

“Wilsonville: Bedroom community, future destination resort, small town, business center, something else or a combination? What are the common values that will shape our choices?”

FUTURE SEARCH

A Report to the Community from the City of Wilsonville



Community: People with a common interest. In this case, the common interest was the creation of a vision for the future of Wilsonville.

People came together in the library of our new high school; a symbol of youth, learning and free access to information. A place where ideas are nurtured and helped to grow.

The pillars of the community, those who volunteered to give their time for the community's benefit, came to stand alongside the pillars of the new building — the symbolism was inescapable.

On January 26, 27 and 28, 1995, 91 citizens — each of them representing key stakeholder groups — came together at Wilsonville High School to brainstorm an ideal future for Wilsonville. Out of this two-and-a-half day “Future Search” conference came a set of common values and community goals to guide the city as it plans for the future. These values and goals are the basis of a community vision of what Wilsonville can be; of what we want it to be.



The school itself is a symbol of the dedication and spirit of a community that sees its own identity tied to education and life-long learning. A new school, holding the promise of a proud future. Wilsonville's own high school, a symbol of the community coming of age, a mark of the city's unique identity.



It was a conference where the community was brought into the school and the school was given to the community; an event where people representing a wide cross-section of Wilsonville citizens agreed to take responsibility for the future of their community; and the people said “Let us be accountable for the future we will create.”

TRENDS AFFECTING WILSONVILLE - All are interrelated -

After discussion the conference participants could see that the trends identified as significant to the world and narrowed down as significant by the individual affinity groups are all interrelated and trends affecting Wilsonville were listed as follows:

Increasing tension between self interests and community interests
Infrastructure pressures
Expectations
Resources
Accelerated by large industrial growth
Transportation Planning - not keeping pace
Traffic - auto dependency
High Speed rail/Transportation hub
Alternatives to automobile
Resurgence of community ownership
Interaction

Who chooses?
Who is responsible?
Who holds them accountable?

Migration patterns
Overpopulation
Population/demographic shifts
Changing funding structure/mandates
Outside development forces
Effect of government regulations
Planning requirements
2040
Environmental concerns affecting land use planning
Integrated approaches to planning
TPR
Trend toward more local control
Environmental awareness
GAIA consciousness

THE DESIRED VISION

Mixed-use, higher density, transportation oriented, pedestrian friendly - land and other developments
River, waterways development enhancement
Natural resource preservation - restoration (greenway, infrastructure)
Garden City (treed streets, parks, greenways, etc.)
Home of Oregon Garden Project
Retain heritage, historical identity
Preservation of rural areas (outside the city) - allow for reasonable shifts in UGB
Sense of place - community identity
One school district
Design for community - people - interaction
Creating connected "centers"/features
Linkages/interconnected physical spaces (EW & N/S)
Appropriate/strong industrial base
Affordable living (including houses)
Lifelong learning
Cradle to grave options (living, recreation, etc)
Local, self-reliant community (farmers market, services, etc)

The Core Values

UNIQUE IDENTITY - We value a community that has a unique identity; separate from other communities around it.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY - We value a livable community which respects diversity and offers a safe haven and nurturing environment. We value a healthy community; economically, physically and spiritually.

CITIZEN ACCOUNTABILITY - We believe citizens must take responsibility for defining and making real the community they would like Wilsonville to be.

INTERCONNECTEDNESS (in terms of transportation, communication, programs, urban and rural areas) - We value a community in which consideration is given to the connections between seemingly unrelated decisions and actions. We also value the physical connections created by efficient transportation and communications systems.

ART/CULTURE/DESIGN - We value a community that is designed for human interaction and in which development reflects community design standards.

FREEDOM TO CHOOSE, FREEDOM TO BE HEARD - We value a balance between community and individual rights, in which fairness is paramount and all needs are considered.

ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLINESS - We value the integration and balance of land uses: Housing, recreation, industry, open space, etc. We value the protection and integration of the natural environment with development.

SUSTAINABILITY (in terms of economy, self-reliance, environment and equity) - We value a community that does not diminish its resources in such a way as to make the future less livable for future generations than it is for us.

ECONOMIC DIVERSITY AND VITALITY - We value a community that is a good place in which to do business and in which there is an appropriate and strong industrial base.

LIFE-LONG LEARNING - We value a community that offers cradle-to-grave opportunities for education and recreation.

