City of Gaston, Oregon

Comprehensive Plan

Adopted by Ordinance 2002.01
November 13, 2002

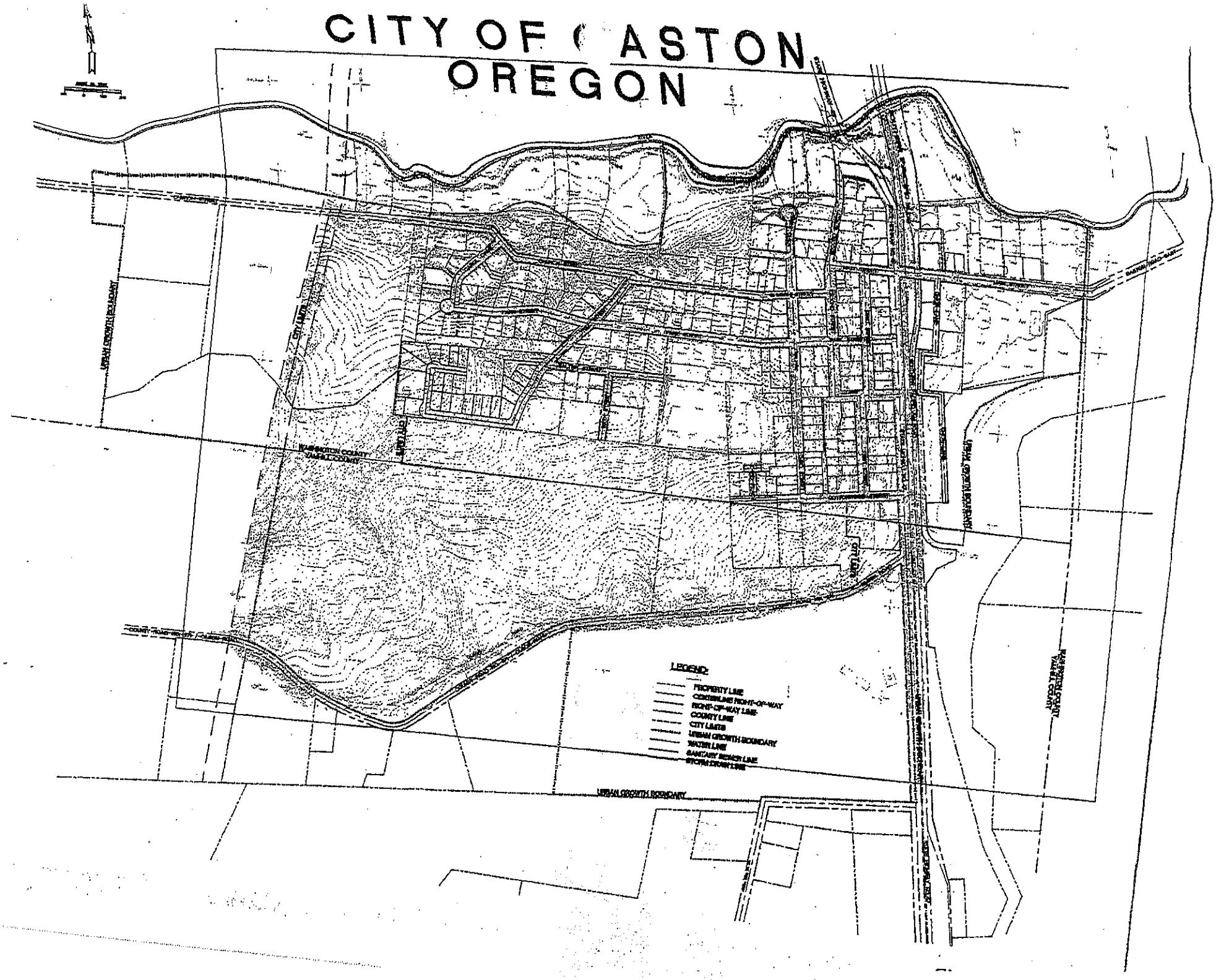
Prepared by

Urban Solutions
PO Box 4063
Wilsonville, Oregon 97070
503-682-9361
urban.solutions@verizon.net

Preparation of this document was paid for in part by a grant from the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development.

Table of Contents

CITY OF CASTON
OREGON



Chapter 1
History, Citizens and Vision

I. INTRODUCTION

This document represents the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Gaston. In the context of Oregon land use law, this Plan serves as the primary policy and decision-making guide for all land use decisions within the city's authority. It describes the community's vision for the future and establishes policies and strategies aimed at realizing the declared future. All implementing ordinances adopted and land use decisions made by the city must be consistent with this Plan.

While this Plan presents the city's declared future, it has been specifically crafted to also comply with the Statewide Planning Goals, adopted by the Land Conservation and Development Commission. The Statewide Goals were originally adopted in 1974. Since then there have been various amendments, additions, and administrative rules adopted that further define the state requirements for local comprehensive plans.

However, this update does not provide full compliance will all of the new state goals, as defined by DLCD's Administrative Rules. For specifically, the new goal 5, Natural Resources; goal 11, Public Facilities; and goal 12, Transportation have not been fully addressed. The city simply did not have the available budget to complete these elements, consistent with the detailed requirements of the new administrative rules.

This Plan provides a coordinated policy framework and implementing structure to manage urban growth while providing urban level services in a timely, efficient and economic manner. It is designed to maintain or enhance community livability while accommodating growth and economic expansion in the context of a pleasant rural village atmosphere.

Citizen Involvement

As a small rural community Gaston has not had a history of strong citizen involvement. Not uncommonly, citizens tend to participate on land use issues that most directly affect them and their immediate neighborhood. But, over the years some citizens have expressed interest in community planning and decisions and have participated in community planning and/or land use decision in the past. Some citizens participated in development of the first Comprehensive Plan in 1977-78. Others participated in Updates and Periodic Review of the Plan in 1981, 1986, and 1991.

The City Council is committed to public input and wants to create a program that encourages more participation as the city continues to grow. In fact, the City Council initiated an update review of the Comprehensive Plan (2001) based in part on input from citizens and business owners who formed and organization called Team Gaston. Team

Gaston is a grass roots organization that has a collective vested interest in and commitment towards Gaston's future as a small but vital community.

Gaston is a small town that likes to keep an open friendly atmosphere about it government decision-making. Therefore, rather than create a formal structure with an "officially appointed" planning commission and citizen involvement committee (CIC), a more informal approach has been selected.

> *Policy I.1: In the context of our new Vision, it shall be the policy of the City of Gaston to provide an open forum for citizen involvement. By this policy the City Council creates the functional role of a Citizen Involvement Committee (CIC), which shall have an open membership. Any residential or business member of the community who wishes to participate shall be recognized as a CIC member. There shall be no minimum participation requirements to maintain membership on the CIC.*
>
> *Each participating member shall have one vote, in cases where a vote is called; but it shall be the general practice to seek consensus on issues rather than majority vote. Votes will, however, be used when there is no clear consensus in order to maintain momentum and get closure on issues.*

Planning History

As required by state law, Gaston initiated its initial comprehensive planning effort in 1977. The first Plan was adopted in December 1978 and acknowledged as complying with the Statewide Goals in December 1981. Subsequent minor amendments were made in 1986 and 1991. These amendments were made to retain state compliance related to new state laws and administrative rules. However, since the original state acknowledgement in 1981 there was never a major community review and update of the Comprehensive Plan and Development Code.

So, in July 2001 the City Council initiated a major review and update of the Comprehensive Plan and Development Code. Development in Gaston had been slow for many years. But, in 2000 the city began to attract increased interest in development, especially within the Yamhill County portion of the Urban Growth Boundary. There was also a growing grass roots interest in promoting commercial and industrial growth from Team Gaston, as noted above.

In addition there was varied interests from outside agencies in the Gaston area. At the federal level there was an assessment and planning occurring by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Department and the Department of Interior adjacent to Gaston. This federal activity was related to consideration of establishing a federal wildlife sanctuary, including acquisition of property and potential restoration along Wapato Creek and the historic Wapato Lake.

This issue is discussed in more detail in the following section on the Physical Natural Environment, but the implication of such action could have a significant impact on

Gaston both positively and negatively, if not properly understood and planned for. However, the City of Gaston does not have a direct influence on any decision to establish such a wildlife preserve or not. Rather this is a decision that will occur between the various land owners and USF & W.

There was also on-going evaluations of water resources by state and county agencies in and around Gaston. The availability of safe domestic water supplies is a growing concern throughout the state, and in particular the Portland Metro Area.

And, Washington County and the City of Hillsboro were also evaluating water supply options for serving the ever-increasing demand for domestic water for urban uses. The City of Gaston currently obtains its water supply from Hillsboro.

At the time of this update, Washington County was also working on its Goal 5 and Metro Title III compliance program. The primary focus of their planning program targeted the regional urban area and not necessarily the surrounding suburban and rural communities, such as Gaston. However, the county must ultimately address the resources in the outlying areas. It would be logical for Gaston to seek to coordinate with the county on any such work program in order to leverage the staffing and technical resources of the county.

The City Council acknowledged these growth indicators. They also understood that the Yamhill County area of the UGB was basically unplanned and under-served by urban services. So, they initiated comprehensive community plan update, as part of their 2001-2002 budget. Work on the update began in July 2001. This planning effort was completed in the fall of 2002 and culminated in adoption of this document, which replaced the 1981 Comprehensive Plan.

> *Policy I.2: The city will continue to monitor external agency studies and programs to assess their implications on local planning decisions. To the extent practicable, the city will serve as a local clearing-house for such inter-agencies information, so local residents, land owners and business owners have convenient access to important information. Where it is determined to be in the best interest of the local community, the city will also actively participate in such studies.*
>
> *The current priorities for interagency coordination for Gaston include, the Wapato Lake Refuge Study and the multi-agency Water Resources and Supply studies.*

Community Description

The City of Gaston is a small suburban community located about 6 miles south of Forest Grove on State Highway 47, see vicinity map (Figure 2). The current city limits (2001) encompass approximately 127 acres located within Washington County on the easterly slope of a ridge separating the Tualatin River and the Wapato Creek Valley. Urban growth is restricted to the north and east by these water features and their associated

flood plains. The city's urban growth boundary, however, includes and additional 40 in Washington County, primarily west of the city, and also extends south into Yamhill and encompasses approximately 120 acres on the south facing slopes. So the majority of the developable land in Gaston is on hillsides ranging from 188 feet (mean sea level, MSL) to about 360 feet, where the city's water system reservoir is located, (Figure 3).

Gaston is approximately 31 miles southwest from downtown Portland. Hillsboro, about 13 miles away, and Beaverton, at about 22 miles, are the two largest and closest suburban communities to Gaston. Forest Grove and Cornelius are the two closest suburban cities located northeast of Gaston. Both of these cities, as well as Hillsboro and Beaverton, are within the jurisdiction of Metro, the Portland Metropolitan Regional Planning Agency. Metro has adopted a 2040 Growth Management Plan. They are now coordinating with the 24 cities and 3 counties within their jurisdiction on developing implementing plans and strategies. Gaston is not within the Metro boundary, but is influenced, primarily by ex-urban growth, by these regional urban growth management plans and strategies.

Gaston's urban growth boundary straddles the Washington County and Yamhill County line, with the majority of the existing development within Washington County. In August of 2000 the city annexed the first Yamhill county property into the city limits. This action was taken to accommodate a site for a new post office. The School District petitioned for annexation of additional property, but that decision was delayed until the Comprehensive Plan update was completed.

Community History

Like many early settlements, the development of the Gaston community was synonymous with the coming of the railroad to the area. In 1865, Joseph Gaston accompanied Colonel A.C. Barry on a preliminary survey to locate a railroad through the Wapato Pass. Gaston wrote, "At about that time the settlers were just about a mile apart along the county roads, which were cut through the thick brush and timber, just wide enough to pass a team and wagon." Two years later Joseph Gaston returned to convince the inhabitants of the area of the need for a west side railroad, which would run from Portland to Corvallis. The Oregon Central Railroad Company completed this line to St, Joseph via Hillsboro, Cornelius, and Gaston on November 3, 1872. The line terminated at St, Joseph due to lack of funds until January of 1880 when construction continued to Corvallis. Ownership of the railroad was transferred to the Oregon and California Railroad in 1880. In 1927, Southern Pacific Railroad took over the line. In the early 1900's the Oregon Electric Railroad offered commuter service two days per week on the line in the Gaston-Forest Grove area.

