



# **City of Aurora Comprehensive Plan Update 2000 to 2020**

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**City of Aurora  
Comprehensive Plan  
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# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2000 to 2020 CITY OF AURORA, OREGON

## I. INTRODUCTION

The City of Aurora is a rural residential community located in the northern end of Marion County. It lies just a few miles south of the Portland Metropolitan regional urban growth boundary. Aurora is situated near the confluence of Mill Creek and the Pudding River. See Exhibit A - General Vicinity Map.

The City is bisected by U.S. 99 E., the old main north/south highway running east of the Willamette River. The Aurora State Airport is about one mile north of town, lying between Airport Road and Hubbard Cut-off Road. Interstate 5 bypasses Aurora about 3 miles to the west.

Originally known as the Aurora Colony, founded in 1856 by Dr. William Keil and his followers, the City was incorporated in February 1893. The original colony was one of the most socially and economically successful 19th century experiments in communal Christian living.

The City's rich past created a sense of pride and continuity that current residents still hold for their community. To strengthen this heritage, the Aurora Colony Historic District, containing 21 sites and structures of historic significance, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, in 1974. Within this district is a flourishing antiques sales center, which is becoming a significant tourist attraction.

In maintaining their link to the past, Aurorans look to leveraging it into continuing growth and prosperity in the future. For this reason the City has embarked upon a comprehensive land use planning process designed to:

1. Enhance community livability and economic expansion in the context of a unique Aurora Colony village atmosphere; and
2. Preserve and enhance the community's historic character and natural resources for present and future generations;
3. Provide a coordinated policy framework and implementing structure to manage urban growth while providing urban level services in a timely, efficient and economic manner; and

4. Address the statewide planning goals of the Land Conservation and Development Commissions (LCDC); and the administrative rules of the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD).

#### **A. Citizen Participation**

Aurora is committed to the active participation of its residents and business owners in planning for and implementing the community's future. In 1979, when the original comprehensive plan was drafted, a Citizen Involvement Committee (CIC) was established. The CIC actively participated in the planning process up to and through the final adoption by the City Council in March 1979. The City's Plan was subsequently acknowledged by LCDC for compliance with the statewide goals.

A smaller three-member CIC was appointed to work with the Planning Commission on subsequent Plan reviews and revisions in 1981 and 1987. The City conducted a Periodic Review, as defined by DLCD in the 1987. Consistent with the requirements of the DLCD, the City initiated another Periodic Review in 1998. The 1998 Periodic Review was terminated in late 1999 based on new legislation, which eliminated the requirement for cities under 2500 population.

Official state Periodic Reviews are scheduled every 7-10 years. The purpose is to insure that the City's Comprehensive Plan and Development Codes remain in compliance with changing state laws, and remain aligned with local circumstances and desires. However, the City chose to continue their comprehensive plan update into 2000 to ensure that their desired future was clearly declared as public policy.

Since the 1987 Periodic Review, the City discontinued a formally appointed CIC. Instead, it has opted for a more general and broad based citizen participation strategy. Citizen participation continues to be a major underpinning of the planning and development process within Aurora.

Since the adoption of the original Comprehensive Plan, Aurora has maintained a high level of citizen involvement. Examples include:

Significant involvement by community volunteers in completing the City's Historic Sites Inventory.

Aurora citizens have a long history of concern and participation related to master planning and management of the Aurora State Airport. The citizens continue to evaluate the City's role and responsibility, regarding the future of the airport. Expansion of the runway, commercial and industrial development, sanitary sewer, traffic, and noise are all issues of

concern for Aurora's future livability. These important issues have been addressed to Oregon Department of Aviation and users of the airport during the City and other community members' participation with the Policy Advisory Committee for the 1999 update of the Airport Master Plan. The City is seeking ways to have more direct involvement in planning and development decisions. The City and community continues to discuss its relationship with the airport, and the possibility and viability of a future intergovernmental agreement governing growth management issues as well as the possible formation of Local Improvement District for provision of public facilities and services and ultimately annexation of the airport property into the City in the more distant future.

Citizens have also been actively involved with the City in planning and designing a sanitary sewer system, through a "Self Help" program introduced and endorsed by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Through this program, members of the community have been directly involved in many aspects of construction of the sewer system.

From 1994 to its completion in 1995, the City conducted a community-wide Future Search Conference "Vision Aurora" involving a wide range of stakeholders. The Vision Aurora participants attended three community gatherings, beginning with the initial conference in February 1994, a mini-conference in April 1994, and a Town Hall Meeting in October 1994. The primary outcome of the conference was a Community Vision Statement, which was adopted by the City Council in August 1995. The actual Vision Statement is presented in the next section.

Citizens have participated in three Periodic Reviews of the Comprehensive Plan since its adoption in 1979. There were update reviews conducted in 1981, 1987, and the current review was initiated in 1998. Due to budget limitations and new legislation, the City terminated its formal periodic review process. The City then decided to complete selected portions of the former periodic review process as grant funds became available, in order to comply with the state wide planning requirements, provide the framework and structure for managing urban growth, provide for urban services in a timely, efficient, and economic manner, enhance livability and the rural colony village, and preserve and enhance the community's historic character and natural resources. The current review is scheduled in phases and will likely continue into the year 2001.

## **B. Planning History**

As required by LCDC statewide Goal 2, the City of Aurora submitted its original comprehensive plan for acknowledgment in June 1980. After nearly a year's review by the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), the Commission determined that the City had failed to comply with 12 of the 13 applicable statewide planning goals. This led to several amendments to the City's comprehensive plan, including a significantly reduced urban growth boundary (UGB).

The City had originally adopted an UGB which extended up to and around the Aurora Airport. The airport is a state owned and operated facility one mile northwest of the City limits. While Marion County considered the UGB too large, it recognized Aurora's legitimate interest in the future expansion of the airport including industrial development. In August 1979, the City and County signed the Urban Growth Boundary and Policy Agreement, an inter-governmental agreement (IGA) which established a new, smaller UGB for Aurora. The remainder of the original boundary was incorporated into a Planning Area of Mutual Concern. The IGA was renewed in 1986. See Exhibit B for a copy of the renewed IGA and map of the Area of Mutual Concern.

Under the terms of the agreement, the County retains planning jurisdiction of the Airport and surrounding rural lands. The City has right of notice of County development applications and decisions along with the opportunity to comment. For purposes of review and revision to its comprehensive plan, the City retains its UGB as its primary planning area. Aurora also considers the Airport as its secondary planning area of mutual concern outside the urban growth boundary. The City needs to remind the County of its responsibilities to give notice and an opportunity to comment to the City.

Historically, the lack of a public sewer system hampered growth in Aurora. As an interim policy, because of poorly percolating soils, a large minimum lot size (15,000 to 19,000 square feet, with a double drain field septic system) was imposed by DEQ and Marion County until a public sewer system was available. In some areas, a sand filter has also been required.

This set of circumstances has constrained residential development to large lot plats and partitions and stalled commercial and industrial expansion until a sewer system is available. In 1979 the City assumed there would be public sanitary sewer available by 1985. However, this target date was not realized. The City began a Waste Water System Master Plan process in 1996-97. In 1998-99, the City successfully funded, designed, and began construction on the city wide waste water system approved by DEQ. Construction of the system was initiated in the Fall of 1999, with completion expected in the early spring of 2001. The City anticipates significant future growth will occur as the sewer system



becomes operational, and intends that this Comprehensive Plan Update and resultant Development Code amendments will guide such future growth.

The City has coordinated its activities with affected local and state agencies as required by statewide planning goal 2. Some of these agencies included Marion County, the North Marion School District, and the state departments of Transportation, Land Conservation & Development, Forestry, Economic Development, Environmental Quality and Fish & Wildlife. See Exhibit C for a list of agency contacts.

According to LCDC policy, cities need not address Goal 3, Agricultural Lands, in their comprehensive plans. It is assumed that urban uses within the proposed UGB will be adequately justified under Goal 14, Urbanization, in the process of establishing the UGB. For this reason, Goal 3 has not been addressed.

The City is not located on the Willamette River nor on a major estuary. For this reason, Goal 15, Willamette River Greenway, and Goal 16, Estuarine Resources, have not been addressed as they do not apply. Furthermore, Goals 17 and 19 do not apply because the City is not located in a coastal region.

### **C. Vision Statement**

In the past, while addressing local concerns, the City planning efforts have primarily been focused on complying with the statewide planning goals. However, as discussed under citizen participation, the City has now formulated its own Vision Statement, adopted in August 1995. The Statement contains seven contextual elements which combine to form a composite of the City's desired future. This statement now serves as a primary filter for local decisions even beyond land use planning. At the same time, the City maintains its intent to comply with the state goals.

The people of the City of Aurora envisioned many potential changes in their community and decided to create a Vision Statement as the foundational document for:

1. Taking a pro-active approach to controlling their own destiny by preserving and enhancing their historic community identity;
2. Improving their ability to collaborate with other communities in the region to identify equitable and wise distribution of future growth and economic development; and
3. Enhancing the livability of and encouraging pride in the community by stressing the unique natural environment, historic legacy, and small town village atmosphere of Aurora.

From this foundation, the Vision Statement, set forth on the next page, was crafted with the intention that it serve as the major decision making filter for a broad range of community decisions for the future.

## AURORA'S VISION

We shall create our identity by focusing on the following concepts:

1. **Innovative Infrastructure:** We will plan creatively for transportation alternatives, sewer and water services, and other elements of local infrastructure. Mobility will be planned for and provided through an efficient, balanced transportation system with provision for walking, bicycling, and rail as well as vehicular traffic. Successful management of traffic growth will require the cooperation and coordination of state and county agencies, and neighboring city governments. City public works projects will be planned to take advantage of new technologies that minimize the negative environmental impacts and that promote public involvement.
2. **Natural Areas:** We will create a green-way buffer to circle the City and provide additional recreational alternatives for residents and visitors. A clean Pudding River and Mill Creek will preserve our heritage and demonstrate our commitment to a sustainable natural environment.
3. **Enhanced Historic District:** We will be careful with our historic and cultural heritage, mindful of what we have inherited and equally mindful of what we have to contribute to the future. We will work with local business, the Aurora Colony Historical Society, and the State Historic Preservation Organization to preserve and restore significant colony and post-colony structures.
4. **Diverse Local Employment Opportunities:** Our vision is a model for managing growth in practical and cost-effective ways so that we can offer our citizens a viable economic future while preserving optimum livability. We will support people's desire to live near their work by encouraging local cottage industries, supporting tourist activities, and considering home occupations appropriate to maintaining the village atmosphere.
5. **Village Atmosphere:** We will maintain a sense of place that is clearly apparent and consciously embraced. We will be known by the effort of our people to maintain and enhance our small town roots while being a good, healthy and economically viable place to live and work.
6. **Cradle to Grave Living Options:** Our community will be shaped by the people who live and work here, and care for each other's well being. We will offer a place where individual contribution is supported and encouraged from citizens of all ages. We will become a place where affordable housing and public services are available and capable of meeting the needs of a multi-generational population.
7. **Influence and Control:** We are committed to seeking and choosing the direction for our future through long-term planning. We seek to expand our influence and control over airport impacts, and over the areas encompassed by the original Aurora Colony.