VALUES:

Sense of family - individual and family responsibility
Healthy community - economically, physically, spiritually
Relatedness and connectivity
RESPECT Honor individual environment, people, places and things
Fairness, weigh balance and take in as many needs as possible
Environmental friendliness
Integration of value of land uses
integration and balance of land uses, recreat, indus, open space etc
Sensitivity to diverse community
Sense of community, in partnership with urban and rural area
Responsible citizens in regional and global environment
Liveability
Sustainability, build a future, economical, socially, etc
Sense of identity garden, historical
Freedom - responsibility
Learning - cradle to grave
Balance of community and individual rights
Person to person interaction
Unbiased representation
Protection and integration of natural environment with development
Self-reliance
Aesthetics - arts and culture and design
Transportation efficiency as a value
Citizens must be accountable for making definable and real future
Community which provides a safe haven, nurturing environment
Sense of connectedness
Encourage economic vitality and diversity

The Community Goals

1. A user-friendly community that incorporates mixed uses, high density and other land uses, facilitated by an effective inter-modal transportation system.

We envision a city in which single-family, multi-family and commercial land uses are combined with each other; a walkable city that's easy to get around in by bicycle, car and mass transit; a city with a new and vibrant downtown area built around innovative design and development standards.

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Define mixed use
- * Complete and adopt open space plan
- * Update Transportation Master Plan
- * Designate a parcel to be master-planned as a new downtown
- * Revise Town Center Master Plan
- * Create a Dammasch property master plan
- * Research available financing through gov't and developer cooperation
- * Vote on Urban Renewal Agency extension
- * Revise and update development standards
- * Create a public works plan
- * Create a downtown overlay district
- * Hire an architect to consult and advise on design standards

2. Community identity based on the waterfront and the "garden city" theme.

Our goal is to create better public access to the Willamette River and to establish an identity for the city built around the river and the notion that Wilsonville is a "garden city," with all of the possibilities that the image of a garden might conjure; for homes, businesses and public facilities.

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Complete a waterfront property inventory
- * Establish parking and street guidelines
- * Address infrastructure implications
- * Create ordinances, design standards, etc. that move the city closer to the goal
- * Seek out development partners

3. Natural areas and streams preserved and restored as part of the community infrastructure.

We envision a city in which our natural areas and open spaces are cherished by those who live and work here and preserved and protected for the generations that will follow; a city that considers environmental impact as a fundamental part of its decision-making process.

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Protection and promotion of trees and native land-

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Effect of special interest groups vs real community
desires and wants
Tribalisation of Wilsonville
Urban/Rural conflict
Lack of affordable single family dwellings
Lack of community involvement
Loss of community involvement
Government/citizen accountability, choice, responsibility
Continuing education
Sustainability
Time demands
Family Pressures
Fragmentation of values
Cost of living/livability
Big box/bucks retailers
SOHO Businesses
Global Village
economics
Health care access
Quality of life and environmental issues
Available water
NIMBY (Not in my back yard)
BANANA (Build almost nothing anywhere near anyone)
Change in entry level jobs
Technology based jobs
Technology based industry
Telecommuting

FUTURE SEARCH PARTICIPANTS

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- Don Weege
- Marian Wiedemann
- Kit Wittaker
- Roger Woehl
- Sherlynn Young
- Deb Zundel
- Danika Zundel

- HISTORIC THEMES:**
- Appreciating our Common History
 - Individual's history is positive; society's trend is not
 - change is accelerating
 - personal optimism goes hand in hand with "growing pains"
 - polarization - less common ground
 - history determined by events rather than vision
 - see limits of natural resources
 - more hope for Wilsonville than for the planet.
 - people have decided to have more influence shaping the future
 - some people have been active in shaping the future; we are continuing that process now
 - we are focusing on community unity
 - we are cycling back to some of the same issues of the 60's; i.e. growth, involvement in government
 - shift from family focus to global to community
 - increasing distrust of government

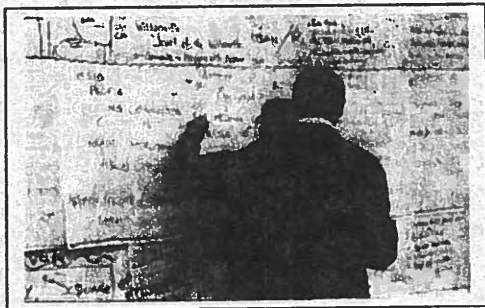
The Future Search process

A future search is a conference with no leaders and no speeches. One of the underlying principles of a future search is that each person is an expert who has something important to bring to the process. Everyone who attends is on equal footing with everyone else.

A citizens committee, or "design team," spent many weeks prior to the conference identifying key stakeholder groups in the community, then identifying representatives of those stakeholder groups to invite to the conference. Whenever possible, people were invited who could represent more than one stakeholder group. Everyone who attended lives, works or has some other direct interest in the city.