Joseph Gaston founded the community named after him. With the coming of the railroad, he felt that the town could become a center for social, educational, and commercial development. He built a railway station, a warehouse, and he spent much of his 16 years in Gaston working to drain an 800 acre swamp, known as Wapato Lake, and convert it to fertile farm land. He lived in the new town from 1880 to 1896, when he moved into Portland. The Gaston home later burned and is now the site for the Parish

House of the Congregational Church. In 1892 he sold land to the city for $100.00 for a school. He had previously offered to donate the property, but indecisions ultimately lead to the sale. The property is now the site of Gaston High School.

The townsite of Gaston is partially located on the Donation Land Claim of Donald McLeod. Main Street marks the south line of the claim. The property south of Main Street was owned by Alvarez Matteson, who built the home Gaston lived in.

In 1972, Will Webber plotted the part of Gaston west of the Railroad and south of the Tualatin River to Oak Street. A variety of businesses developed in Gaston, including the Flour and Feed Mill, the blacksmith shop, a slaughter house and butcher shop, and a cheese factory. The mill was built in 1889 and was operated on water power for thirty years. (Source: "A Cultural Resources Survey for the Gaston-Forest Grove Sewer Project", by Julia A. Follansbee, Archeologist, and Felicity Musick, Historian.)

The city of Gaston was incorporated in 1914. The city's population was certified in the 2000 Census at 600.

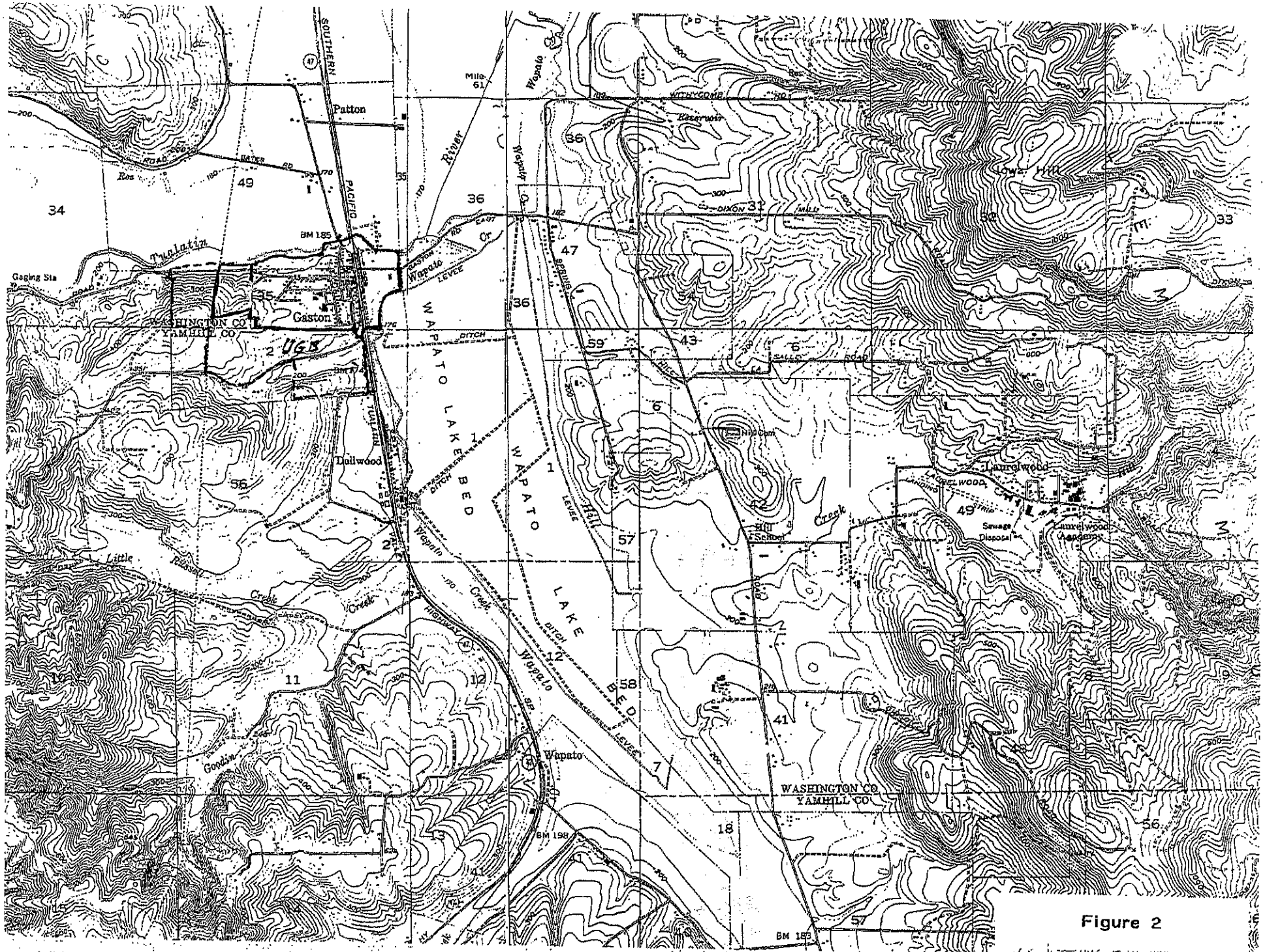

Patton
Gaston
Dollwood
Laurelwood
Wapato
WASHINGTON CO
YAMHILL CO
WAPATO LAKE BED
Tualatin River
Wapato Creek
Little Russell Creek
Goodin Creek
Gaging Sta
Sewage Disposal
Laurelwood Academy
BM 185
BM 198
BM 183

Figure 2

Community Vision

In the past, while some local concerns were addressed, the city's planning efforts were primarily focused on complying with the statewide planning goals. Planning decisions were also predominantly based on projections from past trends, which unfortunately is a traditional planning methodology, which has historically been relied upon by both Washington and Yamhill Counties.

We say unfortunately, because historically Gaston has not grown much. Therefore not much growth has been projected for the future. Also, historically, there had been little focus put on any efforts to aggressively enhance the visual quality of the highway commercial strip, which has never provided much curb appeal to visitors or potential residents or businesses.

However, as an initial focus for the 2001 Plan update, the community formulated their own Vision Statement, which is now incorporated within this document. The statement is a composite description of the city's desired future and how its' citizens intend to deliver that future. This statement is intended to serve as a primary decision filter for a broad range of local decisions and activities, extending beyond traditional land use related actions set forth in this Plan.

In 2001 the people of Gaston envisioned many potential changes in the community and took action to more specifically define and declare the desired future in the form of a Vision Statement. The context of this Vision has been edited into the various elements of the Plan text, so it plays a dominant role in guiding policies and strategies for community development. The Vision Statement, which functions as a declaration, shifts this document from a projected past - to a **declared future**. It represents a new planning model of imagining and declaring a desired future, even though it may have never existed before. This approach is not unlike the Declaration of Independence, which created the United States of America.

It is important to understand the distinction made with the incorporation of the Vision Statement as the principle guide to the future. This means the updated Plan is not just a document that accommodates a mathematical calculation of growth. It also means that the Plan is not just a policy document that extends from past trends and/or statewide goals.

What it means is that this Plan constitutes a specific and deliberate declaration by the City of Gaston of a particular desired future. This declaration is made even knowing that in some cases it may be completely contrary to past trends. It declares a future that is not projected from past trends, but one that is to be created by direct actions of the city, its residents, land owners, and business owners and operators.

So, in contrast, to projected trends, with the new focus on the potential for this community, one of the immediate challenges the community faces is justifying declared growth within the context of the State's Goal 2 planning requirements for projections.

State law requires a coordinated population allocation within each county, yet there are no current updated allocations from either Washington County or Yamhill County available for consideration in the update of Gaston's Plan. Since there are no new allocations available, at this time, and the UGB is set, with no current need to expand the boundary, it is the City's intent to allocate densities to available vacant land to meet declared population and employment targets.

> *Policy I.3: The city shall coordinate resolution of the differences between projected growth allocations and the City's declared growth with Washington County, Yamhill County, and DLCD. However, it is the city intent to declare and adopt a desired population target for the UGB of 2,600 people and 625 jobs. This computes to a jobs/population balance of 4.16:1, or one local job for every 4 people living in Gaston.*

The Vision incorporates concepts that go beyond traditional land use planning and the physical nature of the community. It ventures into the realm of relationships between the people and the built and natural environment, and between the people, and between the people and their government, and the way they all interact with each other. The vision is presented in a different font in an effort to emphasize that is represents a significant shift from the old Plan and that it is a dominant element of this updated Plan for the community. The vision is inspired, in part, by the vision, community interest, and generosity of Joseph Gaston, the community's founder.

Gaston's Vision Statement

The city of Gaston was named after Joseph P. Gaston, a pioneer railroad builder, lawyer, journalist and historian. Joe, as his friends called him, lived in Gaston with his wife Nancy and their only daughter, from 1880 to 1896. During this time he and his wife donated much land for the productive use of the citizens of Gaston. Shortly before his death in 1913, Joe was speaking to a large congregation of people. He recalled the years spent in the small town of Gaston, his efforts to drain Wapato Lake, to build a church and to unite the people of this small community. He concluded his speech with the following:

> "...Our lives are not measured by years, but rather by the character of the work we do. And that life is long that answers life's great end. Making the best use we can of our years and opportunities to do good to others."

It is with these poignant words as well as Mr. Gaston's desire to help and work with all people, that the City of Gaston will base its' **Vision Statement**:

Gaston remains a relatively small but vital rural community. It is surrounded by forested hillsides, which frame the valley floor and over look farms, rivers, streams and wetlands. Gaston's geographic location is anchored by natural beauty, which serves as a tourist attraction bring many people to and through the community.

Even with growth and an influx of tourists, Gaston continues to be a community where its' largest assets are those of the people living here and, at the same time, recognizes that its' young citizens represent the future. With this in mind, Gaston moves forward with an 'Asset Based Community Development' philosophy. Recognizing that to build an economically stable and productive community Gaston will first look to its' citizens. We will embark on a path that leads toward the development of policies and activities based on the collective capacities, skills and assets of every member of this community. In doing so, we lay the foundation on which we build our community, one that is both economically sound and citizen oriented.

With the cooperation participation of community residents, business owners and land owners, Gaston is transformed into an attractive and vital community with a consolidated community operations and civic center, thriving school district, ample parks and open spaces, and convenient well appointed businesses which provide not only needed goods and services, but also substantial local employment for our residents.

Background Analysis and Findings

In formulating the policies and strategies set forth in this Plan the City of Gaston relied, in part, upon a series of technical background inventory and analysis reports. These reports address the general requirements of the statewide planning Goals 2, and 4 through 14. The reports are separate supporting documents and are listed in the Appendix. They are reference documents only, and are adopted separately as a partial basis of findings, but are specifically not made part of the Plan itself.

Because of budget limitations, the city was not able to complete entirely new updated inventories, particularly those related to open spaces and natural resources (Goal 5), Public Facilities (Goal 11), and Transportation (Goal 12) so there is also a reliance on some of the original inventory and analysis from the 1977-78 Plan. However, an updated vacant lands inventory was completed, so that the formulated policies are appropriately focused on the transition from current conditions to those declared with this plan. The city needs to budget additional funds to complete update work on the Public Facilities Master Plans and the Transportation System Plan. Some work has been initiated on the public facilities plan updates, and the city has been awarded a 2002-2004 planning grant from DLCD to assist with updating these plan elements.

The city also relied upon public dialogue and testimony in coming to specific conclusions and policy direction. To clarify the basis for policies, summary findings and conclusions drawn from the technical reports and from public input are provided in the following subsections of this Plan. The findings, generally in narrative form, serve to support understanding of current, projected, and declared conditions. And, they provide the basis for the decisions made in formulating this Plan, as required by state Goal 2. The summary findings explain variations from technical protections and the declared future so it is clear why the city made certain policy or strategy choices.