## **D. Gateway Properties**

The City of Aurora is committed to the Vision Statement included in the Comprehensive Plan as I.C. The City recognizes that construction of the new sewer system will encourage growth in the area and anticipates development within the current urban growth boundary. There is vacant property within the urban growth boundary to the south of the existing City limits on Highway 99 and the northwest of the community along Ehlen Road. Both areas serve as gateways to the unique Aurora Colony historic district.

At the south end of Highway 99, the City has designated properties for higher density residential purposes. This provides needed housing while preserving the historic larger lot residential development. Northwest of the existing urban growth boundary along Ehlen Road, the City anticipates that future expansion of the urban growth boundary to accommodate additional industrial and commercial services and employment opportunities.

To support the village atmosphere and enhance the visual aesthetics of these gateway properties which serve as entrances to the unique Aurora Colony historic district, the City has adopted standards for development. These gateway development standards:

Provide an appropriate visual transition from surrounding agricultural uses to the Aurora Colony Historic District to further reinforce the character of an historic area and protect its visual aspects.

Preserve the sense of place for areas surrounding the historic district by requiring facades visible from the access roads to be compatible with Colony and Post Colony styles.

Minimize the visual impacts of growth and development.

Increase public awareness of the benefits of appropriate structural, streetscape and landscape design.

## **II. BACKGROUND ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

In formulating policies and strategies to guide urban development, the City of Aurora relies 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. These reports include the 1996 Water System Master Plan, the 1996 Wastewater Facilities Master Plan, the 1999 Transportation System Plan, the Downtown Improvement Plan and the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Study and Flood Insurance Rate Map, dated July 5, 1997. See Exhibit D for a complete listing. They are reference documents, and are adopted separately as supporting elements of the Comprehensive Plan, but are specifically not made part of the Plan itself.

Summary findings and conclusions from these various reports are provided in the following subsections. The findings serve to support an understanding of current and projected conditions, and as a partial basis for decision making, as required by State goal 2. They are used primarily to demonstrate compliance with state goals. However, the City's new Vision Statement is actually relied upon more for policy direction than the summary finding. Justification for the original exemptions from compliance with State Goals 3 and 15 through 19 is presented in Exhibit E.

The technical data is used to understand current and projected conditions in and around the community. This is the traditional planning model, required by Goal 2, which observes the past to predict the future.

### **A. Declared Future**

As previously noted, the City's new Vision Statement now plays a dominant role in guiding policies and strategies for community development. The Statement functions as a declaration of the future of Aurora and represents the new planning model of imagining and declaring a desired future, even though it may have never existed before, much like a Declaration of Independence.

Therefore, the plan text has been specifically edited to incorporate the context of the Vision throughout the document. In this context, the Vision Statement shifts this document from a projected past to a declared future. The City's declared future is then translated into appropriate implementation strategies and Development Code language.

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 the past and from statewide goals.

Rather, this plan constitutes a specific deliberate declaration by the City of Aurora of a particular desired future. A future that is not a projection of the past, but one that is to be created by direct actions of the City, its residents, land owners, and business owners and operators. The Vision incorporates concepts that go beyond traditional land use planning and the physical nature of the community. The Vision ventures into the realm of relationships between the people and the built/developed environment and natural environment, and between the people themselves and the way they interact with each other.

**B. Growth and Urbanization**

**1. Population Growth**

Aurora's fastest historic growth occurred between 1970 and 1980. The City experienced an incredible 71% increase in that decade. Such fast growth was a common pattern for the whole state in the 1970's. However, it is also important to understand that part of Aurora's growth was attributed to a major annexation in 1973. Table 1, below, summarizes the City's historic population growth over the past 58 years.

**TABLE 1  
Historic Population  
City of Aurora  
1940-1999**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
1940	228	
1950	242	6.0
1960	274	13.0
1970	306	12.0
1980	523	71.0
1988	535	2.3
1990 (Census)	567	5.9
1998	695	22.6
1999	695	0.0

The rapid growth of the 70's was substantially tempered by the lagging economy of the 1980's, experienced nationwide. Growth in Aurora was further constrained by lack of sanitary sewer coupled with DEQ septic system and minimum lot size restrictions established in the 1987 Comprehensive Plan. More recently development interests in Aurora have again increased, although the lack of sewer will constrain growth until the sewer system is completed in early 2001. With the completion of

the sewer system, Aurora is preparing to experience significant growth pressures in the next few years.

The most current July 1, 1999 population was certified at 695. Over the last ten years, the City's average annual growth has been about 2.25%. See Exhibit F for additional information regarding population projections.

## **2. Population Projections**

For general consistency with state planning guidelines, a 20-year planning horizon is used, which targets the current planning horizon to at least 2018. In order to maintain coordinated projections, Marion County has established official 2015 projections for each City in the county. The County has officially allocated to Aurora a projected population growth based on a 1.4% growth rate per year. Aurora acknowledges the County's allocation for the purpose of defining projected housing needs, but the City expects significantly greater growth in the years immediately following completion of the City wide sewer system. The County's allocation computes to an assigned 2015 population of 875, and 930 by the year 2020.

Demographic data indicates the average household size in the state has been dropping from a high of 3.1 per household in 1970. During the 1980's the household size dropped to 2.6 persons. In 2000, the average household size has dropped to 2.5 per household.

Beginning with the 2015 population of 875, the county's projection was extended to 2020. At the 1.4% annual growth rate, the 2020 population would be 935. Compared to the current population (1998) of 695, Aurora would need to accommodate 240 additional people.

Using the 1.4% growth rate, the population increase of 240 persons divided by the projected household size of 2.5 equals a minimum need of 96 new housing units over the next 20 years.

This growth rate is well below the City's historic average annual rate of growth, but close to the most recent two years average. It is also well below the potential growth the City could experience in the near future. The City anticipates that growth could occur at a much faster rate, particularly once public sewer is available, and has used a growth rate of 2.8% in its recent master planning work. Numerous comments in public hearing regarding the newly constructed wastewater treatment facility indicate that the capacity of this facility is a critical community concern. The November, 1996 City of Aurora Wastewater Facilities Plan prepared

by bst associates, inc. use a growth rate of 2.43% beginning with a population of 650 in 1996. At this rate, the projected population for 2016 is 1051. The 2.43% rate is based on the overall historic average growth between 1960 and 1996.

The Comprehensive Plan uses a factor of 2.8% with a beginning population of 655 based on the Year 2000 census. These projections indicate a population of 1047 persons by 2016, consistent with the forecast in the Wastewater Facilities Plan.

At the 2.8% annual growth rate, the 2020 population would be 1262. Compared to the current population (1998) of 695, Aurora needs to accommodate 567 additional people.

Using the 2.8% growth rate, the population increase of 567 persons divided by the projected household size of 2.5 equals a minimum need of 226 new housing units over the next 20 years.

Estimating growth is essentially a calculated guess. The City is obligated to demonstrate capacity of vacant zoned land to at least meet the housing demand based on the County's growth allocation. This demonstration of capacity is provided below.

Aurora is focusing its planning efforts on its Vision, and on the capacity of the UGB, not a specific projected growth. It is more interested in how and when growth occurs than in how much.



### 3. Projected Housing Needs

#### Available Residential Land

The City's current Buildable Lands Inventory reflects the availability of all residential lands as follows:

**Table 2  
City of Aurora  
Buildable Acreage**

<b>Zone, Overlay or Designation</b>	<b>Within City</b>	<b>Outside City Inside UGB</b>	<b>Total Acreage</b>
<b>HR, Historic</b>	<b>12.33</b>	<b>14.58</b>	<b>26.91</b>
<b>R1, Low Density</b>	<b>18.35</b>	<b>33.57</b>	<b>51.92</b>
<b>R2, Moderate Density</b>	<b>8.65</b>	<b>19.46</b>	<b>28.11</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>39.33</b>	<b>67.61</b>	<b>106.94</b>

#### Housing Needs Analysis

Marion County has established a general urban growth policy with an expectation that cities under 10,000 population will provide an average housing density of 6 units per net acre.

For comparative purposes and to insure compliance with HB 2709, the City's methodology for calculating density assumes a net acre is 32,670 square feet (43,560 - 25% for improvements). Therefore, 3,000 square foot lots equate to 10.89 units/net acre; 5000 square foot lots equate to 6.53 units/net acre; 7500 square foot lots equate to 4.36 units/net acre; and 10,000 square foot lots equate to 3.27 units/net acre. Without sewer, the City has been forced to limit density to about one third of this target range with an approximate 15,000 sq. ft. effective minimum lot size which equates to 2.17 units/net acre.

#### Using Marion County 1.4% Growth Rate

By applying the 4 and 6 units per net acre density criteria to the projected 96 new housing units needed over the next 20 years as calculated above, the City of Aurora will only need between 16 and 24 net acres (depending on the average mix of densities) to accommodate the assigned Marion County population growth projected to the year 2020 of 935 persons.

However, even if development occurs at a much faster rate than is projected, there are 39.33 acres of buildable residential land within the existing City Limits, which can accommodate:

1. On the vacant 12.33 acres of Historic Residential land at an average density of 3.27 dwellings per net acre (which yields 10,000 square foot lots) approximately 40 new housing units for a population increase of 100 persons at 2.5 persons per dwelling

plus

2. On the vacant 18.35 acres of Low Density land at an average density of 4.36 dwellings per net acre (which yields on average approximately 7,500 square foot lots), approximately 80 new housing units for a population increase of 200 persons at 2.5 persons per dwelling.

plus

3. On the vacant 8.65 acres of Moderate Density land at an average density of 6.53 dwellings per net acre (which yields on average approximately 5,000 square foot lots), approximately 56 new housing units for a population increase of 141 persons at 2.5 persons per dwelling.

Therefore, the entire 39.33 acres of buildable residential land within the existing City Limits will accommodate a total of 176 new housing units for a total population increase of approximately 440 persons.

Please note that these densities will be possible when the citywide sewer system is available in early 2001 and that the 4 dwellings per net acre density (7500 square foot lots) was required in the 1989 Comprehensive Plan.

Furthermore, there are also 67.61 acres of vacant residential land outside the City limits and within the existing UGB, which can accommodate:

1. On the vacant 14.58 acres of Historic Residential land at an average density of 3.27 dwellings per net acre (which yields 10,000 square foot lots) approximately 47 new housing units for a population increase of 117 persons at 2.5 persons per dwelling

plus

2. On the vacant 33.57 acres of Low Density land at an average density of 4.36 dwellings per net acre (which yields on average approximately 7,500 square foot lots), approximately 146 new housing units for a population increase of 365 persons at 2.5 persons per dwelling.

plus

3. On the vacant 19.46 acres of Moderate Density land at an average density of 6.53 dwellings per net acre (which yields on average approximately 5,000 square foot lots), approximately 127 new housing units for a population increase of 317 persons at 2.5 persons per dwelling.

