher than the Clackamas County rate (7.3%). Area elementary schools qualify 48.9% of students for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch program, while North Clackamas School District overall qualifies 38% of students. These comparisons suggest that economic equity suffers in the unincorporated urban area of Clackamas County.

Given the great need for healthy, safe and affordable housing, it is obvious that a massive increase in living wage employment is also required. Supporting income growth resolves many issues, including increasing taxpayer funding of essential services and resources, such as affordable housing. Employment lands near transit, and high density housing and services are severely limited. Redevelopment of McLoughlin boulevard is essential to lifting economic productivity, allowing for more equitable distribution of resources and prosperity for the whole community.

Community Plans & Goals

While desire to pursue incorporation in this area has arisen in some form every 5-10 years, we believe the timing is especially right and poignant in this moment. Alignments with significant Metro transportation investments, boulevard planning starting at Park Ave, the presence of

light rail transit coupled with a real lack of capacity to meet growing economic and planning needs, the need to address tough crises like the pandemic we're facing now, and the ever increasing instability and churn of businesses / retail along McLoughlin boulevard under our current model of existence point to many reasons to improve our ability to self-govern and plan new pathways for our collective future. Most importantly, more people than ever have begun to realize how inequitable our society has been and still is for many of our community members. There is a strong desire to be better, to do better, and to design our systems to center these marginalized folks first rather than continue to enable established privilege and plan only for averages and majorities.

Our community has begun to develop a vision for its future through the McLoughlin Area Plan, and the Park Avenue Development and Design Standards project. We know that big, locally-driven changes are needed to ensure housing needs can be met, and that desired public services and amenities can be feasibly developed and implemented. Most importantly, we recognize that long term sustainability and prosperity require holistic thinking about land use, transportation, employment, and self governance. We want to protect and enhance the natural surroundings we enjoy, while simultaneously heightening the local economy, boosting the businesses that shape our area. Incorporation will empower us to implement these visions and ensure that Metro's significant investments in our planning efforts can come to fruition much sooner than later.

Project Timeline

Once approved, we expect to move quickly to procure consultants who will produce the required data. We expect that no more than eight to ten months will be necessary to complete the proposed work (from approval to process to final completion). Following the results of this project, we expect to move directly into various forms of community engagement, and we imagine campaign efforts toward a ballot measure could occur in time for the November 2022 election cycle.

Key goals this specific project will achieve:

1. Identify ideal model(s) of local governance that can enhance equity, transparency, economic prosperity, and long-term community participation.
2. Provide an incredibly powerful collection of information to all residents of the area, enabling enlightened decision making and collective action.
3. Ultimately enable a successful incorporation or annexation that will enable the community to better enact equitable planning and improved funding for Metro 2040 aligned projects including public and active transportation, tree canopy and habitat enhancement, vibrant and walkable urban planning, increased housing capacity, improved economic productivity and employment opportunities, and much more.

Proposed scope of work

2. Provide a bulleted list outline of the major project elements and deliverables needed to meet the requirements of Metro Code Section 3.07.1110 Planning for Areas Designated Urban Reserve [*enhanced local governance of the urban unincorporated area* in our response]. Briefly describe the scope for each phase, key deliverables and general timeframe to complete the project.

Incorporation/annexation should aim to expand civic engagement opportunities for every resident; encourage them to exercise individual agency; and empower them to work empathetically and collaboratively together to work to overcome the challenges and struggles of current models of government and engagement processes. Economic goals and outcomes should occur through an

equity lens, ensuring that anticipated improvements in economic productivity benefit marginalized populations first and foremost.

Determination of the ideal consultants for the following scopes will be done through collaboration among all project partners.

Economic Analysis - *Understand the potential economic benefits and drawbacks of the local governance options available*

Procure an economics consultant to study and reveal the best cost/benefit scenarios to be presented to voters for proposed scenarios. This will include a forecast of potential tax revenue based on projected policy directions that intentionally optimize Metro's 2040 concepts as well as local priorities. It will include a comprehensive cost comparison of various government structures and service arrangements to allow the clearest presentation of possibilities to benefit all residents, businesses, landowners, and other stakeholders.

Deliverables:

- Determine project timeline and optimal scenarios for analysis with community engagement support from Incorporation for Equity
 - Anticipate to begin with 2-4 scenarios for each; geographic areas/zones, future development potentials, future national/international economic trends/projections, and governmental profiles (combinations of nothing, annexation, or incorporation). From there, seek to eliminate the least likely scenarios enabling the remainder of the project to focus on 2-4 total options, ensuring that at least one innovative/unexpected alternative is put forward.
 - Overlay an equity lens (with community input) to guide selection of scenarios.
- Economic analysis report including models and projections for scenarios with digestible & presentable summary

Governmental Structure / Legal Analysis - *Identify the most effective, viable, and empowering structure for local government available*

Procure specialized consultant(s) and/or university researchers to clarify and compare options for governmental structure, along with the best/worst outcomes that can be realized based on real world examples from other existing cities, both foreign and domestic, as well as imagine even better models that may not yet exist. In addition, potential legal barriers and commensurate potential strategies to overcome those barriers will be identified.