Based on the vacant land inventory prepared b, the City concludes that there is ample residential land available to support continued growth for more than twenty years. But, the availability of good, unconstrained commercial and industrial land is limited within the current UGB. After further evaluation, the concept of potential conversion of some residential lands to commercial or industrial was found to only have limited potential, and primarily only in the area north of the city park on East Main Street. Topography, access, neighborhood patterns, and geographic location of other residential lands makes conversion to non-residential uses impractical. Even so, there is sufficient non-residential land available to sustain growth for, at least, five years, if not more, depending upon the rate of economic growth. There is vacant land, plus opportunities for remodel and/or redevelopment of commercial and industrial properties within the Central Business District. So, revitalization of this area is a priority for the near future.

How to Use this Plan

This Plan consists of text in both narrative descriptions and policy statements. It also incorporates a specific Land Use Map and other maps and graphics to visually reflect what the text is saying.

Some of these policies will be reflected in the arrangement of the land uses, streets, etc. on the Plan Map(s). Other policies will be utilized to guide preparation of or edits to the Development Code, and towards development of updated Public Facilities Master Plans, which are both implementing tools for this Plan. While the Plan policies are general in nature, the Development Code and Public Facilities Master Plans provide more specific criteria and standards to guide land use and development decisions. Still further, other policies direct intergovernmental coordination and other aspects of city operations and procedures. As the primary land use and development policy document all land uses and land use actions authorized by the city must be in compliance with this Plan.

This Plan represents a convenient source of coordinated information about the city and its declared future. This document is a tool for:

> **The Citizen** – who needs to know how decisions will affect his/her land, or how to participate in community decisions, or what actions her/she can expect from the elected officials as his/her representative.
>
> **The Developer** – who needs to know where and how certain uses are or might be allowed, and what goals, policies and standards must be applied in bearing the "burden of proof" that a specific development will comply with the Gaston Comprehensive Plan.
>
> **The City Council** (or other decision-making bodies, such as a Planning Commission) – who must consider not only how policies of the Plan relate to certain land use actions before them, but also how the policies relate to all the other matters upon which they must act in their administration of the city's business.

In interpreting the application of this Plan to specific circumstances, it is anticipated that conflicts or confusion will arise about intent. In such cases, interpretations of intent shall be guided by the following policy:

> *Policy 1.4: The City Council shall rely first on specific policies, then on the map(s), and finally on the narrative text to draw interpretive conclusions. The maps and narrative text help to provide a context for understanding the intent of the various policies. As the legislative body of the city, the City Council shall be the final interpreter of this document.*

Plan Amendments

This Plan may be amended by action of the City Council, upon providing appropriate public notice, conduct of a public hearing(s), and adoption of findings justifying the amendments. A Plan amendment may be initiated by:

- A property owner or developer representing the owner;
- A resident or group of residents;
- The City Council

Any Plan amendment must also comply with applicable state laws.

In order to grant a Plan amendment, the City Council shall find the following:

1. The proposed amendment is in conformance with the text portions of the Plan not being considered for amendment, and does not create internal conflicts with other chapters of the Plan.
2. The granting of the amendment is in the public interest.
3. The amendment is necessary and appropriate to address changed circumstances or to adjust for unanticipated consequences or unusual circumstances not previously considered.
4. The public interest is best served by granting the amendment, at this time.
5. The following factors were consciously considered, and the amendment will yield an equal or better development pattern:
    a. The suitability of the various areas for particular land uses and improvements;
    b. The existing land uses and improvements in the areas, relative to trends in land improvement, density of development, and property values;
    c. The availability and economics of providing necessary urban services to the specific area and the rest of the UGB;
    d. The needs of economic enterprises in the future development of the area;
    e. Transportation access; and
    f. Natural and agricultural resources and the public need for healthful, safe and aesthetic environmental conditions.

Chapter 2
Natural Physical Environment
and
Historic Preservation

Natural Physical Environment

The City of Gaston is located for the most part on hillside slopes, which taper down into the valley floor of the Tualatin River and Wapato Creek. The surrounding rural community is composed of low lying farm land, much of which is situated in the flood plain, or the drained lake bed of Wapato Lake. These contrasting elevations give Gaston a distinct visual image, which adds to the charm and character of the community.

The Chehalem Mountains rise from the valley floor to the east, while the foot hills of the Coast Range begin their rise to the west of Gaston. The elevations within Gaston range from about 160 feet along the river to 460 feet at the western edge of the urban growth boundary (UGB). Slopes within the UGB range from 0% in the flood plain to about 40% at the western boundary, (Figure 2 & 3).

The surrounding flood plains create significant constraints on urban development. Therefore, development in Gaston has and will predominantly occur on hillsides. The 100 year flood plain elevations within the city range from 186 feet at the west to 179' at the east. The 100 year flood plain defines the flood level in areas subject to periodic flooding, which have a one percent chance of occurring in any year. This does not mean that such a flood would never occur more frequently, nor does it mean that a higher flood level is not possible.

However, if development is located and designed to avoid serious damage during a 100 year level flood, the risk and degree of potential loss is substantially reduced. In 1986 the city concluded that it was appropriate to allow development within the 100 year flood fringe, but restrict development within the floodway. Therefore the city's flood plain regulations only restrict development at or below 182' at the west and 173' at the east.

The hillsides, however, are not free from development constraints either. Some of the slopes, particularly the steeper ones over 20%, with weak foundation soils are unstable and subject to landslide. The areas with the most severe soils limitations are shown on Figure 4. Mapping of these areas does not mean that development cannot or should not occur. But it does mean that additional geo-technical engineering analysis is warranted before approving development in these areas, to define appropriate mitigation.

The city has experienced slide problems in the past, due in part to under-engineering and improper and incomplete construction. The worst case occurred with the Scoggins Height subdivision, which even today (2002) remains partially unimproved. Cuts in

slopes, unfinished storm drainage and road systems coupled with heavy rains (1996) resulted in landslides, which caused significant damages to property and homes.

There are also two seismic faults located near Gaston. One is located northeast of the city limits. This fault traverses Gaston Road East, east of the fire station. The other is located less than two miles southwest of the city. Both of these faults are associated with a fault system heading in a northwest direction with horizontal 'right lateral' movement (Figure 5). The presence of these faults adds to the overall risk factors that must be considered in urban development. In this case appropriate design factors are addressed in the state building code relative to seismic zones.

The importance of soils in the assessment of urban development has only received serious consideration over the past two or three decades. Soils data is important in determining the overall suitability of land for various types and densities of development.

These inherent limitations constrain urban densities. But in some cases, appropriate engineering design, construction practices, and drainage management can overcome these constraints. These factors, however, tend to add considerable cost to development. Even so, whenever there is a question of soils stability, appropriate geo-technical engineering analyses should be completed as part of the development review process. Additional information is included in a separate report, Gaston's Natural Resource Base, 2001.

Policy II.1: The city will discourage the inappropriate use of flood plains by providing suitable sites for urban development in areas, which are not subject to this or other hazards. However, limited development may be allowed when properly engineered to protect against flood damage.

Policy II.2: The city will seek to create linear greenways and open space along power line easements, rivers, creeks, or streams for recreational purposes and visual aesthetics.

Policy II.3: The city shall preserve and seek to enhance the wildlife habitat and stream bank stability by discouraging the removal of trees along the river and streams, and encouraging riparian re-vegetation.

Policy II.4: The city shall develop and adopt provisions, in a zoning ordinance, which will protect the public health, safety and welfare from flood hazards.

Policy II.5: The city will permit limited use of certain flood plain lands for non-residential and recreational purposes, which do not endanger the public health, safety and welfare.

Policy II.6: The city will encourage continued use of flood plain lands for agricultural purposes.

Policy II.7: Through appropriate regulations, the city shall maintain eligibility for the federal flood insurance program, to enable residents or business owners to obtain low cost flood insurance.

Policy II.8: Any alteration to a natural drainage way shall be engineered and constructed in a manner to allow for the least possible change in the natural rate and direction of flow which existed prior to the alteration. Approved alterations shall not cause any backup of water or flooding of upstream properties, nor any increase in flood elevation on down stream properties.

Policy II.9: To minimize the potential for damage or loss of life from natural hazards, the city shall limit land use and/or the intensity of development in areas identified by the Soil Conservation Service, or other competent authority, as having slide prone or otherwise hazardous soil conditions. All new development on hillsides shall be required to provide geo-technical engineering analysis to define soil and slope stability and any appropriate mitigation to ensure against hazards damage.

Policy II.10: The city shall encourage retention of natural vegetation, especially forest or tree cover, to stabilize land with steep slopes. As needed supplemental planting and other engineered measures may be required to ensure slope stability.

Policy II.11: The city shall adopt Chapter 70 of the Uniform Building Code and the most recent version of the Oregon One and Two Family Specialty Code to ensure proper grading procedures are followed within the city.

Policy II.12: The city shall plan to concentrate urban uses on suitable lands based on research of available information showing the absence of known hazards including, but not limited to, flooding, unfavorable soil conditions, and steep slopes.

Policy II.13: The city shall encourage development that creates minimal disturbance of the city's natural environment and results in enhanced visual character of the community.

Policy II.14: To ensure appropriate consideration of natural hazards is given in the development review process, soils and geo-technical engineering analysis shall be required for all subdivisions. A registered engineer must place his stamp of such report. Such analysis may also be required for larger non-residential developments, particularly if slopes are involved.

Policy II.15: To ensure appropriate design and adequate flood impact protection all development within or immediately adjacent to the flood plain shall require an engineering analysis of flood hazards, storm drainage design, and building design. The area of analysis will include any land at or below 186 feet msl west of Highway 47 and 179 feet msl east of the highway.

However, for purposes of managing and administering the City's flood plain regulations, the FEMA Firm Map shall specifically define the base flood elevation, regardless of any FP designation, which might show on the City's Comprehensive Plan Map and/or Zoning Map.