Therefore, the entire 67.61 acres of vacant residential land within the existing UGB and outside the City Limits will accommodate a total of an additional 320 new housing units for an additional total population increase of 799 persons, which more than doubles the current population of the City of Aurora.

Within the entire existing UGB, including within the City limits, under the present zoning designations, the City has a grand total housing capacity of 496 additional units, or a population increase of approximately 1239 additional persons.

#### Using City Master Planning 2.8% Growth Rate

By applying the 4 and 6 units per net acre density criteria to the projected 226 new housing units needed over the next 20 years as calculated above, the City of Aurora will need between 38 and 57 acres (depending on the average mix of densities) to accommodate the City Master Planning projected population growth to the year 2020 of 567 additional persons.

As stated above, the entire 39.33 acres of vacant residential land within the existing City Limits will accommodate a total of 176 new housing units for a total population increase of approximately 440 persons. The entire 67.61 acres of vacant residential land within the existing UGB and outside the City Limits will accommodate a total of an additional 320 new housing units for an additional total population increase of 799 persons, which is more than adequate to accommodate the projected population growth through 2020.

## Conclusion

Within the entire existing UGB, including within the City limits, under the present zoning designations, the City has a grand total housing capacity of 496 additional units, or a population increase of 1239 additional persons, which can accommodate both the Marion County 1.4% and the City Master Plan 2.8% growth rates in population projection, without expanding the UGB.

There is a surplus of land available within the UGB to accommodate considerably more than the 20-year projected population growth. Using the 1.4% growth rate, the projected 2020 housing need is 96 new dwellings, which when built would use up 19% of the total existing housing capacity of 496 dwellings available within the existing UGB including the City limits. Stated another way, the existing housing capacity located on buildable land within the existing UGB and City limits is approximately 5 times greater than the City's projected 2020 housing need.

Using the City's Master Plan annual growth rate of 2.8%, the projected 2020 housing need is 226 new dwellings which when built would use up approximately 46% of the total housing capacity currently located within the current UGB and City limits. Again, stated another way, the existing housing capacity located on buildable land within the existing UGB and City limits is more than 2 times greater than the City's projected 2020 housing need. Even if the City experiences population growth rates of 2.8%, there is still sufficient housing capacity within the UGB and existing City limits to accommodate the projected population growth and housing need to the year 2020.

The new sewer system and the resulting new buildable residential land creates a great deal of planning flexibility for the City by giving the City time to implement its vision.

#### **4. Land Use and Buildable Lands**

Since 1989, there have been five annexations of property to the City limits. These annexations have added 29.32 acres of residential land, 9.43 acres of commercial, and 18.87 acres of light industrial property to the City. Please see the Exhibit G map showing annexations from 1989 to 1999. Exhibit H shows the existing 1998 land use patterns within the City limits. A summary of developed and vacant acres is presented in Table 3.

**TABLE 3A**

**City of Aurora  
Land Use Inventory Within City Limits (in acres)**

<u>Use</u>	<u>Developed (%)</u>	<u>Vacant (%)</u>	<u>Total (%)</u>
Residential (R-1) <sup>1</sup>	89.35 ( 74%)	30.68 ( 26%)	120.03 (100%)
Residential (R-2)	6.70 ( 44%)	8.65 ( 56%)	15.35 (100%)
Commercial (C-1)	17.22 ( 38%)	27.66 ( 62%)	44.88 (100%)
Industrial (M-1)	19.40 ( 65%)	10.43 ( 35%)	29.83 (100%)
Flood Plain	0.00 ( 0%)	1.34 (100%)	1.34 (100%)
Public	6.70* (100%)	0.00 ( 0%)	6.70 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>139.37 ( 64%)</b>	<b>78.76 ( 36%)</b>	<b>218.13 (100%)</b>

\* Aurora City Park

**TABLE 3B**

**City of Aurora  
1998 Land Use Inventory Within UGB Outside City Limits  
(in acres)**

<u>Use</u>	<u>Developed (%)</u>	<u>Vacant (%)</u>	<u>Total (%)</u>
Residential (R-1) <sup>1</sup>	5.67 (11%)	48.15 ( 89%)	53.82 (100%)
Residential (R-2)	0.00 ( 0%)	19.46 (100%)	19.46 (100%)
Commercial (C-1)	6.10 (61%)	3.97 ( 39%)	10.07 (100%)
Industrial (M-1)	0.00 ( 0%)	13.63 (100%)	13.63 (100%)
Floodplain/Hazard	0.00 ( 0%)	50.69 (100%)	50.69 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.77 ( 9%)</b>	<b>135.90 ( 91%)</b>	<b>147.67 (100%)</b>

**Residential**

As shown in Table 3A above, there are approximately 39.33 acres of vacant residential land, including approximately 30.68 acres of R-1 residential zoned land and 8.5 acres of R-2 residential zoned land, which together represent approximately 50% of the total vacant lands inside the City. As noted above under Housing Needs Analysis, the City has sufficient residential land to accommodate the allocated 20-year growth. There is an additional 67.61 acres available within the UGB, but outside of the City.

<sup>1</sup>Includes Historic Residential Overlay

Of the vacant residential land within the City, 18.35 acres are zoned R-1, low density residential and are located outside the Historic Residential Overlay; 12.33 acres are zoned R-1 and are located inside the Historic Residential Overlay; and 8.65 acres are zoned R-2, moderate density residential.

Although the City's 1989 Comprehensive Plan and related Zoning Code permitted residential development at urban densities, the lack of a public sewer system has severely constrained small lot development. DEQ's double drainfield requirement, which in the past has limited development to a maximum of three units per gross acre, will no longer constrain minimum lot size when the sewer system becomes operational in early 2001.

### **Non-Residential**

Approximately 21% of the land within the City limits is designated for commercial uses. Of the existing commercial land, about 62% or approximately 27.66 acres is vacant and buildable to meet future commercial needs within the current City limits. This includes 10 small parcels with less than 21,000 square feet for small scale commercial expansions in the Historic Commercial Overlay. The remaining commercially zoned properties include partial lots ranging from 1/2 acre to 3 acres and a single 6.84 parcel.

Approximately 14% of the land within the City limits is designated for industrial uses. Of the existing industrial land, about 35% or approximately 10.43 acres is vacant and buildable to meet future industrial needs within the current City limits. All existing parcels zoned industrial are less than 2.75 acres.

The remaining land is public or cannot be developed due to physical constraints, such as flood plain or steep slopes.

### **Conclusion**

Notwithstanding that the City includes vacant land inside the current urban growth boundary, a number of outside factors impact the liveability of Aurora such that the City may need to expand its urban growth boundary for unique historical, economic, land use and transportation reasons.

Summary findings and conclusions are presented in the following chapters covering Growth and Urbanization, Resource Inventories, Local Economy, Housing, Public Facilities, and Transportation with additional information available in the attached Exhibits.

### **III. LOCAL ECONOMY**

The median family income in Marion County is currently estimated to be \$28,600, according to the State of Oregon Housing Division. Current information specific to Aurora is not available. When it becomes available, the 2000 census is expected to provide much more useful current information.

Approximately 75% of the community's wage earners commute over 15 miles to work, principally to Portland and Salem. Others work in the surrounding communities of Hubbard, Woodburn, Canby and Wilsonville. Local job opportunities in surrounding small towns include agriculture, aviation at the Aurora Airport; and traditional commercial and industrial enterprises.

#### **A. Commercial Areas**

With regard to non-residential uses, Aurora has a total of 48.21 acres designated commercial lands. This includes 17.22 acres of developed commercial land and 27.66 acres of vacant commercial land within the City and 10.07 acres within the UGB outside of the City, which includes 6.10 acres developed and 3.97 acres vacant.

Within the community (City and UGB), there are approximately 23 acres of commercially zoned and developed land containing 65 business. Approximately 74% of this land is within the existing City limits consisting of four blocks in the center of town, the central business district includes restaurants, offices, showrooms, service stations, and antique stores. The antique business comprises the majority of all business licenses for commercial activities in the City and is a major attractor of the imported dollar to the local economy. Each year, thousands of people come to the community to shop for antiques. While in the City, they also purchase other local goods and services. Adjacent to this area, properties previously zoned industrial, including a vacant feed mill, are now being converted into retail spaces.

A second commercial area is located south of the central business district on Highway 99E. This area consists of antique stores, grocery and retail shops, storage and service facilities, offices, a chiropractic clinic, and a nursery.

The Aurora Airport includes a substantial number of limited commercial activities and uses. These are directly related to the airport and general aviation use. They are not general commercial in nature, and they are outside of the City limits. The Oregon Department of Aviation has recently completed a Master Plan Updating Process and has adopted an amended Aurora Airport Master Plan, which will govern growth at the airport for the future. Aurora community members have mixed feelings about the impact of the Aurora Airport on the livability and general commerce of the City and local area. Community members

have been involved in the Aurora Airport Master Planning process and have registered their concerns regarding the existing and potential adverse impacts of airport activities on the community. The City of Aurora needs to decide what role the Aurora Airport will have in its future, and what formal and informal relationships can be established to achieve mutually beneficial goals.

## **B. Industrial Areas**

There are 19.4 acres of industrial development within the City. There is an additional 10.43 vacant acres of vacant industrial land within the City limits. Almost all of this is located between Highway 99E and the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way. Outside the City limits in the southwest portion of the Urban Growth Boundary there are 13.63 acres of industrially designated property available for development.

The industrial development within the City of Aurora includes a wrecking yard, cabinet shop and welding shop on approximately 5.5 acres abutting the railroad in the southwest portion.

The current buildable industrial inventory may not be adequate to accommodate future population growth. The City anticipates that an undetermined portion of the area north of Ehlen Road, east of Highway 30 and west of Airport Road will need to come into the urban growth boundary of Aurora. Upon expansion of the urban growth boundary, this area will be designated for a combination of industrial and commercial or industrial only uses.

### **Agriculture**

Farming is part of Aurora's history and local economy. With a perfect blend of fertile soil, mild temperatures, and adequate precipitation, the Aurora area is suitable for the growth of a wide range of crops including floral and nursery stock. Nearly a million square feet of land are devoted to greenhouses and approximately 800 acres are utilized in outdoor and field productions. This is in an addition to farmland devoted to the production of grains, grass seed, fruits, and vegetables. As a supply and service center to local farmers, the City will benefit from continued growth in the agriculture sector.



## **Airport**

Located approximately one mile to the northwest, the state owned Aurora Airport and related private businesses employ a work force of over 225, most of whom do not live in the immediate vicinity of Aurora. The airport's payroll has an impact on the local economy. The Oregon Department of Aviation has recently adopted an amended Aurora Airport Master Plan, which will govern growth at the airport for the future. Aurora community members have mixed feelings about the impact of the Aurora Airport on the livability and general commerce of the City and local area. Community members have been involved in the Aurora Airport Master Planning process and have registered their concerns regarding the existing and potential adverse impacts of airport activities on the community. The City of Aurora needs to decide what role the Aurora Airport will have in its future, and what formal and informal relationships can be established to achieve mutually beneficial goals.