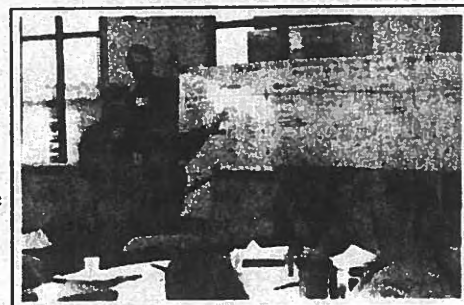
Participants began the conference by noting significant historical events affecting themselves, society at large and Wilsonville in particular, from 1965 through the present day. Once these "historic themes" were identified, participants listed all of the societal and world trends impacting Wilsonville...



From these presentations, a set of "core values" were distilled. Then, using the core values as a guide, the conference broke up into small groups, each of which took responsibility for developing an action plan...

- lives out of control because of government intervention, lack of control and influence
- too many changes and no way of controlling
- Despite resources, the lack or sense of identity
- no community center
- services
- lack of retail
- loss of wildlife
- center developed
- lack of pedestrian access
- no swimming pool
- the way town
- lack of pedestrian access
- loss of wildlife
- lack of retail services
- Despite resources, the lack or sense of identity
- no community center
- lives out of control because of government intervention, lack of control and influence
- too many changes and no way of controlling

... and a timeline for implementing those items that would get Wilsonville to the conference's vision of our most desirable future.



...followed by an exercise in which individual participants and small groups were asked to list all of the things that make them glad, mad and sad about Wilsonville.



With this as a backdrop, small work groups created their most desirable vision for Wilsonville's future, then presented that vision to the entire conference.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH THE PRESENT:
Each group reflected on their own personal, city-related, interactions and experiences in Wilsonville. They listed experiences that made them **MAD, SAD OR GLAD** which were then summarized as follows:

- GLAD:**
- Best of both worlds
 - People's spirits and souls
 - People in the community
 - small town feel
 - cooperation among various organizations
 - natural resources
 - school system, parks and people
 - community and social infrastructure for people to come together
 - economic and vitality and this vision process
 - Physical attributes of area
 - common facilities
 - city government and agencies that will help solve problem - economic viability
 - increasing sense of community involvement - cooperation together.

- MAD:**
- Current development standards - would like to see counterbalance
 - Traffic, facilities for pedestrians, bicycles
 - uncontrolled growth.
 - Original plan not being followed - how people perceive it is not being followed.
 - Crime
 - things that draw people in large numbers.
 - Process and lack of understanding of it.
 - Detrimental change in aesthetics in design and natural spaces
 - Negative impacts of growth, traffic, economics placed above livability

SAD:

- Not taking advantage of natural features, parks and rivers
- separation of neighborhoods
- people choosing not to communicate together and lack of a community focal point
- no focal point (river would be ideal focal point)
- No town focal point
- no on-going cooperation of resources
- lack of youth involvement
- unfulfilled hopes and dreams
- no swimming pool
- the way town center developed
- lack of pedestrian access
- loss of wildlife
- lack of retail services
- Despite resources, the lack or sense of identity
- no community center
- lives out of control because of government intervention, lack of control and influence
- too many changes and no way of controlling

Community Goals

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scaping

- * Restoration of Coffee Lake and other wetlands and stream corridors
- * Landscaping of transportation corridors
- * Creation/protection of wildlife corridors
- * Education programs stressing the value of natural resources
- * Urban growth boundary and overall development standards based on natural features (design with nature)
- * Preparation of Open Space Master Plan (including plans for maintaining natural areas and setting limits on parking areas)

4. A unique sense of place

Through design and development standards we want to create a city that is like no other; whose look and feel is uniquely "Wilsonville."

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Increasing community involvement (including town hall meetings, neighborhood watch, public art, a single local school district, life-long learning and public involvement with local schools)
- * Promoting the Garden City theme, including tree planting, a farmers market in a town square, Oregon Garden Project, integrated "adopt a trail" program, and wildlife appreciation
- * Develop a town square with pedestrian connections to neighborhoods
- * Develop historic theme for Old Town including revitalization of Old Town businesses and adoption of design standards for Old Town
- * Develop a river/waterway focus including a boardwalk, restaurant(s) and a ferry

5. An innovative, community-wide network structure as a vehicle for communication: community concerns and project interaction.

We envision a city in which neighborhood associations, individual citizens, community groups and city government create and have access to communication networks, using the best technology available, to influence decisions and enhance citizen accountability.