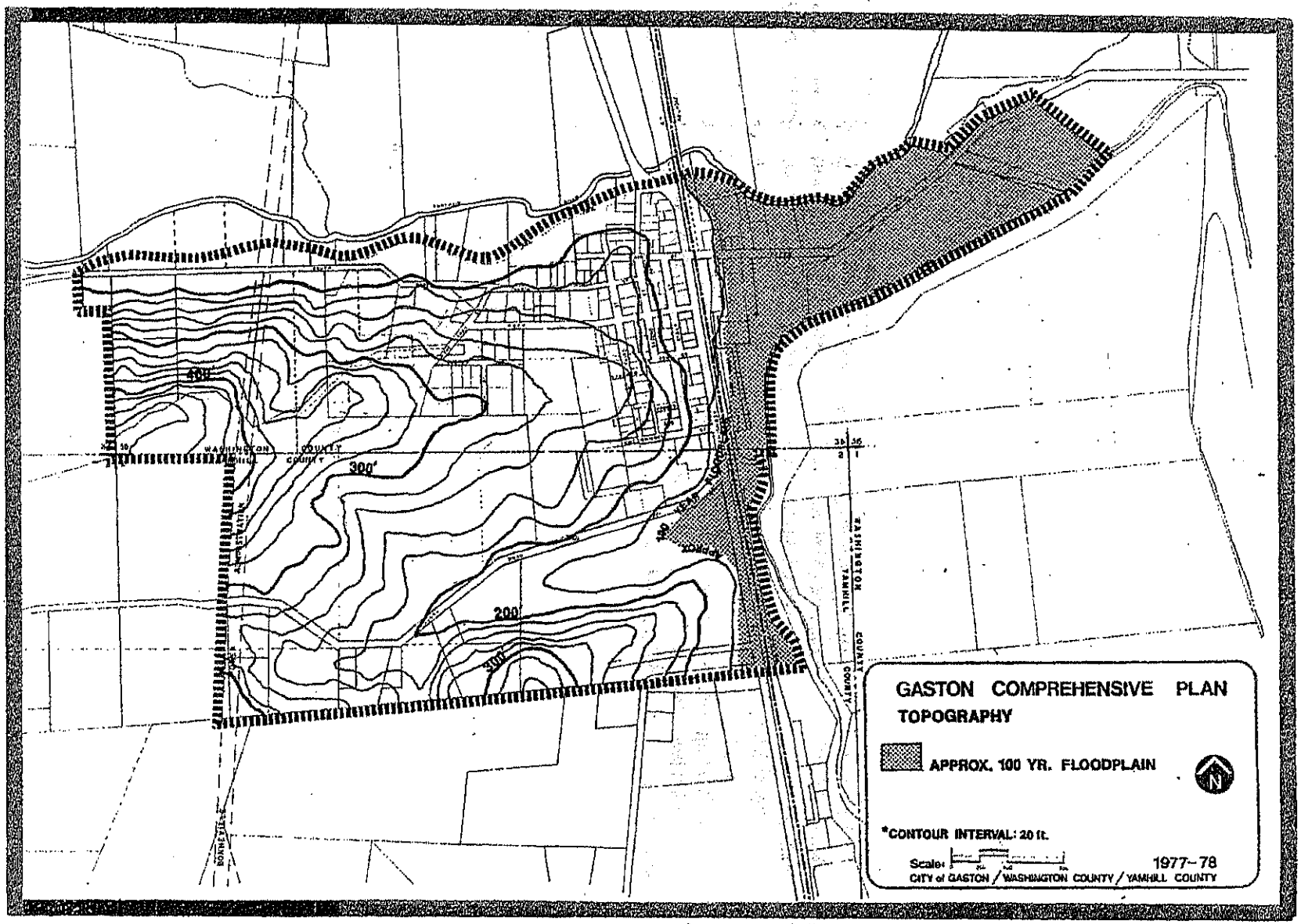

GASTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
TOPOGRAPHY
APPROX. 100 YR. FLOODPLAIN
*CONTOUR INTERVAL: 20 ft.
Scale:
1977-78
CITY of GASTON / WASHINGTON COUNTY / YAMHILL COUNTY
400'
300'
200'
WASHINGTON COUNTY
YAMHILL COUNTY

Figure 3

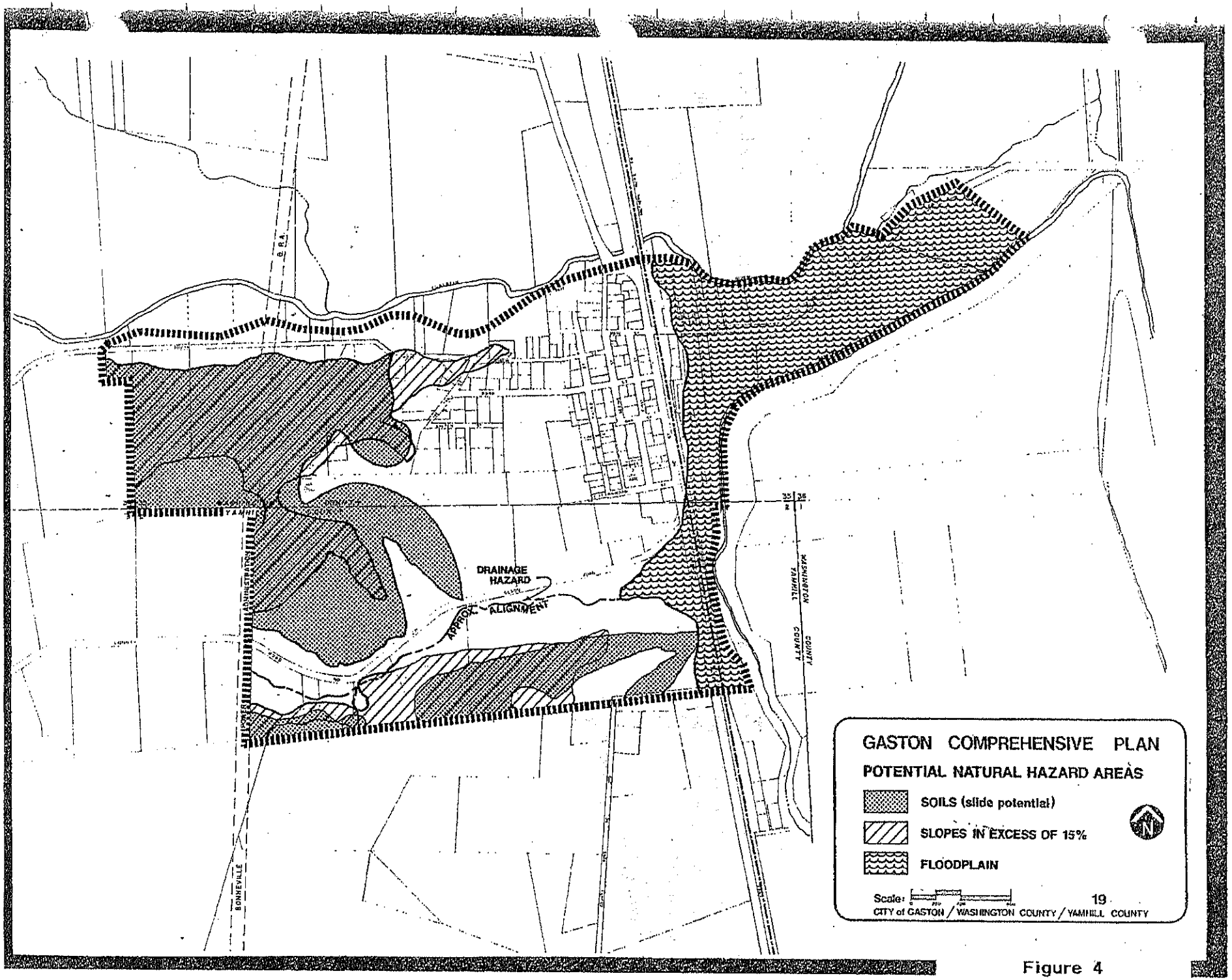
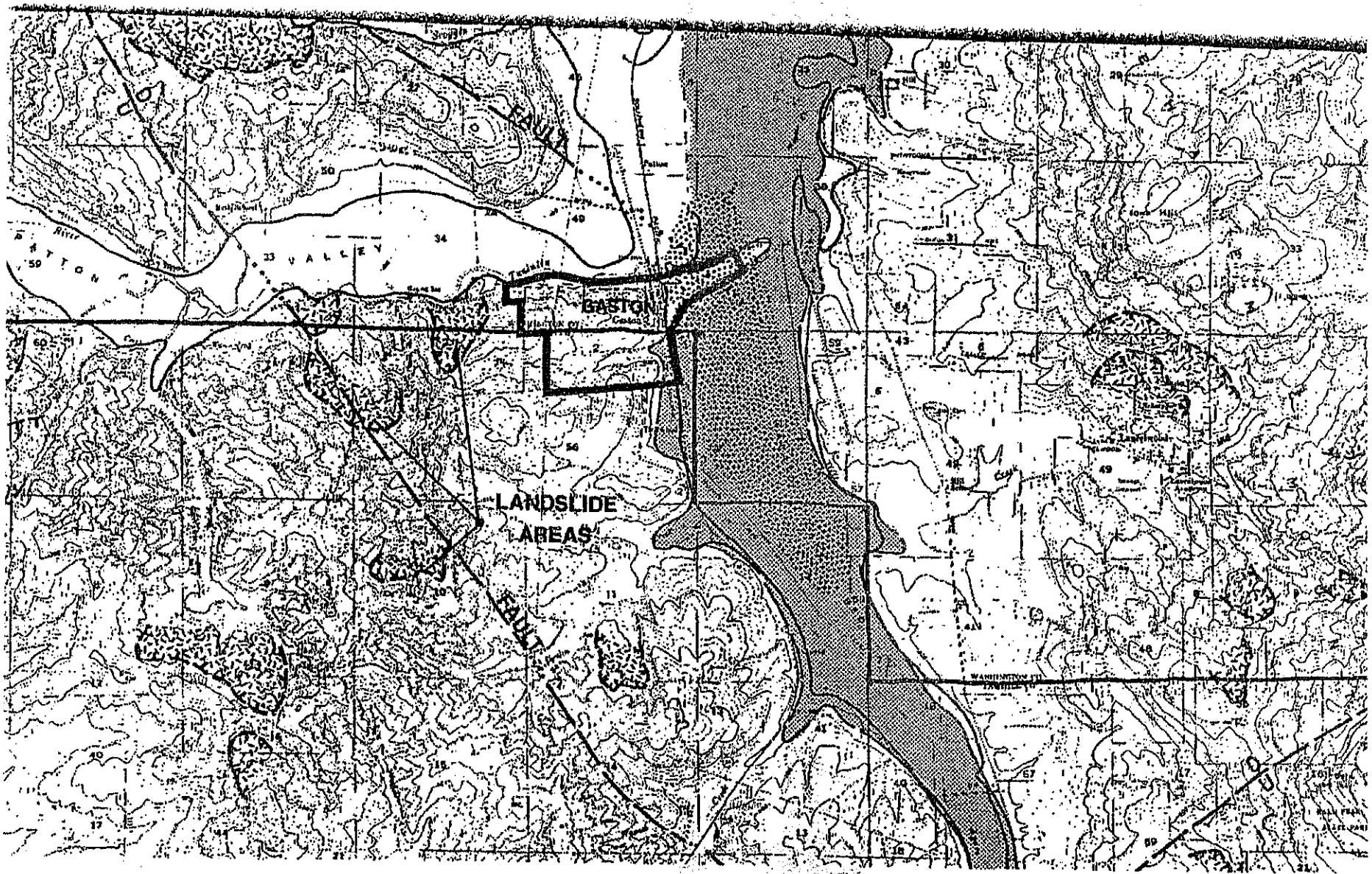

DRAINAGE HAZARD
APPROX. ALIGNMENT
BONNEVILLE
YAMHILL COUNTY
WASHINGTON COUNTY
GASTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
POTENTIAL NATURAL HAZARD AREAS
SOILS (slide potential)
SLOPES IN EXCESS OF 15%
FLOODPLAIN
Scale:
19
CITY of GASTON / WASHINGTON COUNTY / YAMHILL COUNTY

Figure 4



GASTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

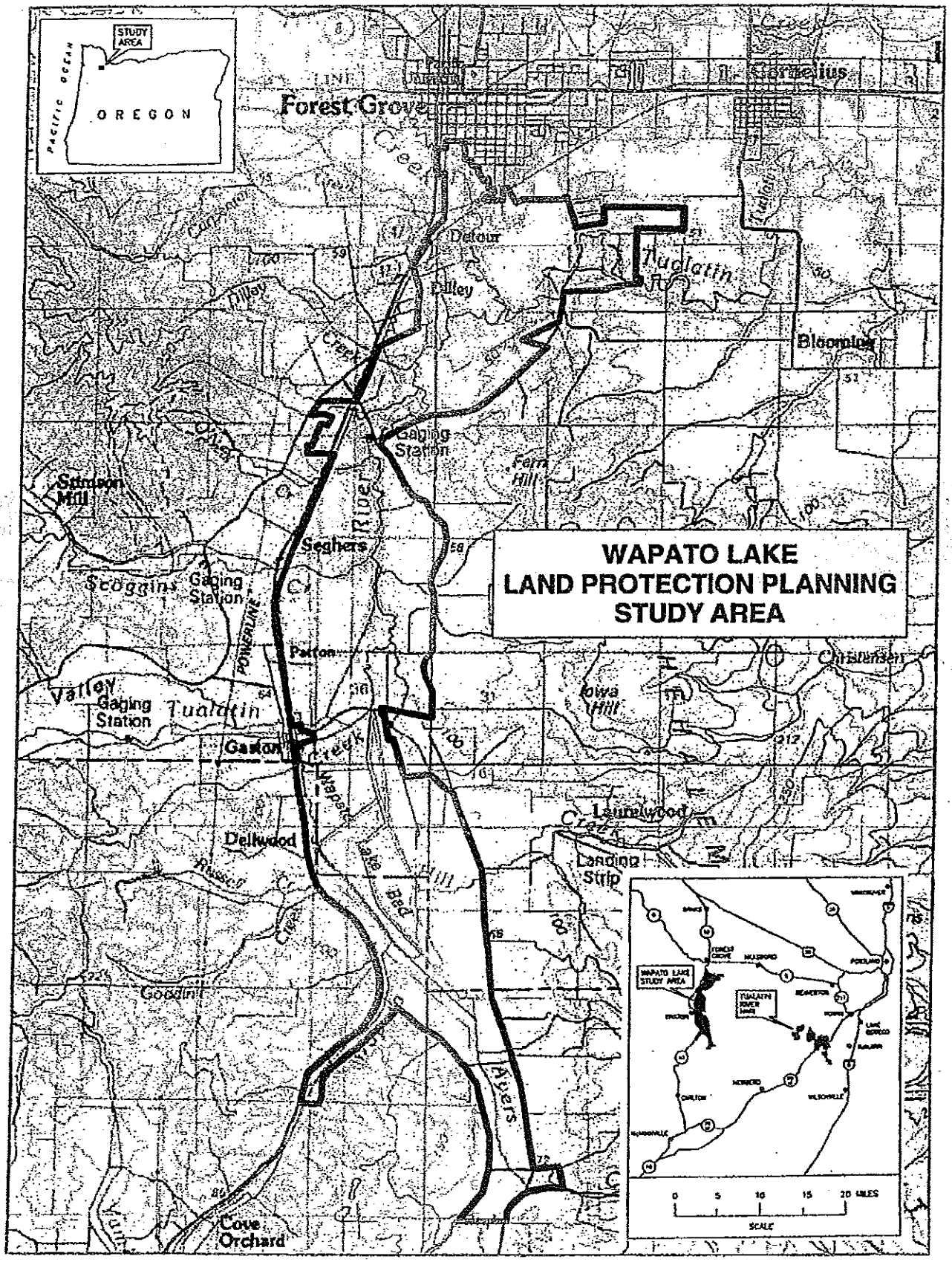
GEOLOGIC HAZARD AREAS

Figure 5

CITY of GASTON / WASHINGTON COUNTY / OR

SOURCE:

Oregon dept. of Geology & mineral industries, Geologic Hazards of the Tualatin Valley Region



September 2001

Figure 6

Wapato Lake Study

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was initiated (November 2001) a Land Protection Planning Study of the Wapato Lake area. The study will conclude whether or not the historic lake area will become part of the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS). There is a possibility, if the area is designated as part of the NWRS, that there would be restoration of historic wetlands and other habitat. The study area includes approximately 6,400 acres extending north/south at the east edge of Gaston (Figure 6).

The study initiation summary issued by the USF&W is being conducted because, *"Wapato Lake was created from yearly flood waters of the Tualatin River. Historically, the river crested its banks during seasonal flooding periods filling the Wapato Basin. The basin held water as flooding receded. The soils in the Wapato Lake Basin contain an organic peat substrate that once supported a scrub-shrub wetland plant community hosting a variety of species. Upper marsh areas were comprised of dense stands of seasonally flooded herbaceous plants dominated by wapato (Sagittaria latifolia). Oregon Ash riparian hardwood forests historically occupied flood plains adjacent to streams and the Tualatin River. This habitat has been identified as among the rarest plant communities. Protection is needed because of the areas former historical status and range of importance for promoting biological diversity on a landscape scale in the Willamette Valley".*

The historic lakebed has been drained and significantly altered over the years to accommodate farming. The alterations began with the efforts of Joseph Gaston in the late 1800's to drain the lake. In the mid 1930's, the Wapato Lake Improvement District was formed and the area was drained, ditched, tiled and diked to sustain agricultural crops and to manage irrigation flows consistent with established water rights. These water rights and water conveyance systems contribute to the complexity of issues that must be addressed if the refuge is to be established.

Even with all these manmade alterations, remnant communities of seasonal emergent wetlands, forested wetlands, and riparian forests can be found today, with considerable biological diversity. Existing habitat presently consists of farmed wetlands, small marsh areas and ponds, riparian areas along ditches, and intermittent streams supporting growth of Oregon ash, Oregon white oak, willow, wet deciduous woodland swales, and small stands of mixed deciduous/coniferous forest.

The land protection planning study will determine whether these lands could be protected under the National Wildlife Refuge System. The study was tentatively scheduled for an initial decision in September 2002. However, the time line was not met, and the decision process was not completed prior to the City moving forward to adopt the new Comprehensive Plan.

Establishment of a National wildlife refuge adjacent to the city could have significant impacts on land use decisions, both positive and negative. At the very least, it would add significance to Gaston's geographic location and presence within the surrounding rural

area. However, there are no significant results anticipated in the immediate future. Any changes that may occur are likely to be incremental and take many years to be realized.

The city's 2001 Plan update was on a parallel schedule to the Wapato Lake National Wildlife Refuge study, but ultimately moved in advance of the study results. So, the full results of the study will likely not be available in time to be fully considered and incorporated into the city's comprehensive plan.

Policy II.16: Because of the potential significance of decisions related to the Wapato Lake National Wildlife Refuge study, the city will continue to monitor the progress of the project and will assess net impacts as information becomes available.

Policy II.17: If it is determined that the wildlife refuge is to be created, the city shall actively engage in the planning process to ensure maximum benefit is derived to the community. Specific focus will be placed on efforts to realign the creek channel and dike, combined with engineered cuts and fills, in order to recapture industrial land from the flood plain, and/or to create more usable park space north of the dike. It is noted that creating the refuge could reverse the role of the dike from protecting farmland to protecting the adjacent urban land from flooding.

Policy II.18: The city shall apply water quality and quantity, and riparian protection and enhancement standards as established by Washington County Clean Water Services (formerly USA).

Historic Preservation

A brief history of Gaston was presented in the introductory chapter. While Gaston has a long history, there are only a few existing buildings were ever formally recognized as having historic significance. They include the following:

a. Two churches in Gaston are included in the Statewide Inventory of Historical Sites and Buildings, they are Congregational (Union) Church on 2nd and Church Streets and the Evangelical Church on 2nd Street near Park Street.
b. Three houses in the study area, according to Julia Follansbee's "A Cultural Resources Survey for the Gaston-Forest Grove Sewer Project", have potential for being included in the Statewide Inventory. They are the Grace Bastes House (c. 1890) located at 3rd and Oak, the Storey Cline House (c. 1860-1870) located at 312 Park Street, and the house (c. late 1800's) located at 314 Park Street.
c. A map developed by the Gaston Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee (1975-78) identifies other homes which may have historical significance, but for which more information is needed.

Since the 1977-78 Plan was adopted the state law has changed regarding listing of historic structures and sites. Such listing, with its potential restrictions, now requires the owner's consent. For this reason, the map that was included in the 1977-78 Plan has been eliminated from this updated version. There are records on file at city hall for anyone who may be interested in community history.

The Tualatin Valley Indians settled in winter villages in the Wapato Lake vicinity (east of the city). Neither the exact locations nor any systematic effort to locate their remains or artifacts, by professional archeologists has ever occurred. However, there are reports of projectile points and charcoal deposits having been unearthed in the area.

Policy II.19: The city will assist, to the degree possible and practical, any property owner, who wishes to list their building and/or property on the Statewide Inventory, or otherwise seek to preserve and enhance the historic value of the property.

Policy II.20: The city shall work with interested parties to explore the possibilities of creating a cultural and historic museum for the community. Such a facility could be part of a new civic center, as has been discussed in several public planning workshops.

Chapter III
Public Facilities and Transportation

This chapter discussed the status of the city's current public facilities and transportation system. It also frames the policies for how the city intends to coordinate provision of adequate urban services with continued urban growth.

The primary tool for managing the public facilities systems is good system master planning. All of the current system plans are in need of updating, since most of the systems were only preliminarily planned back in 1977-78. The following is a brief description of each of the systems components based on existing information.

More detailed information and system planning was initiated in 2001. However, budget limitations will force this master planning program into a multi-year effort.

This chapter carries forward most of the policies established back in 1977-78. However, they have been reformatted and in most cases consolidated into general Public Facilities management policies, rather than separate policies for each system component.

There City Council declares that there will be two categories of urban services and facilities considered in this plan as follows:

a. *Primary Facilities and Services:*

   Primary facilities and services include water, sanitary sewer, storm drainage and streets. These facilities must be provided prior to or in conjunction with urban development and must provide adequate capacity and service levels, including peak demand periods. They are essential to support development as it occurs.

b. *Secondary Facilities and Services:*

   Secondary facilities and services include police, fire, city administration, including parks and the library, and schools. Provision of these facilities and services typically lags behind or follows growth. However, they are often planned in anticipation of growth, but it is usually not possible or practical to create service capacity in advance of development.

A. Primary Facilities and Services

Water (See separate Master Plan document)

Source

The city purchases water form the City of Hillsboro. The main line serving the city comes down Patton Valley Road. The Hillsboro system is supplied from the Tualatin River, and supplemented during low water flows from Barney Reservoir on the Trask River. The water enters the Gaston system via an 8" pipe crossing the river, which is connected to a main meter and pressure reducing valve. The valve drops pressure from 103 psi to 90 psi. From the valve, the main system feed is a 10" line.

Existing Conditions

The city maintains its own supply distribution system, which consists of pipes ranging from 4" to 12". System pressurization and storage is provided by a .5 million gallon reservoir, located at the top of the hill, west of Trail Street, adjacent to what is now platted as the Trails End subdivision.

Over the past several years the city's maintenance program has repaired numerous leaks and bad meters, which once accounted for a loss of up to a 60% of the water supplied from Hillsboro. The city seeks to maintain the system with less than 10% loss.

The system provides good water supply throughout the current city limits. However, there are some pressure problems (too high) near the reservoir, and the fire flows are only about 1200-1500 gallons per minute (gpm). Commercial and industrial uses require fire flows of 2500-3500 gpm.

The existing reservoir provides basic system pressurization and emergency storage.

Future Needs

However, without a second tank, the city has not been able to properly maintain the reservoir, either inside or outside. There are also a few areas were system looping and/or line size upgrades would improve overall system flows. The system master plan is being updated as part of the 2001-2002 plan update. However, the master plan is not scheduled to be completed and adopted until early in 2003.

Sanitary Sewer (See separate Master Plan document)

Source

The city's sanitary sewer system has been operated by Clean Water Services (formerly USA) since 1972. The sewage treatment plant, located on East Main Street, was abandoned in 1987 and replaced with a pump station, which moves effluent from the city to a regional waste water treatment plant in Forest Grove.

Existing Conditions

The existing pump station contains 2-pumps, referred to as a duplex station. Design pumping capacity is 500 gpm. The theoretical pumping capacity is 1000 gpm.

At the time the pump station was designed the city's population was 430, with an additional 173 people in the UGB portion of Yamhill County for a total of 603 people in the service area. Growth projections at that time indicated a total of 850 people in 1985 and 1,085 by 2000. The city has not actually grown to meet that projection, yet. The 2001 population was only 600. Therefore the current system has a capacity to serve an additional 186 dwelling units or the equivalent non-residential flows, without any upgrades.

Preliminary records indicate that there are wet weather flows considerably in excess of normal discharge flows. These flows indicate a condition called inflow & infiltration or I & I. I & I conditions can be caused by leaking connection, manholes, cracked or broken pipes, or inappropriate connections, such as storm water.

Clean Water Services monitors I & I and schedules repairs if the system experiences excessive flows. They generally allow up to 4,000 gallons per acres per day. However, if the I & I problem compromises the ability of the system to accommodate planned growth, rehabilitation would be coordinated with improvements to serve the new growth.

Except for the new post office, Clean Water Services does not provide service to the Yamhill County portion of the UGB. Any service extension into Yamhill County requires annexation into the city, as well as into Clean Water Services service boundary.

Future Needs

Clean Water Services has their own facilities planning program. However, they do rely in part on information and coordination from customer agencies such as the city of Gaston. The city will need to coordinate with the County on master plan updates to ensure adequate service is maintained as the city grows. The

primary master planning focus will be on providing service to the Yamhill portion of the UGB.

It is anticipated that the pump station will need some upgrading within the next 5-10 years, depending upon the rate of growth. I&I repairs will also be necessary to maintain system capacity.

Storm Drainage (See separate Master Plan document)

Existing Conditions

The city's existing storm drainage system is comprised of ditches and pipes. Most streets have curbs, but not all of them do. It is not an ideal or well engineered system, but it seems to function without a significant problems.