### **C. Potential Development**

There currently are 27.66 acres of vacant land suitable for commercial development within the City limits, located primarily between Highway 99E and the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way. Approximately 14 acres of this commercial acreage cannot be fully utilized, however, because of the presence of steep slopes on the western margin. Most of the parcels are small, partial lots ranging from 1/2 acre to 3 acres. Outside the City limits within the Urban Growth Boundary, there are 3.97 acres of commercially designated property in two parcels. One is 1.21 acres and the second is 2.76 acres. Both parcels are located south of the City adjacent to Highway 99E.

There are 10.43 acres of vacant land zoned industrial and located primarily between Highway 99E and the Southern Pacific Railroad right of way. The parcels range from 4,700 square feet to 2.75 acres.

13.63 acres in the UGB south of the City has been designated for industrial purposes. This area is well suited for such development because it is near both highway and railroad transportation and is conversely unsuitable for residential development due to noise, congestion, and aesthetics. Such development along 99E is particularly attractive because the highway provides the major link between Aurora and the rest of the region.

The lack of public sewers has constrained economic development. Since large lots have been necessary to meet the state's double drain field requirements, total land costs have been higher than in sewered communities. This constraint will, however, soon be lifted with completion of the sewer system.

The City intends to facilitate development by providing a range of suitably sized and located parcels. Until such development occurs, land designated for commercial/industrial development outside the City shall retain its UTF zone designation and be devoted to agricultural uses.

Because the existing industrial land is in relatively small parcels, additional land north of Ehlen Road and east of Highway 51 may be needed. This area is well suited for industrial development due to its close proximity to major transportation corridors and the Aurora Airport. In its 1988 and 1998 Aurora Airport Master Plan and related 1999 update, the Aeronautics Division of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) anticipates significant economic/commercial development in the vicinity of this facility. Marion County has designated approximately 184 acres of property to the east and south for airport-related industrial uses. This property is zoned P (Public) which allows for airport and airport related commercial and industrial uses. An analysis of the impacts of the Airport Master Plan should be performed by the City to gain a better understanding of how the City and the airport can work together to manage growth in the area.

Although excluded from the City's UGB, the county recognizes that such airport development will have a significant economic impact upon Aurora. The generation of new jobs will also have a secondary effect of increased patronage of local businesses. For this reason, this area has been designated as one of joint city/county concern.

According to the Oregon Department of Economic and Community Development (ODECD), there are no highly refined measures for predicting a small community's future commercial/industrial needs. Under these circumstances the best method is to project need based on the current ratio of developed land to population.

The City anticipates that its population will increase by at least 80% over the next two decades. This growth would be expected to generate the need for development of an additional 6.02 acres of commercial and 6.79 acres of industrial property. This is less land than the total currently available within the City limits, as noted above. However, straight-line extrapolation fails to take into consideration several other important factors:

As the City continues to grow, there will be sufficient population to support a broader range and number of commercial activities. This may result in the local provision of some goods and services, which now must be obtained in surrounding larger towns.

The lack of a public sewer system in the past dictated larger lot development that required in sewerred communities. Since much of the existing commercial and industrial base was developed prior to the institution of the state's double drainfield requirement in 1974, it does not reflect minimum lot sizes now available with the new City wide sewer system.

Highway 99E is the City's major link to the rest of the region; most of the existing and proposed vacant commercial/industrial property is located on this state highway. Maximum utilization of this transportation corridor is in the best interest of the City and the region.

Continued increases in the cost of gasoline support an increasing need to provide both employment and additional services within the community.

To offset past development constraints imposed by the lack of sewers, the City wishes to provide developers with a wide range of suitably sized and located parcels. Highway 51 and Ehlen Road intersect one mile west of the current Aurora urban growth boundary. Both of these streets are designated as major arterials providing access to neighboring communities and to I-5. Property located near this intersection is in large parcels, has high visibility necessary to attract and support commercial development and access to highways to support industrial and commercial development.

To account for greater economic growth than past trends and allow for larger scale commercial and industrial development, the need for an additional 10 acres of commercial and 45 acres of industrial land is projected.

## IV. HISTORIC DISTRICT

### A. History of Aurora Colony

Aurora was the largest of four towns built in the American west by a communal society founded by Dr. William Keil. Born in Prussia in 1812, he and his wife immigrated to New York where they established a successful tailoring shop. While in New York, Keil became interested in Christian reform movements and developed his own interpretation of the New Testament. With only a limited knowledge of English, Keil found it necessary to sell his shop and travel to Pennsylvania where there was a large population of German speaking people.

While preaching near Pittsburgh, Keil became acquainted with Andrew and Barbara Giesy and their 15 children. Four of the Giesy sons, Andrew Jr., Christian, Samuel and Henry, became students of Keil's teachings and helped spread the "word" in the Pittsburgh area. By 1844, there was a substantial number of Keil followers, including some former members of the Harmony Colony in Economy, Pennsylvania. Due to persecution and the need to be isolated from other basic teachings of the Christian religion, the decision was made to move west. People of all religious backgrounds were accepted into the colony as long as they adhered to Keil's basic Christian principal of "love thy neighbor". The first Christian community founded by the group was called Bethel and located in Shelby County, Missouri. Later, a second community, Nineveh, was founded about sixty miles away from Bethel.

In 1853, Christian Giesy, who had been active in recruiting colonists for Bethel, was chosen to lead an advance party to the Oregon Territory to look for new town sites. The "spies", as the advance party was called, chose a site on Willapa Bay, north of the mouth of the Columbia in the present state of Washington. In 1855 a large wagon train led by Dr. Keil arrived at the Willapa Bay settlement. Within a few months, colony leaders realized that Willapa Bay was too isolated and that a new site should be considered. During the winter of 1855-56 a small party traveled throughout the Willamette Valley in Oregon, finally choosing a site on the Pudding River, about three miles south of its junction with the Willamette River. This site had good water power potential and was on the trail from Oregon City to French Prairie and the upper Willamette Valley. In the spring of 1857 construction of Dr. Keil's home began. When completed, Dr. Keil's home frequently served as a roadhouse for travelers on the overland stage route. During the 1860's, three more wagon trains were sent west from the Missouri colonies and about 100 colonists arrived by ship via the Isthmus of Panama.

The new settlement was known as Aurora Mills and later just Aurora, the name of one of Dr. Keil's daughters. Aurora was a thriving community and generally known for hospitality, music, fine food, and high quality craftsmanship. As an

experiment in communalism and practical Christianity, the Colony was one of the most successful ever attempted.

The experiment endured for nearly 25 years. Unlike other communal, religious, or utopian communities of the time, Aurora had, in the words of Robert Hendricks, "no peculiarity of religious belief, or dress, or living conditions or social relations in any way different from that practiced by its neighbors, other than the one fact that its property was held in common."

Dr. Keil died on December 30, 1877. Two and a half years later on August 1, 1881, the colonies in Missouri and Aurora were legally dissolved and the property was divided among nearly 1000 members. Although there was a board of trustees, Dr. Keil's death left the colonies without a strong leader. It was soon evident that leadership was not the only problem.

The Oregon and California Railroad came through Aurora in 1870, and the effect of outside influences became an increasing factor within the Colony.

In the years before his death, Dr. Keil began making increasing demands upon the young Colony members, first asking that they marry only with other Colony members and later that they not marry at all. These factors, combined with Keil's partial withdrawal from active Colony leadership several years before his death, put the Colony in a state of general discontent.

The economy of the Colony was very good, however, consisting of 23,000 acres of farm land, a thriving town and several mills. Aurora continued as a stop on the railroad for several years after the Colony was dissolved, but it gradually lost its reputation for "old world" hospitality. In recent years, there has been interest in preservation of historic sites and Colony buildings by the Aurora community in general, and by the descendants of former Colony members in particular.

## **B. Historic Inventory**

In April 1974, the 150 acre Aurora Colony Historic District was given the distinction of becoming a National Historic District, the first in Oregon. Detailed on the next page, the district contains 21 buildings and sites considered to be of primary historical significance including homes, stores, mills and a church, hotel, and pioneer cemetery. Most of these remain in private ownership although a few sites have been acquired by the Aurora Colony Historical Society. Some of these, including the Ox Barn, have been converted into a museum complex where the unique treasures of the Colony are preserved and displayed.

These historical roots serve as a focal point for several annual community activities. Each March, there is a spinning wheel showcase, which permits the

local residents to display examples of this old-time art. In June, the annual Strawberry Social is held at the Old Aurora Colony Museum; an antique quilt show is held in October and holiday decorations and activities occur during November and December.

Aurora is known throughout the nation as an antique sales center because of the combination of the City's historic character and the number and variety of antique stores. Aurora is part of the "Circle of Sites" of historical communal societies along with the Shaker communities and other famous groups, past and present.

Because of their contribution to the economic livelihood and social well being of the community, Aurora's historical resources should be maintained and enhanced. To ensure the integrity of these resources, careful management of land use in the historical district is necessary to discourage the inappropriate modification or demolition of historical structures and prevent construction of adjacent buildings which are characterized by incompatible uses and/or architecture. This is accomplished through cultural resources management provisions incorporated in the Aurora Municipal Code. Please see additional historic resource and inventory information attached as Exhibit I.

## AURORA COLONY HISTORIC SITES

1. Old Aurora Colony Museum - Ox Barn
2. Giesy (Emma Wagner) House, or "Kraus House"
3. Steinbach Log Cabin
4. Keil Cemetery
5. Snyder (Andrew) House
6. Snyder House
7. Fry (William) House
8. Smith (Stephen) House
9. Small Board and Batten House
10. Octagonal Building
11. Colony Store and Hall (Aurora Food Market)
12. Keil (Frederick) House, Synonymous with Elias Keil House
13. Geisy (John) House
14. Miller (Jacob) House
15. Miller House
16. Colony Hotel Site
17. Colony Dam and Mill Pond Site
18. "California" Store Front
19. Sites of Colony Spinning, Lumber and Grist Mills
20. Site of Wilhelm Keil's Gros Haus
21. Site of Aurora Colony Church

## **V. RESOURCE INVENTORIES**

### **A. General Physical Characteristics**

#### **1. Topography**

Aurora is located on the eastern side of a flat plain known as French Prairie, which includes the entire Marion County region north of Salem. The prairie is bounded on the west by the Willamette River and on the east by the Pudding River. Aurora has a rolling terrain with elevations ranging from below 100 to approximately 200 feet. Slopes of 10% or more are not uncommon, particularly along the Mill Creek and Pudding River stream banks. Flatter land, more typical of French Prairie, is found north and west of the creek and south of the City limits.

#### **2. Climate**

The Aurora area has a temperate maritime climate with moderately warm, dry summers and mild, wet winters. Average annual precipitation is approximately 40 inches per year, 60% of which falls between November and February while only 10% occurs between June and September. Snowfall is rare. Prevailing winds are from the west and northwest during the summer and from the south and southwest during the winter. Seasonal temperature variations are relatively small. The average July temperature is 80 degrees while the average January one is 33 degrees. Temperatures below 20 degrees and above 100 degrees are unusual. The frost-free season extends from April through October, approximately 200 days.