Deliverables:

- Determine project timeline and optimal scenarios for analysis with community engagement support from Incorporation for Equity
 - Anticipate to begin with 2-4 scenarios for each; geographic areas/zones, future national/international societal trends/projections (how people will view, participate in, and rely on local governance), and potential governmental structures including doing nothing, traditional annexation or incorporation, and other potential models not common in Oregon. From there, seek to eliminate the least likely scenarios enabling the remainder of the project to focus on 4 total options, ensuring that at least one innovative/unexpected alternative is put forward.
 - Overlay an equity lens (with community input) to guide selection of scenarios.

- Governmental structure report with options and recommendations including digestible & presentable summary

Project manager

3. Describe the skills and experience of the lead staff person who will manage all aspects of the grant project and oversee the project team's collaboration and consultant work.

Project Management - *Guide the necessary processes of the project*

We request that Metro include funds for a project manager who will work directly to procure consultants and manage their work. Throughout the project, they will communicate frequently with and have the support of city and county staff members and Incorporation for Equity.

They should be fully qualified for such a role and will be responsible to ensure that the consultants' work remains on track with clear expectations and that all parties work effectively together to complete a thorough yet efficient process that encourages both creative and pragmatic thinking along the way. We want to see some out of the box thinking and non-standard sources for research, but we understand that big ideas must be quickly vetted in order to control budget and ensure clear and concise project deliverables. They should ensure the final project report is thorough, clear, and representative of the communities best interest and equity priorities.

Deliverables:

- Oversee the project process and deliver a final recommendations report as a culmination of all analysis deliverables & best available options/strategies for moving forward.
 - Work with the consultants to outline and describe past and current barriers to incorporation and/or annexation including factors involved in other regional successes and failures that residents will need to be aware of.
 - Include both a concise summary, and breakdown of the analyses performed.

Project partners and roles

4. Clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of each of the key project partners. Describe the level of commitment from service providers to meet the goals of the project.

Incorporation for Equity is a core group involved in preparing this grant application that includes members (including present and past leadership) of Oak Grove and Jennings Lodge CPO's, MAPIT, Urban Green, Oak Lodge Library Board, HDOG (Historic Downtown Oak Grove), and other action groups. Partnering directly with us in this work are Clackamas County and the City of Milwaukie.

The County and City both recognize the importance of this project, as well as the immense benefit it could bring to our residents/landowners/business owners and to each of their governments. As an active and empowered partner, we will be better able to execute plans, collaborate productively, and reinforce their efforts rather than draw on their resources. Both have committed to provide politically neutral support, allowing the members of Oak Lodge to lead and guide the process while they contribute the necessary professional staff to administer the funds and help organize community-led public engagement.

Clackamas County is considering being the fiduciary partner that would manage the funds, working with Metro on consultant procurement. Given the county's projected budget limitations, we request that Metro provide for both the consultant scopes of work, and dedicated project management. City of Milwaukie officials and staff will serve as advisors providing insights into the functions of Milwaukie as it relates to annexation and incorporation options.

Community engagement

5. Describe how the community engagement strategy will utilize best practices to meaningfully engage neighbors, property owners, key stakeholders and historically marginalized communities. Specifically describe your approach for advancing racial equity and involving communities of color in the planning process. Provide examples the city has used or is currently using to meaningfully involve diverse community members in planning processes.

One of the driving motivators towards incorporation is the potential for more equitable opportunities for all. Because of this, we plan to pursue a truly representational and robust community engagement effort following this project. Therefore, this grant is focused on gathering the information necessary to facilitate community conversations around potential incorporation.

Proposed project budget

6. Use the budget table template provided to show the estimated project costs by major phase or element. The budget table should reflect the bulleted outline provided in #2. Indicate estimated cost for consultant work as well as other direct project expenses. In the space below, describe the methodology used for estimating project costs, and identify any additional funds (if any) that have been pledged by project partners or other sources.

Estimated costs are informed by the professional input of Metro staff and initial conversation with potential consultants. Working within the total grant amount requested, we will need additional support from all project partners to help determine where the money should be best allocated to achieve the goals and deliverables outlined within any applicable procurement limitations.

Other funding sources committed: none

In-kind contributions: Potential for academic support of research and/or engagement; yet to be determined.

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Proposed project budget | Concept planning

Project Name: Incorporation for Equity - Alternatives Analysis for Local Governance

Grant Funds Requested: \$125,000

Other funds Pledged: \$0

PROJECT COMPONENT (Phase, element, deliverable, etc.)	CONSULTANT FEES	CBO PARTICIPATION AND/OR COMMUNITY LIAISON	OTHER DIRECT PROJECT COSTS	TOTAL
Project Management	\$ 25,000			\$ 25,000
Economic Analysis	\$ 50,000			\$ 50,000
Governmental Analysis	\$ 50,000			\$ 50,000
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET				\$ 125,000