The city has a routine maintenance program, including regular line cleaning, with a vactor truck. Ditches are also maintained as needed to sustain flow capacities.

There is no formal drainage system serving the Yamhill portion of the UGB.

Future Needs

Except for proving service to the Yamhill portion of the UGB, there are no major system failures to correct. However, there are some incremental system improvements that could be made, particularly in conjunction with any planned street improvements. It would not be cost effective to attempt to do any major storm system improvements separate from road improvements, as was done with Trail Street in 2001.

Transportation (See separate Master Plan document)

Existing Conditions

The primary arterial serving Gaston is Highway 47. The highway runs north/south through town.

This facility is under the jurisdiction of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). Therefore any improvements to the highway, such as traffic signals, must be coordinated with ODOT.

Cross-highway traffic is becoming an increasing problem for local circulation. Through traffic volumes on the highway over the past 10 years have increased substantially.

Further, ODOT has review authority over changes of access directly to the highway. It is noted that most of the current uses fronting the highway have

direct access. Consolidation of access and provision of alternate side-street access will probably be necessary as the commercial and industrial district continue to develop or redevelop.

There currently is no fully signalized intersection on the highway within Gaston's planning area. There is, however, a flashing yellow light at the Main Street intersection.

There is a sidewalk along most of the west side of the highway, but there is no sidewalk along the east side. There is also no designated bike lane (signed) or path (local or regional) through Gaston.

In the main portion of town, west of the highway, the local street network provides a partial grid circulation pattern. However, the grid is broken by development in several locations.

For example, Oak Street does not connect through to Third Street or to Salter, and Sixth Street tees to Slater, but does not connect through to Park or Church. The school property and buildings block this connection.

To the south, except for Olson Road, there are no roads extending into the Yamhill portion of the UGB. However, Cottonwood, Sixth, Trail, even Third Street are can easily be extended into this area, completing links to Olson Road. East of the highway, Main Street is the primary collector. Onion Lane is the only local street serving the industrial district, and it is not a full standard width street. Not all of the streets are fully improved to the city's urban standard, with curbs, gutters and sidewalks.

With limited road funds, the city has incrementally been upgrading streets one segment at a time. The most recent improvement was completed in 2001 along the length of Trail Street. However, due to steep grades and right-of-way limitations, this street was not brought up to full urban width.

Rail service through Gaston has been terminated. The railroad has actually removed the lines, but they maintain ownership of the right-of-way. They have authorized long term leases of the property, but no permanent structures may be constructed, which would inhibit future rail service.

There has been some talk of potential commuter rail service. However, this option is, at best years into the future. There is a test line operation being developed, which will run between Wilsonville and Beaverton. This commuter link is expected to be operational in 2005. If this line successful, it could stimulate interest in other lines, such as the one through Gaston.

Future Needs

As development occurs, particularly to the south into Yamhill County, streets will need to be extended. In order to provide good local circulation Cottonwood should be extended west, and Third, Sixth, and Trail should be extended south to Olson Road. And, generally streets should be designed to maintain and enhance the basic grid system whenever possible to ensure maximum circulation options.

To the west, steep slopes may prevent, or severely limit good connectivity of roads. Ideally, there should be another north/south link between Church and Olson Roads west of Trail. But the topography will likely not allow for any direct connection. However, as development occurs, any feasible north/south and east/west links should be provided to support overall community connectivity.

There will also be a need for signalization on the highway in order to accommodate cross highway local travel. It is recommended that the city work with ODOT in developing a Transportation System Plan, which would plan for such signalization. A preferred configuration would be to create a local loop including First, Main, Onion Lane, and Cottonwood Streets, with signals at both Main and Cottonwood. (See Figure 7). **Special Note:** It is recognized that Onion Lane may need to be designed with a substandard width due to limited lot depths and the railroad right-of-way.

The city should also jointly explore, with ODOT, the possibility of designating the central business district along the highway as a "Special Transportation Area" (STA). This designation would result in a specific traffic management plan, with special standards for access, crossings, signalization, speed, etc. It is noted, however, that any such designation does not obligate ODOT to any specific funding of defined projects. It only defines the desired system design and allows for incremental implementation as funding becomes available.

B. Secondary Facilities and Services

Police and Fire

Source

The city staffs its own police department. Currently there is just one officer, who receives backup from Washington County.

Fire protection is provided by the Gaston Rural Fire District. There is a fire station located on East Main next to the city park. The district currently has one full-time employee, who operates along with 2 part-timers and 36 volunteers.

Existing Conditions

Both police and fire service are adequate for the current population.

Future Needs

As development occurs and the population increases additional staffing will be required to maintain good service.

City Administration

Existing Conditions

City administration is currently provided by three full-time staff. The staff operates out of a city hall located on the highway. The library is also located in the same building. There is a small public meeting room, available where the city council meets. However, the capacity of this room is very limited. If large public participation is expected other facilities, such as the school gym is necessary.

Future Needs

As development occurs and the population increases additional staffing will be required to maintain good service. At some point a new or expanded city hall will be required. A larger public meeting room is also a desirable facility improvement. There may be options for the city to coordinate with the school district in providing additional administrative facilities. Community input has indicated some support for development of a new multi-purpose civic center.

Public Parks

The city currently owns about 7 acres of park land. The park is located on East Main Street adjacent to the fire hall. It is located within the 100 year flood plain. There are three existing ball fields, with a small parking area.

With a current population of 600 people, the existing ratio of park land to population equals 10 acres per 1000 people, not counting school facilities, which are also available at times for public use. This is a desirable ratio (10 acres per 383 homes) for parks to maintain as the community continues to grow.

Schools and Education

Existing Conditions

Local elementary and high school education is provided by the Gaston School District. Like many districts, in the aftermath of property tax measure 5, school funding is tight. However, the district actually faces a problem of not having enough students. The lack of student growth is compounded by the lack of local residential growth, which further compounds tax revenues.

Future Needs

To sustain current operations, the district needs more students. The district owns just over 9 acres south of the existing high school. Part of this land is outside of the current city limits, but within the UGB. The district decided the land was surplus to their needs, and has made application to annex the property, in Yamhill County, into the city. Once annexed, they will market the property to a residential developer. In this way the district will feeding its future by generating additional housing, which will produce more students. The housing will also generate additional tax revenues. The annexation is pending city decision on public facilities to serve the area.

There are many opportunities for the city and the district to work together in building the community. The new community vision envisions such cooperative efforts, anchored in life long learning for all members of the community.

> *Policy III.1: The city shall develop and maintain public facility systems master plans for all primary facilities designed to ensure the availability of adequate water, sanitary sewer, storm drainage and transportation facilities necessary to sustain the existing and future population and economic growth within the city's urban growth boundary.*
>
> *The systems shall be designed and developed in a manner that generally maintains or improves service capabilities for all existing land uses as well as all planned housing and economic growth within the entire urban growth boundary.*
>
> All new urban level development shall be designed and constructed consistent with master plan standards, unless otherwise authorized by the City Council.

Policy III.2: The city shall develop and maintain a public works program to ensure proper maintenance of all facilities and systems, except sanitary sewer treatment, which is provided by Clean Water Services. The program shall be designed protect the city's investment is infrastructure by maximizing system longevity and to:

- *a. Improve the city's water distribution system and to curtail losses by leakage.*
- *b. Maintain maximum flow capacity in the sewer collection system, and minimize I & I.*
- *c. Maintain flow capacities in the storm drainage system.*

Policy III.3: Unless and until a more cost effective and reliable source is identified, the city shall continue to purchase water from the City of Hillsboro. As part of regular master plan updates, the city shall explore the feasibility of alternative supplies. The city shall also continually investigate all possible funding sources for water system improvements.

Policy III.4: To assure the availability of an adequate sewage collection and treatment system, the city shall continue to support Clean Water Services in its efforts to maintain and improve the city's sewer system. The system must be designed to sustain the existing population while providing service capacity to support continued urban growth within the UGB.

Policy III.5: The city shall plan to construct a new second reservoir as soon as possible. This reservoir shall be designed to meet the long term system needs, and to provide opportunities for over due and continued periodic maintenance of the existing tank.

Policy III.6: The city shall continue to request that Clean Water Services discourage hookups to the sewer system linking Gaston and Forest Grove, which would limit the city's sewer capacity, or permit urban growth outside of the UGB.

Policy III.7: Within the City Limits all new development shall be required to connect to the sewer and water systems. However, consistent with the Urban Planning Area Agreements with the two Counties, prior to annexation, rural residential development may be allowed by the affected County, with septic systems, in areas outside of the City, but within the UGB.

Policy III.8: The city shall not allow any extension of sewer or water service outside of the city limits, which would result in substandard service to existing city customers or limit the future development of land within the urban growth boundary. The city shall further not allow any extension of service outside of the adopted urban growth boundary.

The city shall only allow for an extension of water outside of the city limits when the recipient has:

a. *Agreed to pay the costs incurred by the city for the extension, and*
b. *Signed an annexation agreement or a service provision agreement with the city.*
c. *Service to any intervening properties shall only be allowed when the owners have met the requirements in a. and b. above.*
d. *The city shall charge outside water users at a rate of 175% of the in-city rate when the city maintains the water line, or 150% when the user maintains the line, until such time as the property is annexed to the city. Any private maintenance must be performed consistent with city standards.*
e. *The extension will only be allowed if it will not limit the development potential of the city.*
f. *No extensions outside of the UGB shall be allowed.*
g. *For sewer service, annexed the property into Clean Water Services Boundary.*

Policy III.9: All new development shall be required to pay for all line and street extensions necessary to serve the property as developed. All line and street extensions shall be consistent with city standards and specifications.

If the line or street being extended is oversized in order to accommodate development other than that of the developer extending the line or street, then the city shall participate in the funding to cover the over-sizing. As an alternative, the city may consider forming a local improvement district or establishing other funding mechanism to cover the over-size cost.

Policy III.10: The city shall coordinate with the appropriate agencies on streets that are not under city jurisdiction as follows:

a. *With ODOT on all actions that affect Highway 47, including land use actions and system master planning.*
b. *With Washington County on all actions that affect Church Street and East Main, including land use actions and system master planning.*
c. *With Yamhill County on all actions that affect Olson Road, including land use actions and system master planning.*
d. *In coordination with these agencies, the city shall develop a Transportation Master Plan (TMP). The plan shall:*
    i. *designate street classifications;*


CITY OF GASTON
OREGON
Transportation Plan
Circulation
Plan
Collector Street
Signal
Street alignments shown are general not specific.
Actual alignments will be engineered in conjunction
with development.
URBAN SOLUTIONS
PO Box 4063
Wilsonville, OR 97070
August 2002

Figure

ii. *establish street standards, including curbs, gutters and sidewalks;*
iii. *establish intersection design standards, which avoid off-set and off-angle intersections;*
iv. *encourage connectivity through expansion of the basic grid network;*
v. *provide for safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities, which make non-auto trips to schools, parks and shopping a realistic alternative;*
vi. *anticipate and provide for the potential of future commuter rail.*

e. *Until the updated TMP is developed and adopted an interim TMP shall consist of the street standards section excerpted from the 1977-78 comprehensive plan. This interim plan shall be a separate implementing document to the updated comprehensive plan. Except that Figure 7 supercedes the street plan shown in the 1977-78 street plan.*

Policy III.11: The city shall seek to maintain public park space consistent with the current ratio of 10 acres per 1000 people. Public parks should be located within ½ mile walking distance from residential neighborhoods.

Policy III.12: The city shall coordinate with the Gaston School District to allow public use of school play equipment and sports facilities when not in use for school activities. The city shall also work with the district to evaluate the potential for joint development of other facilities, such as library, community center, and even administrative offices.

Policy III.13: The city shall seek to establish public access to the Tualatin River, and will encourage the development of pedestrian, bicycle, or equestrian trails in areas designated as greenways and along the highway, which link points of interest.

Policy III.14: The city shall develop a public facilities and services maintenance and capital improvements plan (MCIP) to guide orderly maintenance and improvement of all public facilities. The city shall explore funding options, including establishment of utility systems development charges (SDC').