#### **3. Soils**

Aurora is located in the Willamette River basin which consists of three major physiographic features: The Pacific Coast Range, Willamette Valley Trough, and the Cascade Range. The trough was created as a result of down-folding of regional bedrock which occurred during the formation of the Coast Range. The resulting trough subsequently has been filled with sediment derived from both mountain ranges.

As indicated in Exhibit D-7, soils in and around Aurora are predominantly of the Woodburn-Amity-Willamette association situated on alluvial terraces; a majority are Woodburn and Willamette silt loams, providing some of the most fertile agricultural land in the Willamette Valley.

Exhibit D-8 identifies development limitations associated with soil type, based on the USDA Soil Conservation Service "Soil Survey of Marion



County Area, Oregon". The Soil Conservation Service classifies its soil groups by drainage, percolation and engineering characteristics, among others. From these are derived development criteria, based on the soil's subsurface drainage capability for sewage disposal and their bearing capacity for building foundations, roads and streets. For urban uses general limitation classifications of slight, moderate and severe are given to the soil groupings. Soils with slight limitations do not require any special design restrictions; urban uses are generally easy to achieve. Moderate limitations have restrictions that can be overcome with planning, careful design and usually greater costs. Severe limitations indicate that urban development is highly questionable and should be severely restricted or not allowed at all.

Woodburn soils are moderately well drained with a surface layer of very dark brown silt loam. The upper part of the subsoil consists of dark yellowish-brown silty clay loam and the lower part, dark brown silt loam. Woodburn types have severe limitations for development with septic tanks due to slow permeability. Woodburn soils with slopes greater than 12% limit industrial and commercial development.

For Willamette soils the surface layer consists of a very dark grayish-brown silt loam, the upper subsoil, a dark brown silt loam, the lower subsoil, a dark brown silty clay loam, and the substratum, a dark yellowish-brown silt loam.

Soils of this association are suitable for cultivation of small grains, pasture, hay, orchards, and grass grown for seed. Recently, increasing numbers of berries, vegetables, and specialty crops have also been grown in the Aurora vicinity. However, growth of the latter crop is somewhat limited by lack of adequate irrigation. With the exception of the Willamette series, all soils in the area have a perched water table in winter and early spring. Unless drained, these soils are too wet for the proper cultivation of crops. However, natural drainage ways throughout the association provide adequate outlets for artificial drainage.

Willamette soils with slopes from 3 to 12% present moderate limitations on residential development with septic tanks.

Soils of the Cloquato-Newberg-Chehalis association, including Cloquato silt loam and Newberg fine sandy loam, are found primarily within the flood plains of Mill Creek and the Pudding River. Soils of this association are deep and subject to frequent overflow. Consisting of a surface layer and subsoil of dark brown silt loam, Cloquato soils are well drained. Newberg soils are somewhat excessively drained and contain a surface

layer of very dark grayish-brown fine sandy loam or silt loam and subsurface layer of dark yellow -brown sandy loam.

Like the Woodburn-Amity-Willamette association described above, these soils are suitable for the production of small grains, grass seed, fruits and vegetables. A protective cover of plants is necessary during winter and early spring, when most flooding occurs.

Limitations on urban development, except recreational uses, for Cloquato and Newburg soils are severe due to flood hazard. Limitations on urban development, except recreational uses, for Amity silt loam are severe due to high seasonal water tables.

The City is bounded on the west, north, and east by a terrace escarpment which consists of gravelly and silty alluvium too varied to be classified as soil. Forming the sidewalls of the major streams, this escarpment is moderately steep and thus unsuitable for agricultural production. Development in any area defined as terrace escarpment is severely limited by steep slopes.

Existing vegetation includes Douglas fir, maple, hazel, swordfern, bracken fern, poison oak, tussock, sedges, and grasses. Possible uses include pasture, woodland, and open space.

## **B. Open Spaces and Natural Resources**

### **1. Forest Lands**

Except for a stands of trees in the City Park, along the unnamed tributary to Mill Creek in the Ehlen/Airport Road area and along the Pudding River near the east boundary of the City, there are no significant forest resources within the Aurora City limits. Most of the heavily forested areas within the vicinity are associated with the flood plains of Mill Creek and the Pudding River, all but a small portion of which has been excluded from the proposed UGB. Since flood plains are not appropriate for intense urban development, these resources are not endangered.

Furthermore, there are several soils within the vicinity of the City with high forest suitability ratings although most of these areas are currently utilized for agriculture. The Woodburn silt loams (WuA, WuC, and WuD) have a cubic foot site class rating of 2 while the Chehalis silty clay loam (Ch) and Newberg fine sandy loam (Nu) are site class 3.

## **2. Fauna and Flora**

According to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, wildlife species in the Aurora area include fur bearers such as deer, muskrat, raccoon, possum, beaver, and fox; and upland game such as pheasants, quail, grouse, dove, and pigeon. The lower Pudding River is used heavily by migratory waterfowl in the fall and winter months. Numerous species of non-game wildlife also inhabit stream areas and adjacent habitats; these include blue heron and many species of songbirds dependent upon vegetation for cover, nesting, and feeding.

A wide variety of fish species frequent the Pudding River and, to a lesser extent, Mill Creek. Winter steelhead primarily use the former for a migratory route. Warm water game fish such as catfish, bass, bluegill, and crappie as well as such non-game species as suckers, carp, and squawfish are found in large numbers. In addition, rainbow trout and cut-throat trout may inhabit the streams part of the year.

Flora species found on non-cultivated land in the Aurora area include Douglas fir, cottonwood, bilge maple, Oregon white oak, ash, willow, rose, hazel, vine maple, wild blackberry, swordfern, bracken fern, poison oak, tussock, sedges, oatgrass, and other native grasses.

The area does not contain critical spawning or rearing habitats. Furthermore, the flora and fauna within the UGB are similar to species found in adjacent areas. As a result, conversion to urban uses would not conflict with these resources.

## **3. Open Space**

Zoned for urban transition farm (UTF) by Marion County, much of the undeveloped land within the urban growth boundary currently is devoted to agriculture and will remain as open space until needed for urban development. Additional open space is associated with the flood plains and steep banks of Mill Creek and the Pudding River, which for the most part have been excluded from the UGB.

Aurora City Park and the privately-owned Aurora Trout Farm have been identified as the area's recreational resources. However, the latter's loss due to urbanization is not considered significant because it is similar to other trout ponds throughout the state.

#### **4. Water Resources**

The City is located near both Mill Creek and the Pudding River although only a small portion of the former traverses the UGB. In addition, the City depends upon the Willamette aquifer for its water supply. The City has yet to determine if there are any significant watersheds or wetlands in the area. With regard to its water resources, the chief concern of the City is to prevent contamination of its groundwater, despite the lack of a public sewer. The state's double drain field requirement has insured that this does not occur. The City has constructed a City wide sewer system. For more discussion, see sections on water quality (Goal 6) and public facilities (Goal 2).

#### **5. Other Resources**

Within the City's urban growth boundary there are no:

Mineral and aggregate resources based on information from Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Resources (DOGAMI) and USDA Soil Conservation Service.

Ecologically and scientifically significant areas based on information from the Nature Conservancy Inventory;

Singularly outstanding scenic views and sites based on local inventories;

Indigenous energy sources based on local inventories;

Cultural areas other than historic resources based on local inventories;

Wilderness areas based on local inventories;

Potential and approved Oregon recreation trails based on information from Oregon State Parks and Recreation Division.;

State/federally-designated wild and scenic waterways based on information from Oregon State Parks and Recreation Division;

Wetlands identified on the National Wetlands Inventory.

## **C. Air, Water, and Land Resource Quality**

### **1. Air Quality**

The City of Aurora is located outside the Portland Air Quality Maintenance Area (AQMA) and, therefore, industries located there generally are subjected to less stringent state and federal air quality standards. Within the City limits, there are no major point sources, i.e. industrial facilities with sufficient air pollution emissions to require operational permits from the state Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The nearest major source is Northwest Organic Products, located on I-5 near the Aurora/Donald overpass, well outside the UGB.

In general, the area has no serious air pollution problems although it is subject to occasional haziness due to field burning activities and/or temperature inversions which trap pollutants in the mid-Willamette Valley.

### **2. Noise Quality**

According to DEQ, there are three major noise sources within the vicinity of Aurora:

#### **a. Aurora Airport**

As indicated in Exhibit D-10, there is significant area around the airport within the 55 Ldn contour, the level of noise considered to be disruptive to human activities. Although none of this area falls within the proposed UGB, a significant portion of the city/county mutual planning area is affected. In its Aurora State Airport Master Plan updated in 1999, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Aeronautics Division addresses these noise problems. The City and the County have an intergovernmental agreement that addresses issues related to Airport Area (Exhibit B). The county, under whose jurisdiction the area lies, has developed specific noise policies and standards affecting land uses.

#### **b. Southern Pacific Railroad**

DEQ considers the railroad to be a significant source of noise. Although designated by the Plan as either commercial or industrial, much of the land along the railroad is currently developed for residential purposes. Given the existing houses, it is difficult to mitigate other than by encouraging noise buffers.

**c. State Highway 99E**

DEQ considers a highway to be a significant noise generator if traffic exceeds 5,000 average daily trips (ADT). The 1999 Aurora Transportation Plan indicates the average daily traffic volumes on Highway 99E range from 8,400 to 14,700 vehicles per day in the Aurora Urban Growth Boundary. The adverse impacts of noise can be moderated slightly by adequate setback and/or noise buffers along the highway as required by the Aurora Development Code.

**3. Water Quality**

According to DEQ, there is no evidence that the lack of a sewer system has resulted in the pollution of the community's ground or surface water resources. In a 1976 survey conducted by Marion County, it was found that Aurora had a lower than average percentage of septic system failures; as a result, the community had a very low priority for receiving a federal pollution abatement grant with which to construct a sewer system. Furthermore, the state's adoption in 1974 of a double drain field requirement for septic permits ensures that future failures will not result in ground water contamination. The latest test of City well water conducted in 1999 shows nitrate levels detected at 0.01mg/l, well below the state's maximum 10 mg/l (milligrams per liter); and nitrite levels detected at 0.1mg/l, well below the state's maximum of 1.0 mg/l.

At the federal level, EPA has recently listed additional northwest fish species as "endangered" under the Endangered Species Act. This listing will likely lead to increased standards at the local level (DEQ) for protecting water quality. The City will respond to new standards when they are developed. It is anticipated that, at a minimum, stream bank and riparian zone protection will be a focus to help control sedimentation and temperature. Some levels of storm water treatment may also be necessary.

DLCD in cooperation with the Division of State Lands, has developed stream bank protection standards known as "safe harbor setbacks". The City has incorporated these requirements in the update of the Development Code.

#### **4. Natural Hazards**

Some areas within the proposed UGB are characterized by flooding, steep slopes, and/or unstable soils. To minimize risks to life and property, development in these areas must be managed carefully.

##### **a. Flood Plain**

As indicated in Exhibit D-5, the City of Aurora is located south of the confluence of Mill Creek and the Pudding River, both of which have extensive 100-year flood plains. For the most part, the proposed urban growth boundary is drawn to avoid inclusion of these areas. However, approximately 33 acres in the northeast corner of the UGB are within the Mill Creek flood plain; in addition, a narrow strip of land just inside the City's eastern boundary is within the Pudding's flood plain.

