

# Lowell Downtown Master Planning Project

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### ***Q- What is the Lowell Downtown Master Planning project?***

**A-** The City of Lowell City Council has identified Master Planning for the City's Downtown Area as a priority in its 2018 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan provides clarity and inspiration to the City Administrator and staff in addressing the priorities of the Council and community.

The Strategic Plan calls for a Downtown Master Plan steering committee, which has been formed and includes all members of the Economic Development Committee and several other local representatives. The Plan aims to improve quality of life in Lowell by addressing parks and recreation opportunities, economic development and community beautification efforts in Lowell's Downtown. The result will be a Master Plan Document capturing the City's ideas and hopes and setting out a strategy for realizing the Plan, including potential funding sources and tools.

### ***Q- Why is the City pursuing this project?***

**A-** A key goal of any community wide planning project should be to develop an actionable plan that reflects the broad range of voices and values within a community. As such, it should be informed by numerous opportunities for residents and other stakeholders to weigh in on. Decision makers in Lowell recognize untapped opportunities for general improvements in quality of life through a downtown that is better defined, utilizes space better, and realizes its intended (zoned) uses more effectively. This includes leveraging momentum from the local school district and other local initiatives. A funder has seen that potential as well.

### ***Q- Who is paying for it?***

**A-** The City of Lowell was very fortunate to receive grant funding through the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) to pursue a Downtown Master Plan. The City is leveraging \$10,000 in local funds to receive an additional \$30,000 from DLCD. Competition for these funds was significant and Lowell was the only community in the region with a successful request.

**Q - What is “Downtown” Lowell?**

A- This is a question that is still open for some consideration. With input from the City, the LCOG team have conceptualized a preliminary study area for Lowell’s Downtown Master Planning process. Defining an area is important for managing the scope of the project and establishing priorities. The study area is designed to include key corridors, key facilities and also some influencing areas. Currently included in the draft study area are: City Hall, approximately 100 tax lots, four schools, two public parks, and six operating commercial businesses. Inclusion of a property in the preliminary and final downtown study area does not necessarily mean it will be addressed uniquely or experience direct impacts.



Figure 1: Preliminary Downtown Study Area

**Q- Who is leading the project?**

A- The project is being led by the City of Lowell’s City Manager. The Downtown Master Plan Steering Committee, made up of eight Lowell residents, is guiding the process. The Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) and The Urban Collaborative have been contracted to work with local decision makers and stakeholders to prepare the Plan.

**Q- How can I get involved and stay informed?**

A- There will be numerous formal opportunities for feedback. These include a survey, public open houses, a design charrette and public hearings. All of these are designed with public input in mind. A project webpage has been developed for tracking progress: [www.ci.lowell.or.us/downtown-master-plan](http://www.ci.lowell.or.us/downtown-master-plan). A tentative schedule of these opportunities is also included on the reverse side of this form.

**Q- What about all of the work that has been done in the past around Downtown Planning?**

A- There have been a number of historic efforts to improve downtown. Project staff have worked closely with the City to capture and characterize these efforts to build on the progress they represent. The Plan will acknowledge these efforts and will be made to build on that progress.

**Q – What is the Project Schedule?**

A- The project schedule outlines tasks and subtasks the LCOG Team is contracted to complete for the City and their associated timeframes. Tasks and subtasks with public participation elements are highlighted in green. This is an estimated schedule and is subject to change. Interested parties should check in on the project website for regular updates: [www.ci.lowell.or.us/downtown-master-plan](http://www.ci.lowell.or.us/downtown-master-plan) -- updates will also be provided through local facebook groups.