Chapter IV
Urban Growth and Land Use

Urban Growth Boundary

Early settlement in and around Gaston occurred in the early to mid 1800's. The City of Gaston was incorporated in 1914. Historical population growth is as follows:

Table 1

Year	Population
1914	?
1920	221
1940	333
1950	368
1960	320
1970	429
1976	450
1980	471
1990	563
2000	600

Source: PSU Center for Population Research and Census.

Growth in Gaston has been generally slow as compared to other suburban cities within the Metro region. During development of the first comprehensive plan, beginning in 1976, population projections assumed that by 1985 there would be 850 people. However, this growth did not occur, and the population of Gaston still has not reached that number, even in 2001, some 25 years later. The city's certified population was 600 in 2000. Based on the countywide average household size of 2.61 it is estimated that there are approximately 230 existing housing units in the city.

It is hard to say why growth has been so slow, particularly since other nearby rural cities like Yamhill and Carlton have experienced more growth. Some of the potential factors may include: lack of available and buildable land, hillside constraints, lack of local jobs and shopping opportunities, predominance of agriculture lands surrounding the city, significant drops in timber related activities, and some believe even the general appearance of the community have all combined to stagnate growth. These are all factors the current citizens. Land owners and business owners consider as important factors to be addressed for the future of the city.

Of growing local concern is the immediate view from Highway 47, as you pass through Gaston. The traveler's view is of vacant lots and old run down buildings. From this perspective, Gaston just does not appear to be a thriving community, even though there are nice residential areas up on the hill.

Vacant Buildable Land

The current urban growth boundary (UGB) was jointly established by the city, Washington County and Yamhill County in 1976. The Yamhill portion of the boundary was adjusted in 1981, removing an area south of Olson Road and west of the mobile home park (see UGB file for details). Any amendment to the boundary must also be jointly agreed to and must further by acknowledged by the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD).

As part of the 2001-02 plan update, the city completed an updated vacant land inventory within the UGB. This report was coordinated with Washington and Yamhill Counties and the Gaston School District regarding population projections for the city limits and surrounding rural communities. The findings and conclusions of these analyses are included in a separate background report, Gaston, Urban Growth and Natural Resources, February 2002. Only the relevant conclusions of that report have been incorporated directly into this chapter of the plan. It is noted that some calculation errors were found in the back ground inventory report. In addition, subsequent decisions made regarding new residential densities and associated land use designations have resulted in different numbers reflected in Table 2 below as compared to Table 2 in the February 2002 report.

In 2001 it was determined that there was vacant and buildable land as follows:

Table 2
City of Gaston
2001 Land Inventory
City Limits and UGB

Type Land Use	Vacant Acres	Built Acres	Total Acres
Residential SR-1	50.40	1.25	51.65
R-1	41.02	36.47	79.49
R-2	36.61	30.50	67.11
R-3	13.64	5.67	19.31
Commercial (C)	.73	5.42	6.15
Industrial (I)	15.60	1.71	17.31
Other *	0	16.59	16.59
Total	158	97.61	257.61

- Other includes public, including city park, water reservoir, and school district.
- City Hall is included in commercial, and fire hall is included in industrial.
- Total acres does not include right-of-way or easement.

As reflected above in Table 2, there are very few acres of vacant buildable land remaining within the current (2001) city limits. Within the city limits only about 18 acres are vacant and buildable to accommodate new housing. But, within the UGB, there are about 124 vacant acres available.

So, most of the potential development within the current city limits will come from infill and/or redevelopment. There are only about 16.33 acres of vacant buildable land within the UGB to accommodate commercial and industrial uses and job growth.

Residential Land

For residential development, the two largest developable parcels within the city limits are situated at the western and southern edges:

1. One parcel, containing 9.9 acres, is situated west of the terminus of Park Street and lies on steep forested north slopes. Access to the property will be from Park Street. This property has been approved for a large lot planned development (Mosswood). However, due to lack of road improvements through the Scoggins Height plat, only a couple of lots adjacent to Church Street have been developed to date. Because of the slopes and trees there are only 15 lots on just over 11 acres.
2. The other lies south of the Trails End plat, at the current southern terminus of Trail Street. This property consists of a total of 19.33 acres, but only about 8 acres is currently within the city limits.

   This property is actually part of a much larger 91 acre ownership that extends across the county line into Yamhill County. Not all of this ownership, however, is within the current UGB. The UGB stops at the powerline easement. Therefore only about 73 acres of the total ownership is available without a UGB amendment. This property is on the south slope and is relatively unconstrained for urban level development.

   The school district also owns a 2.3 acre parcel located adjacent to this larger tract. It lies at the western terminus of Cottonwood Street. This parcel is also within the city limits.

In addition there are several parcels throughout the city that are large enough to accommodate further partitioning. Some of the larger parcels north of Church Street have development potential, but are also limited by the flood plain. Development on these larger lots will depend upon the owners' interests and needs. But, not more than about 25 to 40 additional housing units could be expected from such infill. This infill is also less likely in the near term. However, the major portion of new development will occur on the land that is currently outside of the city but within the UGB.

As noted above, there is one large 73 acre parcel, most of which is within the UGB but outside the city limits. In addition, the school district also owns a 6.7 acres to their 2.3 acre lot. This land is vacant and buildable and is within the UGB but currently outside the city. It is also on the south slope. The District has an annexation request pending before the City Council for this property. However, because there was insufficient

information regarding utility services, particularly water, the annexation decision was been postponed until the plan update could be completed.

On the north slope, west of Mosswood, there are 3 larger parcels containing a total of 27.98 net acres. These parcels are constrained by steep slopes and trees, much like the Mosswood property. Therefore they are not suitable for high density development, at least on the slopes. This property is currently designated for very low density (SR-1).

There is also additional 29.58 acres of vacant land, which lies north of Church Street between the street and the Tualatin River. The largest of these parcels contains 11.31 acres. However, because much of this property is constrained by flood plain, and has been further encumbered by a split zone with Washington County, the owner requested to be removed from the UGB. The rest of the area north of the road is designated for low density (R-1). While these areas will not generate high density development they do offer an alternative housing type to accommodate those that prefer a larger lot and high value home option.

There are additional parcels ranging in size from .50 acres to over 18 acres along both sides of Olson Road. Most of these parcels can accommodate additional partitioning or subdivision. But, there are some wetland constraints, and there is an existing mobile home park on some of this property.

In total there are an additional 142 vacant residential acres available for urban development, within the current UGB. However, to accommodate the targeted population of 2,500 people, only about 130 acres (@ 6 units/ac) to 150 acres (@ 5 units/ac) are needed, depending upon the zoned density and the average density of new development. So it is concluded that there is sufficient available residential land to accommodate desired growth within the current UGB.

As additional land is developed appropriate extension of streets and public utilities will be necessary. Street extensions must provide a logical circulation pattern to and from the highway, as well as connectivity providing alternate routes around town.

It is the city's intent to establish a policy framework for allocating densities to the available vacant lands. This framework is designed to provide a wide range of housing options from large suburban lots to high density townhome and multi-family developments. The densities established herein range from a low of 1 unit per acre to a high of 15 units per acre. This range is consistent with and maintains the established density pattern in the city. Generally density is highest near the highway and commercial district and decreases going west. The framework and zoning is shown on a single map (Figure 8) and described as follows:

A. Suburban Low Density:

This density allows for large lot single family development at one unit per acre. This designation will be implemented by the R-1-40 zone. It is intended to be

applied to sensitive land that is restricted by steep slopes (over 15%) and/or unstable soils. The density is to be used to calculate the maximum number of units allowed, but the density may be allowed to be shifted or clustered in order to protect the steeper slopes and more sensitive areas of the site. Such clustering may be allowed through a planned development process, and could result in lots smaller than 1 acre.

However, the maximum density may not be achieved due to specific site constraints, hazards, or by the developers choice. The applicant for a development must prove the land can support the density and lots configuration proposed. Further, the land must be annexed to the city in order to achieve this zoning potential. Until annexation occurs, the county zoning applies.

The primary area where this designation is applied is the forested hillside in the western portion of the UGB south of Church Street.

The total number of vacant acres allocated to this density designation is 50.40 net acres. This acreage is expected to yield 50 dwelling units, at 1 unit per acre.

B. Urban Low Density:

This density allows for smaller suburban sized single family lots at 3.2 units per acre. It is intended to be applied to the close in areas limited by wetlands or flood plain. It is to be implemented by the R-1-10 zone. As with the suburban low density, clustering may be allowed to protect sensitive resources, which may result in lots smaller than 10,000 square feet in size. Accessory dwelling units may also be allowed in this zone.

The primary area where this designation is applied is north of Church Street, the Scoggins Heights area, and south of Olson Road in the forested area.

The total number of vacant acres allocated to this density designation is 41.02 net acres. This acreage is expected to yield 131 dwelling units, at 3.2 unit per acre.

C. Urban Medium Density:

This density allows for traditional single family lots and attached dwellings at 4.6 to 6.5, or an average of 5.5 units per acre. This is the predominant urban residential designation and is to be implemented by a new R-1-7/5 zone. This new zone replaces both the prior R-1-7 and the R-1-6 zones. It is designed to accommodate a range of lots sizes and creates opportunities for in-fill on existing lots. Accessory dwelling units may also be allowed in this zone.

This density is intended to be applied where there are few or no natural limitations to development. The primary area where this designation is applied is throughout

the central portion of the city, including the majority of the Yamhill portion of the UGB.

The total number of vacant acres allocated to this density designation is 36.61 net acres. This acreage is expected to yield 201 dwelling units, at 5.5 unit per acre.

D. Urban High Density:

This density allows for mobile or manufactured home parks and multi-family development at 9-15 units per acre. This zone is intended to be applied near the highway and the business districts. It is a transitional zone between high intensity business uses, the highway and lower intensity residential neighborhoods. It is to be implemented by either the R-3 or MHP zones.

The total number of vacant acres allocated to this density designation is 13.64 net acres. This acreage is expected to yield 205 dwelling units, at 15 unit per acre.

The above acreage allocations are conservative, based on roughly calculated net vacant acres. Actual available acres could be slightly higher, but with this allocation, and using a houshold population of 2.61 people, the projected population potential is for an additional 2,122 people within the UGB.

Policy IV.1: All residential development shall occur in conjunction with appropriate primary urban services, including sanitary sewer, water, and storm drainage. Such utilities must be provided consistent with the city's systems master plans.

Policy IV.2: All residential development shall occur in conjunction with appropriate street improvements that provide logical extensions of existing streets, and also maintain a reasonable grid pattern, with alternate circulation choices.

Policy IV.3: As residential development occurs additional parks shall be developed to maintain the acres/population ratio of existing parks, at 10 acres per 1000 people.

Policy IV.4: All residential development shall be consistent with the densities set forth on the Comprehensive Plan Map. But, density transfers may be allowed as a method of protecting steep slopes, flood plains and forested areas, or providing for parks and open spaces, while accommodating reasonable urban densities and efficient use of available land.

Policy IV.5: Consistent with state law, allow mobile or manufactured homes on any platted residential lot. But, also provide for manufactured home parks.

Policy IV.6: Provide a planned development process that allows for application of flexible standards and density transfers or clustering of units.

Policy IV.7: Rely on coordination with the Housing Authority of Washington County for provision of low income housing.

Policy IV.8: The City desires a blended lotting pattern. The intent is for the various allowed residential densities to be spread or mixed throughout a development, rather than clustered along rigid zoning lines, in a uniform cookie cutter pattern. Therefore the maximum number of units allowed within a development shall be determined by multiplying the specified densities times the gross acreage allocated on the Comprehensive Plan Map, but the actual lot layout need not conform to the district boundaries shown on the map. This mixing of densities across zone lines will not require a PUD to implement this policy.

Policy IV.9: Special Future Land Use Conversion. There are four residential properties along East Main Street north of the city park. Each of these lots is currently developed with a single family house. The homes are all currently occupies.

These properties are considered to be better situated for industrial use rather than residential, primarily because of the flood plain impacts. However, the city recognizes the long established residential zoning and current use, as single family homes. The city further wishes to avoid potential negative financial impacts on the current owners, which may result from a non-conforming use designation, if the properties were to be re-designated as industrial at this time.