The flood season for streams in Marion County begins in October and extends through April with the majority of larger floods occurring in December and January. Cloquato, Newburg and Amity soils associated with these flood plains are characterized by moderate to poor drainage and are subject to major flooding resulting from prolonged rains or heavy snow melts. According to the USDA Soil Conservation District, limitations on urban development, except recreational uses, for Cloquato and Newburg soils are severe due to flood hazard. Limitations on urban development, except recreational uses, for Amity silt loam are severe due to high seasonal water tables. According to 1972 figures, of all insured disaster losses in the United States, 90 percent were due to flooding. For these reasons, urban development of these areas is inappropriate.

##### **b. Slope**

As previously discussed under the soil inventory, Exhibit D-8 identifies development limitations associated with soil type, based on the USDA Soil Conservation Service "Soil Survey of Marion County Area, Oregon". The Soil Conservation Service classifies its soil groups by drainage, percolation and engineering characteristics, among others. From these are derived development criteria, based on the soil's subsurface drainage capability for sewage disposal and their bearing capacity for building foundations, roads and streets. Severe limitations indicate that urban development is highly questionable and should be severely restricted or not allowed at all.

The City is bounded on the west, north, and east by a terrace escarpment which consists of gravelly and silty alluvium too varied to be classified as soil. Forming the sidewalls of the major streams, this escarpment is moderately steep and thus unsuitable for agricultural production. Development in any area defined as terrace escarpment is severely limited by steep slopes.

Slopes greater than 25% primarily are associated with flood plains of the Pudding River and Mill Creek. See Exhibit D-9. Steep slopes and unstable soil conditions render these areas most suitable for forest, recreational, and open space uses. Most of these have been excluded from the urban growth boundary or have been subtracted from the buildable lands inventory.

Additionally, in 1999, the Department of Geology and Minerals (DOGAMI) published IMS-8, Relative Earthquake Hazard Map for Selected Urban Areas in Western Oregon. According to this map, the City of Aurora and the areas within the current urban growth boundary are located entirely in Zone B - intermediate to high hazard.

To avoid potential hazards, the City will require engineering studies to identify special design and structural requirements for sites when slopes greater than 25% or unstable soil conditions are indicated.

**c. Soil Limitations**

Many soil types in the vicinity of the City of Aurora are characterized by poor percolation and permeability which can result in structural instability, flood hazards, and inadequate sewer waste disposal. In the absence of sewers, soil conditions constitute the single most severe constraint to development in the City. While still a concern, with the new sewer system, slope protection focuses more on foundation stability and water quality concerns. Please see Exhibits D-7 and D-8 attached for additional information.



## **VI. PUBLIC FACILITIES**

The City will continue to master plan all public facilities, including sanitary sewer, water, storm water, streets, street lighting, solid waste, parks/recreation, schools, police, fire, health and local government services to insure that the public is provided with safe, efficient and effective public facilities and that new growth provides its fair share of all public services in full compliance with all local, state and federal regulations.

### **A. Sewer**

Many of the soil types in the Aurora area are not well suited for septic systems. See Exhibit D-8. Historically, the lack of public sewer has the single greatest physical constraint to development. The large minimum lot sizes required for a septic permit, ranging from 15,000 to 19,000 square feet depending on dwelling type, added significantly to housing costs and prevented development at urban densities.

Lack of sewers has also constrained economic development. Due to high land costs, new industries were less likely to locate in Aurora than in a sewered community where land requirements will be two to three times less. This will all change with the new sewer system.

The City completed an updated Sewer Master Plan in 1998. This plan is being implemented with a collection and treatment system. The system, anticipated to be on-line in the Spring of 2001, will encourage new development in all land use categories and development will be allowed on smaller urban sized lots.

### **B. Water**

Currently, the City of Aurora draws its water from the Willamette aquifer through three City-owned wells. However, only two wells are currently in operation. Please see Water System Master Plan Update and Map attached as Exhibit D-1 for additional information. With the completion of Well #4 and other main line improvements, the City may have adequate water supply to accommodate anticipated development during the next several years.

In 1998, the City updated the original Water System Master plan previously prepared by Westech Engineering, Inc. and adopted in 1980. The update was designed to comply with the provisions of Goal 11. Goal 11 public facilities plans are required to meet the 20 year projected growth.

The aquifer that provides Aurora's water supply must be protected from negative impacts such as may result from chemical spills, and underground storage tank leaks. The Department of Environmental Quality has adopted stringent

provisions regarding underground storage tanks. The City has adopted a Sewer Ordinance to prohibit and regulate the collection and treatment of hazardous waste through the City's wastewater system. The City will consider adding provisions regarding the regulation of storm water in order to limit the use of chemicals that could, if spilled, constitute a hazard to the aquifer.

### **C. Storm Drainage Facilities**

Large portions of the City are not served by adequate storm drainage facilities. Currently, the City Public Works Department is conducting a survey of existing facilities to determine what remedial program is necessary. Provision of adequate storm sewer for new development is required in the City's Development Code. As noted above, these standards may need to be upgraded due to recent endangered species listings by EPA. The City will complete a Storm Water Master Plan in the future. At that time, the City will analyze the impact of the new Salmon Plan and other applicable state and federal programs on the construction and operation of existing and future storm water facilities.

### **D. Street Lighting**

The City street lighting system consists of various types and power of lights. The system is maintained and serviced by the Portland General Electric Company (PGE). In a recent survey, a lighting specialist found this system to be adequate.

However, focused planning efforts to enhance the downtown core have led to upgraded lighting standards, with poles of historic character. Generally, provision of street lighting for a new development is required by the City's development code, consistent with PGE standards.

### **E. Solid Waste**

The City of Aurora contracts with a franchise holder to haul solid waste from individual property owners to the Marion County transfer station at Woodburn. The combustible refuse is then taken to the Ogden-Martin burner in Brooks.

## **F. Recreation**

Approximately seven acres in size, Aurora City Park is located between Main and Liberty Streets at the south end of the community. Classified as a neighborhood park, it contains a ball diamond, tennis courts, restroom facilities, and a picnic area. The City has also recently constructed a public restroom in downtown within the Historic Colony District.

The Oregon State Park and Recreation Division recommends 10 acres of parkland for every 1000 residents. By this standard, the City will have adequate park facilities until 2002 when its projected population will exceed 700.

According to the Division, a community park would be the most appropriate new facility. A community park is defined as one which serves the whole community and is no more than 30 minutes by foot, 20 minutes by bicycle, or 10 minutes by car from the residences it serves. The portion of Mill Creek flood plain included in the proposed UGB is a likely site for a new park since it is not suitable for other urban development. There is also interest in developing a downtown park and/or plaza which would enhance the Historic District's tourist appeal. The City's Vision also anticipates linear greenway parks and pathways along the river and creek.

Other recreational facilities within the vicinity of Aurora include the Pudding River, Mill Creek, and the privately operated Aurora Trout Farm. In addition there are several county and state facilities, including Champoeg State Park, in the north Marion County area.

The City will develop a Parks Master Plan which, among other things, will require that new development either dedicate additional park land or pay a fee in lieu thereof to fund the City's purchase of additional park land to serve the park and recreation needs of the community.

## **G. Schools**

North Marion School District #15 provides the basic public education facilities and programs in north Marion county. The district was formed in 1960 as a consolidation of six smaller districts. The elementary school was constructed in 1962. A 6-room addition to the elementary school and a 3-room addition to the high school were completed in 1965. Additions to the high school were made in 1968, 1975 and 1999. A new middle school was completed in January 1981, and a new pre-kindergarten through second grade was constructed in 2000.

The school district serves grades preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. All the facilities are located on a 64-acre site at the intersection of Boones Ferry and Grim Roads approximately 2 miles southwest of Aurora. Currently, there are no plans for a building site in Aurora. However, the district's planning committee is studying long-range needs.

Only about 20% of the students attending the North Marion County School District live in Aurora. By comparison, approximately 38% live within the City of Hubbard and 10% in Donald. The remaining 32% live in surrounding rural areas.

#### **H. Police Protection**

Established in July 1981, the City's Police Department is funded from the tax base approved by voters. The department is manned by full-time staff and volunteer reserve officers. Additional support is available from Marion County sheriff's substation located in Woodburn, approximately eight miles to the southwest. Residents have 24 hour access to the police department via the 911 dispatch service provided by Willamette Valley Communications.

#### **I. Fire Protection**

The City of Aurora is served by the Aurora Rural Fire Protection District No. 3. The district is headquartered in Aurora with a second station in Donald. Like the police force, it is operated with a chief and volunteer force. Additional volunteers and equipment are available from the Donald station when needed. Please see Exhibit D-12 for additional information.

In 1981, the City had an Insurance Standards Organization (ISO) fire insurance rating of 7 on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being no organized fire protection available. This rating is used by the insurance industry to determine insurance premiums. In order to reduce the fire rating, cities normally improve the water system, add additional equipment, and provide more full-time fire fighters. In 1996, the City's fire insurance rating was officially decreased by ISO to 5, because in recent years, the City has improved the water distribution system and the fire district has added additional equipment and improved operations.

Existing fire fighting capacity is adequate to meet current City needs. The department periodically replaces outdated equipment, as the budget allows. It is estimated that existing facilities can service significant residential growth. Existing staff exclusive of volunteers includes a part time Fire Chief and one full time operations manager. More paid staff will only be required at such time that

the number of calls daily makes it unfeasible for a volunteer force to cover the demand. Industrial development of the airport could strain existing capacity unless the district requires the installation of internal sprinkler systems in new industrial facilities.

## **J. Health Services**

First aid services are provided by seven local volunteer firemen trained as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), and four First Responders. Please see Exhibit D-12 attached hereto for additional training information.

Ambulance service is provided by the Woodburn Ambulance Service, with the Canby Fire Department and Tualatin Fire and Rescue providing back up ambulance service. The nearest full service emergency room is located at Meridian Park Hospital, about 10 miles to the northwest in Tualatin. Residents may also use Willamette Falls Hospital in Oregon City. Aurora's residents can seek medical care in Canby, Hubbard, Woodburn, Salem, Silverton, and the greater Portland area.

## **K. Local Government Services**

All powers of the City are vested in the council which is composed of a mayor, elected for a two year term, and four councilman elected at large for four year terms. The City Council by its charter authority currently contracts for the outside professional consultant services of a City attorney, municipal court judge, City planner, City engineer, financial planner and public accountant. The City Council currently employs the City Recorder, Superintendent of Public Works, Police Chief, a full-time assistant City Recorder/Clerk, a part-time City Clerk, a full-time public works person, and a part-time Court Interpreter.

The City Planning Commission is composed of seven members appointed by the Council. Two of the seven members may reside outside the City limits but within the UGB.

Also meeting monthly, the Historic Review Board is composed of five members appointed by the Council. These five members consist of a representative from the Council, a representative from the Planning Commission, a member of the Aurora Colony Historical Society, a resident of the Historic District and either a licensed builder or architect, or a citizen at large. The Historic Review Board is authorized by the Council to protect the cultural resources within the National Historic District.