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Communicate results of Future Search Conference to entire community
- * Identify existing networks and gaps within those networks
- * Organize and improve connections within existing networks
- * Organize neighborhood associations
- * Ongoing research of communications systems and techniques

6. Balanced, cooperative effort between government, community and business to ensure economic vitality.

The Wilsonville of the future will support its business/industrial community with clear standards for doing business in the city; with necessary infrastructure improvements and allocation of resources to encourage new business development.

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Create a clear, concise written description of what it takes to establish a business in the city.
- * Create clear standards with quarterly follow-ups
- * Update Comprehensive Plan
- * Provide sufficient, properly zoned land inventory
- * Infrastructure improve-

ment (ongoing)

7. An environment that is conducive to the construction of affordable housing for all economic levels.

We envision a city in which everyone who wants to live here is able to afford housing here, regardless of their income level; a city in which people can live close to their workplace.

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Reduce open space and lot coverage requirements for affordable housing
- * Modify height/landscaping requirements
- * Increase manufactured housing

The Garden City Theme

Something that was repeated throughout the conference was the idea of creating a community identity around gardens. In terms of community identity, no other single idea generated as much interest.

The much-publicized Oregon Garden project helped stimulate the discussion. But even with the Oregon Garden project having chosen Silverton for its location, it is entirely possible for Wilsonville to incorporate the garden city theme into future plans. Wilsonville's location, on the edge of the Portland metropolitan area and in a setting that still offers a lot of rural character, lends itself to the garden city theme.

Wilsonville still has a great deal of open space in its city limits. With the community's support for the garden city theme, there is time and opportunity to make it a reality.

- * Investigate tax assessment freeze or delay
- * Credit/Waiver of systems development charges

8. Life-long learning opportunities for all Wilsonville citizens.

We envision a community in which all citizens — from their birth through their entire lives — are encouraged to engage in educational opportunities which enhance their quality of life.

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Create a local/regional educational consortium to:
 - Make educational opportunities available to all pre-school children
 - Create an adult literacy program
 - Create an information network
- * Chamber of Commerce to create a "citizens academy"

9. A functional transportation system.

The Wilsonville of the future will feature a street system that provides quick and easy access to all parts of the city; bicycle and pedestrian ways that do the same; and a mass transit system that is available to and used by all.

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Periodic reviews of Transportation Master Plan by Mayor's Blue Ribbon Panel
- * Begin priority street construction projects
- * Accelerate bicycle/pedestrian projects
- * Feasibility study of water transportation
- * Feasibility study of Boeckman Road interchange

10. The best ongoing integrated parks and recreation system in the State of Oregon.

Through the development of neighborhood parks, the Town Center Park, the completion of Memorial Park and the creation of a swim center and additional

community centers, Wilsonville will offer a park system and recreation programs that are the envy of the state.

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Establish citizens' advocacy group for parks (Friends of Parks System)
- * Develop Master Plan "Plus" - plan for a swim center
- * Identify and establish stable funding source
- * Establish multi-age sports/rec programs

11. Create design standards to assure that new development is attractive and functional.

We envision a city in which the design of new development complements and enhances the livability of the community; design that is functional as well as visually pleasing; that incorporates art and considers local desires.

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Landscape the I-5 corridor
- * Build berms to hide unattractive buildings from public view
- * Plant more trees now
- * Create a well-defined edge to the community
- * Do not allow parking to overwhelm buildings
- * Create overlay design standards for specific neighborhoods (e.g., Old Town)

12. Develop alternative sources of financing for community projects

We envision a city in which lack of financing is not a constant barrier to realizing community goals, but in which already over-burdened traditional funding sources are not burdened even further.

Among the items in the action plan:

- * Create a community foundation to solicit and receive living trust donations from citizens and their estates
- * Extend the Urban Renewal District in five year increments
- * Establish surcharge on business license fees to fund "Garden City" improvements
- * Identify user fees, special levies and special improvement districts for parks, etc.

How can you get involved?

Wednesday, June 14,
7 p.m. at Wilsonville
High School.

Mark it on your calendar and plan to attend.

That's the date for a Future Search follow-up meeting to which the entire community is invited. Everyone is welcome to join with the Future Search participants in finalizing and prioritizing action plans for carrying out the Future Search Goals.

In addition, Anton Nelesen, an internationally recognized expert in community design and planning, will make a special presentation on Wednesday, May 31 at 8 p.m. at Wilsonville High School. Come join us for what promises to be an entertaining and educational evening!

*"Man who owns dog
must also own shovel."*

...a definition of citizen accountability presented to the Future Search Conference by participant E. Lee Reedy.