Therefore, the City Council hereby establishes a Special Land Use Conversion District to manage conversion of these properties to industrial use over time. For the present, these properties shall remain designated Urban Low Density Residential on the Comprehensive Plan Map, and zoned R-1, Urban Low Density Residential. However, by mutual and unanimous agreement of all four property owners, a joint application may be made to the city to re-designate these properties for conversion to industrial uses. The city shall not consider any unilateral requests from individual owners. These properties must convert together.

Commercial and Industrial Land

Commercial District

There is not much vacant buildable commercial or industrial land within the city either. The commercial district runs along the west side of the highway and extends west to First Street. The commercial district is constrained by the hillside rising west of First Street, and there are only about 6 total acres of commercially designated land, including the new post office at Olson Road. The highway is the only major street with sufficient traffic volumes to support commercial uses.

Essentially all of the commercial land is currently developed to some extent. But, almost all of the buildings are older structures, many in need of repair. There are, however, a couple of newer small office buildings south of Oak Street. And, some of the commercial property is currently in residential use, particularly to the south of Oak Street.

Because of the street configuration and the topography there really aren't many feasible options for additional commercial development west of the highway. In the future it is anticipated that any significant commercial uses will occur as a result of redevelopment within the existing commercial district. There is, however, some potential for allowing a mix of commercial uses within the industrial area east of the highway. This would help to expand commercial potential, while also maintaining the commercial district within a compact area, rather than allowing for linear sprawl down the highway. This pattern may also be consistent with an ODOT – Special Transportation Area (STA) designation, as discussed earlier in the transportation section.

Another alternative would be to explore locating city offices and a civic center on the east side of the highway. This would free up the current city hall space for new commercial development. It would also consolidate government functions in a central location.

However, allowing too much commercial could undermine the job potential from the limited industrial land supply. Allowing commercial activity on both sides of the highway could also create traffic problems, by forcing cross-highway travel. The current commercial district is on the same side of the highway as the residential district. This allows for non-auto trips and doesn't require crossing the highway for shopping. So, caution is warranted in consideration of any mixed uses east of the highway.

Direct access from the highway and lack of off-street parking creates challenges for both business operators and their customers. Managing this issue will remain a major planning issues for years to come. There are enough issues within the business district, including a potential ODOT- STA designation, to warrant special master planning to create a coordinated, well thoughtout strategy and urban design for the Central Business District.

Industrial District

The industrial district parallels the abandoned Southern Pacific rail line along the east side of the highway. The industrial district is constrained by the railroad right-of-way on the west and flood plain on the east.

The rail right-of-way is currently not zoned, although it could be, sense the tracks have been vacated. The railroad will not allow permanent structures to be placed in the right-of-way, but will allow interim uses.

This district is further constrained by a lack of good roads and a logical circulation pattern. Other than Main Street, the only road in the district is Onion Lane, which is a narrow 30 foot wide lane, that snakes between older warehouse buildings. Even if Onion Lane is reconfigured, it will still be necessarily limited to a narrow street due to shallow lot depths combined with the flood plain and railroad constraints.

There is only a total of 15.26 acres currently designated for industrial use. While conversion of residential land was discussed in the Natural Resources and Urban Growth Report, the reality is that the hillside topography of most of the city, coupled with existing residential development patterns, significantly limits any logical conversion to industrial or even commercial uses, except as addressed in the Residential section and number 2. below, and the creation of the Special Land use Conversion District.

Of the total industrial acres only about 1.7 acres are developed with structures. So, there are about 13.5 acres, available to accommodate industrial growth, and creation of jobs. This is not enough to create any substantial job base for the city.

However, there are a few more options available for industrial development than with commercial. They are as follows:

1. First, it is noted that the rail right-of-way is currently not zoned. There is a total of 4.45 acres of abandoned rail right-of-way within the district. While the railroad probably will not vacate their rights, they have allowed a long term land lease to local businessman. This land could be zoned for industrial or a mix of commercial and industrial uses.
2. There is a small pocket of 4 residential lots east of the city park on the north side of Main Street. These parcels total 7.38 acres. There are homes built, but much of the land remains vacant. Some of this land is constrained by flood plain, but there is more design flexibility for industrial uses in the flood plain than for residential. To increase industrial potential these properties could be redesignated from residential to industrial. (See also Policy IV.9).
3. As with the commercial district, there is also potential for redevelopment and reconfiguration of access, circulation, and buildings, particularly south of Main Street. In fact, because there are no real significant structures, the entire district could be considered for new development potential. However, any such

redevelopment would require cooperation and coordination between property owners, business operators and the city.

4. There is also a potential to add some additional land to the south immediately adjacent to the highway on the east side. However, to make this feasible, there would need to be some modifications to the dike and drainage/irrigation channel to accommodate road access and deepen the available lot depth from the highway. Such modifications are made possible by the current interests of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife department. They are evaluating the Wapato Lake area for a National Wildlife Refuge. If they move forward with acquisition, there is potential to coordinate with them, Division of State Lands (DSL), and Washington County Clean Water Services, and the Wapato Drainage District to explore and execute the modifications. The modifications could be done in a manner that would allow for some recovery of flood plain constrained land, including land within the current city limits.
5. There is also a potential, and increasing local interest, in seeking a UGB amendment to bring in the area surrounded by Matteson Road. This area would make an excellent industrial park. However, such annexation and change in use will require addressing the potential conflicts with State Goal 3, protection of prime farmland issues, and other applicable Goal 14, urbanization criteria. Even so, given the relative importance of providing local jobs, and a good industrial tax base, these are issues worth addressing as soon as possible.

Commercial and Industrial Access

Any major development within the commercial district will require careful consideration of access and circulation. The same is true for the industrial district. It is anticipated that additional traffic signals on the highway will be necessary at some time in the future. Any such signalization will require coordination with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). It is anticipated that ODOT will not allow more than two full signals on the highway. They will also be logically concerned about the configuration of accesses directly from the highway to adjacent commercial properties. Coordination with access and circulation into and through the industrial district must also be considered.

Initial evaluations of traffic circulation suggest that it would be desirable and logical to create a loop system to connect both sides of the highway through signalized intersections. Such a loop might utilize Main Street, First Street, Cottonwood Street, and a re-configured Onion Lane, see Figure 7. This local system would link across the highway, with signals at both the Main and Cottonwood.

Economic Development and Revitalization Strategy

The current configuration of lots, existing buildings, and street access make it difficult, if not impossible, for individual property owners to make any significant impact on economic development in either the commercial or industrial districts. However, with some cooperation between the city and property owners it would be possible and

desirable to develop a coordinated economic development strategy. Such a strategy could guide and facilitate full development and redevelopment of both districts over time.

Policy IV.10: It is the city's intent to establish and maintain an inventory of both commercial and industrial land of a quality and quantity sufficient to attract new businesses to Gaston. To accommodate the targeted job generation potential of 480 new jobs there is a need for an additional 19 acres. But, the city's current priority is on maximizing expansion, development, and redevelopment of the existing land inventory and creating a vital and attractive Central Business District. However, the city will continue to explore opportunities for bringing additional industrial land into the UGB, in coordination with Yamhill County. See Policy IV.13.

Policy IV.11: All commercial and industrial development shall occur in conjunction with appropriate urban services, including sanitary sewer, water, and storm drainage. Such utilities must be provided consistent with the city's systems master plans.

Policy IV.12: All commercial and industrial development shall occur in conjunction with appropriate street improvements that provide logical extensions of existing streets, and also maintain a reasonable grid pattern, with alternate circulation choices. Adequate off-street parking must also be provided.

Policy IV.13: The city shall initiate development of an economic development master plan, which meets the requirements of statewide Goal 9 and is consistent with local needs, concerns and desires. The city shall work with property owners, ODOT, OEDD, and other appropriate agencies in development of the plan. The planning effort should include:

- *An economic market analysis, which will define the potential for both commercial and industrial growth;*
- *Determination and justification if additional urban land is needed for economic development;*
- *Identifying viable development and redevelopment strategies designed to provide appropriate levels of local jobs, goods and services, and to maximize the potential of available land;*
- *Definition of appropriate uses of the abandoned rail right-of-way;*
- *A detailed assessment of potential alterations of the flood plain to capture additional developable land;*
- *Definition of the most effective and efficient lotting pattern;*
- *A final access and circulation plan; and*
- *Address financing strategies capable of delivering the master plan.*

CITY OF GASTON
OREGON

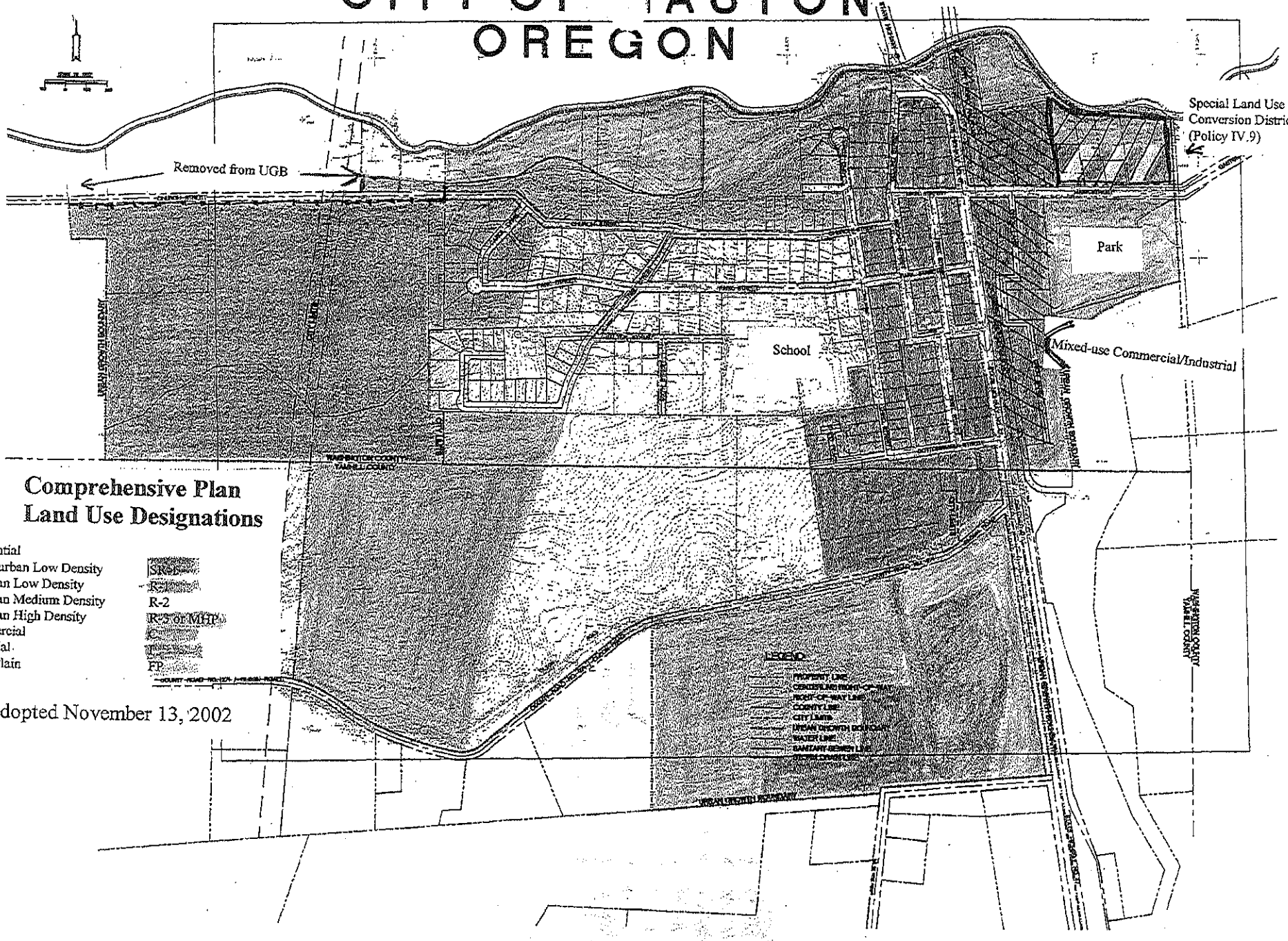


Figure 8