Local government activities are conducted in two connecting buildings which house the City offices, shop, council chambers, and police department, located at 21400 and 21420 Main Street NE.

## **VII. TRANSPORTATION**

### **A. Street Classification and Conditions**

The street system in and around the City is detailed in the Transportation System Plan. The adopted Transportation System Plan, dated November 1999, is incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan Update by this reference.

The City is interested in developing a coordinated regional transportation strategy with Clackamas County, Marion County, ODOT, Canby, Hubbard, Donald, and even potentially Wilsonville and Woodburn. The primary concern for the City is developing functional solutions to the heavy impact of regional through traffic on Aurora.

### **B. Highway 99E**

Highway 99E passes through Aurora on a northeast to south axis. This two-lane state highway is both the community's most important thoroughfare and its major link to Portland, Salem, and the rest of the region.

The highway is near its design capacity and is in need of improvements. Most of the commercial activity in Aurora faces the highway, thus creating some challenges to developing a functional but locally acceptable design for highway improvements.

Recently, Marion County completed improvements to Ehlen Road, west to I-5. Improvements included replacement of the Mill Creek bridge. The City is also working with ODOT and Marion County on realignment and intersection improvements to better route east/west traffic from 99E to Ehlen Road.

As development occurs along the highway, access to the right-of-way should be controlled to reduce traffic hazards; these include improvements such as driveways, frontage roads, turn lanes and rear access roads. Provisions will be made for limiting access directly to the highway from the proposed commercial area south of Ottaway.

### **C. Main Street**

Main Street is a collector street that runs north/south through the center of the City; nearly all other City streets connect to this arterial in some manner. To relieve congestion, Main Street should be extended to the south. This would facilitate the movement of through traffic by limiting its interface with local traffic.

#### **D. Ehlen Road**

Ehlen Road (Market Road 10) is classified as an arterial in the Aurora Transportation Plan. It enters Aurora from the west terminating at the north end of Main Street. When the traffic signal is constructed at 99E/Liberty, Ehlen Road will no longer end at Main Street, but will continue to the traffic signal. This road provides direct access to Highway 51 (Hubbard Cut-off) and the Interstate 5 Interchange and serves commercial and industrial facilities at the south end of the Aurora Airport as well as future residential growth in the northwest corner of the City. The City should work with Marion County and the Aurora Airport to encourage widening and straightening improvements to Keil Road cutoff to alleviate the existing physical constraints to truck traffic.

In anticipation of further development, the right-of-way of Ehlen Road has been increased to 80 feet and a centerline setback of 50 feet should be implemented to provide additional space for future widening and improvements. In addition, creation of access points along the arterial must be carefully designed and developed; county and state highway departments should be consulted prior to allowing any new access points or rights-of-way along Ehlen Road.

#### **E. Airport Road**

Developed at county standards, Airport Road (Market Road 59) parallels the Aurora State Airport and provides access to the City from the north. It is classified as an arterial in the Aurora Transportation Plan.

Use of Airport Road to access the City Center is anticipated to increase as the airport industrial district continues to develop. Any future development, access, or right-of-way along the Airport Road should be carefully reviewed and designed to reduce potential traffic hazards. Furthermore, development standards should be formulated which accommodate increased automobile and truck traffic resulting from future airport development, while protecting and enhancing pedestrian and non-motorized vehicle traffic.

#### **F. Local Streets and Ways**

The Transportation Plan identifies all major streets and provides guidance for development of a collector system, as well as a local street network. As areas of the community are developed, public rights-of-way should be built to City standards. Where necessary, additional right-of-way should be dedicated as part of the development process. The City's Vision calls for a "walkable village" atmosphere.



## **G. Mass Transit**

Mass transit is defined as any form of passenger transportation that carries multiple members of the public on a regular scheduled basis. It can include buses, taxis, shuttle trains and carpools. At this time, Aurora is not served by a local mass transit system. It is also no longer served by Greyhound Bus Lines on a flag-stop basis. The Union Pacific Railroad currently does not make freight stops in Aurora and there is no passenger service available.

With assistance from the state and the City of Salem, the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments developed a carpool program which is available to all cities in Marion County, including Aurora. The carpool matching program is now operated by the City of Salem, and continues to be available to all commuters, regardless of where they live. However, due to the community's size and the variety of destinations, carpooling is not a feasible alternative for many Aurora commuters.

Although Tri-Met does not serve north Marion County, a number of commuters in the Aurora area drive to Canby and Wilsonville to catch commuter buses. As the cost of commuting increases, greater numbers of commuters may avail themselves of this service. Therefore the City will continue to coordinate with Wilsonville's Smart system, which now has routes to Salem and Woodburn's bus system, in an effort to enhance transit options.

As local employment opportunities increase, the need for inter-city mass transit should be somewhat reduced. The close proximity of employment opportunities would allow residents to take advantage of means of transportation other than automobile.

## **H. Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities**

As indicated above, Aurora's transportation system is almost totally dependent on the automobile and, thus, offers few alternatives for the transportation disadvantaged. The county has adopted an element of its transportation plan to address the needs of this segment of the population.

Sidewalks are not common and minimal bicycle paths or trails have been developed within the City. The bike paths along a portion of Ehlen and Airport Roads were recently constructed by the County in compliance with the City's 1999 Transportation System Plan. A previous project constructed 6-foot wide bicycle paths on Highway 99E through Aurora, south to Grim Road. The City needs to establish policies regarding use and construction of bike paths and shoulder improvements for all existing streets and road.

A pedestrian sidewalk from Liberty to Bob's Avenue along the east side of 99E is being implemented incrementally by Marion County. Plans include an extension to Main Street as funding becomes available. For details of the planned pedestrian facilities, please see the Aurora Transportation System Plan.

## VIII. GROWTH MANAGEMENT

### A. Urban Growth Boundary

In April 1986, the City of Aurora and Marion County signed an updated agreement to establish and manage an urban growth boundary. As indicated in Table 4, there are 365 acres of land within the UGB, approximately 215 acres of which are vacant including 52 acres of flood plain.

The inventory of land use and developed lands in Aurora has remained virtually unchanged since acknowledgment of the comprehensive plan by the LCDC. The existing urban growth boundary contains an adequate supply of residential properties based on projected population for the 20 year planning period. However, due to the size and location of commercial and industrial parcels, a need for additional commercial and industrial parcels is anticipated within the next 20 years.

The following locational and size factors were taken into consideration when the UGB was originally established in 1979 and updated in 2001.

The UGB coincides with manmade features and boundaries including a rail line and roads, property lines, and City limits.

Approximately two-thirds of the UGB, including the entire City, lies between the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Pudding River. These provide a natural buffer between urban uses and the rich farmlands further to the west and east.

The remaining one-third of the UGB extends north-westerly from the current City toward the Aurora Airport, itself the focus of continuing development. In addition, this area encompasses almost the entire portion of the Aurora Colony Historic District now located outside the City boundaries.

According to its original master facility plans, it was both technically and economically feasible for the City to extend water and sewer service throughout the UGB, as this property was and still is needed for urban development. Therefore, the UGB constitutes the City's urban service area. The City's wastewater system will be operational by Spring 2001 and will have adequate capacity to serve the existing City limits and some additional extension into the UGB. But the City's water system has experienced some pressure and fire flow capacity problems in recent years and because of new information obtained from the waste water system construction project the City Water Master Plan should be updated. In order for the City to provide public facilities and services to

all of the land currently located within the UGB, the City will have to first make certain that capacity exists to serve all of the vacant land currently located within the City limits and then carefully and incrementally expand public facilities and services into the UGB. Given the current lack of adequate funding for the services (with the exception of the sewer system), individual property owners developing property within the UGB will be required to fund the off-site extra capacity improvements as well as on-site infrastructure improvements for their developments .

Almost all property in the southern portion of the UGB has direct access to Highway 99E, a regional transit way. Similarly, the northwest portion is bounded by Ehlen Road, which provides access to I-5 via the Hubbard Highway 51 and Ehlen Road. Ehlen Road has recently been designated as a Marion County Truck Route and the County intends to construct the last phase of a four phase County improvement program by the fall of 2001, in coordination with Clackamas County and ODOT support for improvements to Arndt Road, resulting in its ultimate designation as Canby's Truck Route to I-5.

In 1989, there appeared to be sufficient vacant acreage within the UGB to accommodate growth for the foreseeable future. Currently, the statute and administrative rules require that cities establish UGBs that accommodate the projected 20-year growth. There is sufficient vacant acreage within the UGB to accommodate projected year 2020 residential land needs, using the present land use designations on the comprehensive plan map and the Land Use Inventory shown on Tables 3A and 3B above. Additional commercial and industrial lands may become necessary to provide employment for the community.

As noted in Table 5, there are 55.69 acres of vacant commercial and industrial land within the UGB, most of which is located on the west side of 99E. The remaining vacant acreage is devoted to residential uses, including 78.83 acres designated for R-1 development and 28.11 acres designated for R-2 development.

Within the City limits, zoning designations for all property are identical to the corresponding comprehensive map designations. However, property outside the City is now zoned urban transition farm (UTF) by Marion County and will retain that zoning until annexed by the City. At that time, the City will zone the property consistent with its plan designation. See Exhibit J - letter to Marion County Board of Commissioners regarding zoning status of unincorporated areas within the Aurora UGB.

**TABLE 4  
City of Aurora  
Land Use Within UGB  
Acres**

Location	Developed	Vacant <sup>a</sup>	Flood Plain/ Natural Hazard	Total
Within City <sup>b</sup>	141.35	75.44	1.34	218.13
Outside City <sup>c</sup>	11.77	85.21 <sup>d</sup>	50.69	147.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>153.12</b>	<b>160.65</b>	<b>52.03</b>	<b>365.80</b>

- a Assumes generally suitable for urban development.
- b See Table 5 for detailed land use.
- c Currently under jurisdiction of Marion County, zoned for urban transition farm (UTF). Will not be zoned for urban uses until annexed by the City.
- d Includes 13 acres of non-residential uses, including Pioneer Cemetery, Calorwash Nursery, and the North Marion Baptist Church, and 23.2 acres of residential development. The latter was calculated by allowing for a 14,000 square foot lot, the average required for septic permits, on existing built larger lot, with the remainder considered vacant.
- e From 1989 to 1999, the City annexed 57.86 acres of residential land. There were no changes to the UGB. See Exhibit G.

**TABLE 5  
City of Aurora  
Vacant Land Within UGB**

Land Use	Acreage Vacant Land		
	Inside City	Outside City	Total
Residential	39.33	67.61	106.94*
R-1	30.68	48.15	78.83
R-2	8.65	19.46	28.11
Commercial/ Industrial	38.09	21.71	59.80
C	27.02	3.97	31.63
I	10.43	13.63	24.06
Flood Plain	1.34	50.69	52.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>76.78</b>	<b>135.90</b>	<b>214.66</b>

\*Includes 56.86 acres annexed between 1989 and 1999.

## **B. Growth Management Framework**

Aurora has the potential to experience rapid growth once a public sewer system is in place. While the City wants continued growth to occur, it does not desire to be overwhelmed by development activities. There is a desire to manage growth so that it can be assimilated and properly served with appropriate urban services and facilities. Therefore the City establishes the following growth management framework:

### **1. Public facilities service capacity.**

The basic policy is to provide orderly, efficient, and cost effective urban services to support growth over the next 20 years. Further, it is the intent of the City to ensure adequate public facilities and services are provided to support full density development of all or a significant percentage of all the Net Buildable Lands presently located within the current City limits before allowing future annexation.

A three-tier priority system shall manage sequencing of future annexations. In order to allow annexation there must be sufficient system service capacity (sewer and water) to serve all net buildable lands inside the City, plus the proposed annexation area. In other words, no reserve system service capacity, which is needed to serve the existing City limits, shall be allocated to serve an area to be annexed.

**NOTE:** For the purposes of this policy, Service System Capacity includes both treatment and collection for sewer; and both supply and distribution for water. It further is calculated based on the maximum density or intensity of land use allowed by the various land use designations.

### **2. Density and land development within City Limits.**

It is the City's intent to promote maximum efficient use of available lands inside of the City limits prior to annexation of additional lands within the UGB. Yet, in doing so the City also desires to spread the cost of urban services to the largest logical and legal amount of vacant land.

The City's targeted overall average residential density is 6 units per net acre applied to the Buildable Lands Inventory. The targeted density is not a mandatory delivery level as actual densities are intended to vary by employing average density criteria in order to create variety. However, to ensure efficient use of available and, the City has established minimum density thresholds as set forth in the Annexation criteria.

Residential zoning will be categorized into the following density districts:

- a. R1 Low Residential Density Zoning: Average lot size 7,500 square feet = 4.36 units per acre.
- b. R1H Historic Residential Density Overlay: Average lot size 10,000 square feet = 3.27 units per acre
- c. R2 Moderate Residential Density Zoning: Average lot size 5,000 square feet = 6.53 units per acre.

**3. Annexation criteria.**

Prior to approving an annexation, it must be found that:

- a. There is sufficient sewer and water system capacity to serve all net buildable lands inside the City at the maximum allowed density, plus sufficient additional capacity to adequately serve the proposed annexation area at its maximum allowed density, and
- b. The proposed annexation complies with the following priority list for annexation:
  - 1. Land which is immediately adjacent to the current City limits, and for which there is sewer and water service immediately available.
  - 2. Commercial and Industrial designated land which is located less than 250 feet from the current City limits, and for which sewer and water service can be provided by minor line extensions.

3. Residential designated land which is located less than 250 feet from the current City limits and for which sewer and water service can be provided by minor line extensions when at least 60% of the net buildable land for the applicable zoning district within the current City limits has actually been developed, or is committed to development; and that such development has occurred at an average of not less than the following minimums in the zone, which represents approximately 80% of maximum density:

R-1	3.5 units per acre*
R-2	5.2 units per acre*

\*Note: For properties included in the Historic Residential Overlay, this requirement shall be satisfied if developed or committed to development at a density of 2.6 units per acre. Committed to development means there is a valid approved land development permit, for which approval has not expired under the two year limit.

#### **4. Expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary**

Notwithstanding that the City includes vacant land inside the current urban growth boundary, a number of outside factors impact the liveability of Aurora such that the City may need to expand its urban growth boundary for unique historical, economic, land use and transportation reasons.

First priority shall be given to properties to be designated commercial or industrial which provide employment generating uses and for which sewer and water service can be provided. The amount of land required for the use shall not dominate the amount of employment generated by the use.



## **IX. POLICIES**

### **A. Overall Objectives**

The objectives of this Comprehensive Plan are to:

1. Implement Aurora's declared Vision.
2. Maintain and enhance the City's historic character and community identity.
3. Influence, manage, and control the transition from rural to urban uses on lands outside the City's UGB which are logically within the City's area of interest for planning.
4. Allow property owners in the urban service area to exercise their right of development, at such time as adequate public services are available, in accordance with comprehensive plan policies and implementing regulations.
5. Meet the intent of state goals and county plans which require rational urbanization and appropriate provision of public facilities.
6. Retain and improve the City's livability and economic stability.
7. Preserve and protect natural features from undesirable effects of growth to the maximum degree practical.

### **B. Citizen Participation (Goal 1)**

**Objective:** Develop a citizen involvement program that ensures the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process.

**Policies:**

1. The City will continue an active involvement program to include citizens in all phases of the planning process including post-acknowledgment. The Planning Commission shall act as the Citizen Involvement Committee (CIC) and shall be responsible to ensure that citizens have appropriate opportunities for active involvement.

### **C. Planning Process (Goal 2)**

**Objective:** Establish a land use planning process and policy framework document (comprehensive plan) as a basis for all decisions and actions related to use of land and ensure an adequate factual base for such activities.

**Policies:**

1. The City will update its comprehensive plan at least every ten years to ensure that it remains consistent with local issues and concerns. As needed, it will also make amendments to align with new state laws and administrative rules.
2. The City will involve citizens and affected local, state, and federal agencies in the comprehensive plan update process.
3. With construction of the approved public sewer system, the City will coordinate with Marion County to monitor population growth as compared to estimates and official allocations. It is the City's intent to manage the availability of adequate vacant land within the UGB.
4. Elements in the comprehensive plan which will receive special attention include growth and urbanization, transportation, public facilities, recreation, and economic development.
5. The City will modify existing ordinance and/or draft new ordinances, historic preservation guidelines and other measures as needed to implement the provisions of the comprehensive plan.
6. The City Council will adopt procedures and criteria for reviewing applications for plan amendments which are submitted in the period between major plan updates. These will be in compliance with all applicable local and state requirements.
7. The City will seek funding to support increased municipal participation in coordinated planning efforts with Marion County.

#### **D. Growth and Urbanization (Goal 14)**

**Objective:** Achieve orderly development in the community by providing a workable program for managing growth.

**Policies:**

1. The City will extend urban services only to urbanizable land within the urban growth boundary. Annexation to the City will be a requirement of such extensions. Until annexed, land with the UGB shall retain its county Urban Transition Farm (UTF) zone designation.
2. The City will only consider for annexation land which has immediate access to urban services, based on the three tiered priority format set forth in the Growth Management Framework. When annexed, land shall be automatically rezoned as shown in the Development Code. The property owner may request a zone change to meet identified housing, economic, and recreation needs as indicated by the comprehensive plan.
3. In addition to the existing quasi-judicial process, the City will provide for a periodic evaluation and updating of the urban growth boundary at the same time as the comprehensive plan is reviewed. Changes to the UGB will be based upon consideration of the seven factors listed in statewide planning goal 14.
4. The City will seek funding to evaluate the impacts of development of the industrial and commercial properties at the Aurora Airport and on surrounding lands, to determine the role of the Aurora Airport in relationship to the Overall Objectives of the Aurora Comprehensive Plan and to identify formal and informal relationships needed to achieve mutually beneficial goals.

## **E. Open Spaces and Natural Resources (Goal 5)**

**Objective:** Conserve open space and protect natural and scenic resources to the maximum degree possible.

**NOTE:** Policies for forest resources will be found in the Oregon Forest Practices Act because a small amount of forest resource is located within the UGB.

### **Policies:**

1. The City will encourage the preservation and planting of trees to separate conflicting land uses and provide scenic and recreational opportunities where feasible.
2. The City will encourage plans for development which include preservation of open space areas, and protection of adjacent natural resources, i.e., riparian greenbelts. The City will consider appropriate "Safe Harbor" setbacks to protect stream banks and water quality, consistent with EPA and DEQ standards.
3. The City supports the implementation of the Fish and Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan for Marion County developed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.
4. The City will explore the establishment of an inter-governmental agreement with Marion County to manage and enhance historic resources outside of Aurora's UGB.

## **F. Air, Water, and Land Resources (Goal 6)**

**Objective:** Enhance community livability by protecting air, water, and land resources.

### **Policies:**

1. The City will require all developments to adhere to applicable federal and state air quality standards.
2. The City supports the county's efforts to minimize noise at the Aurora Airport through enforcement of noise standards specified in the county's airport overlay zone, and incorporated into the City's Development Code.

3. The City will more carefully control the relationship of future development to and abutting Highway 99E. Permitted development will be subject to adequate setback and buffer requirements to minimize noise impacts.
4. The City will encourage the planting of trees along its streets and thoroughfares in the downtown corridor as shown in the Downtown Improvement Plan.
5. The City will require future development activities which generate significant noise to adhere to all noise regulations of the State of Oregon.
6. The City will complete a public sewer system no later than 2001.
7. The City will require all development to adhere to applicable federal and state clean water requirements.

**G. Natural Hazards (Goal 7)**

**Objective:** Protect life and property from natural hazards due to flood or landslide.

**Policies:**

1. The City will prohibit any urban development within the 100-year flood plain. These areas will be preserved as agricultural land or open space.
2. The City will require a licensed engineer's assessment of design and structural techniques when appropriate; restrict or prohibit construction of structures on slopes with a 25% or greater gradient; and restrict or prohibit construction on soils which pose a threat to structural stability.

**Implementing Actions:**

1. The City will provide accurate and current information to the public on all flood plains, steep slopes, and unstable soils within the UGB.
2. The City will adopt a flood plain zone which restricts urban development in flood hazard areas.
3. The City will require a licensed engineer's assessment of design and structural techniques necessary to mitigate potential hazards associated with steep slopes or unstable soils.

## **H. Recreation (Goal 8)**

**Objective:** Provide adequate recreational opportunities for City residents.

### **Policies:**

1. The City will provide additional park and recreational facilities as needed to meet statewide park and recreational standards subject to economic constraints.
2. The City will seek new sources of revenue to finance the acquisition, development, and maintenance of additional park and recreational facilities.
3. The City will explore the feasibility of acquiring a future park site in the northeast portion of the UGB.

## **I. Energy (Goal I3)**

**Objective:** Conserve energy where possible through land use planning, education, and adoption of conservation oriented policies.

### **Policies:**

1. The City will review site design criteria to ensure greater energy efficiency.
2. The City will discourage leap-frog development through its growth management framework.
3. The City will support the local recycling facilities and programs.
4. The City will support development of mass transit, car-pooling, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities to reduce dependence on the automobile.
5. The City will encourage creation of local employment opportunities particularly industries and businesses which are energy-efficient.

## **J. Historic Resource Policies (Goal 5)**

**Objective:** Protect the community's historic character and sense of identity by conserving buildings and sites of historic significance and increasing the zone of control to include more of the original colony property.

### **Policies:**

1. The Historic Review Board will be responsible for:
  - a. Interpreting the requirements of the Historic Preservation Ordinance;
  - b. The protection of identified historic resources from demolition or inappropriate alteration; and
  - c. Maintaining the historic context within which significant sites and structures are located by managing of existing and future development.
2. The Planning Commission will be responsible for interpreting the elements of the Development Code relating to the Historic Commercial and Historic Residential Overlays.

## **K. Economic Policies (Goal 9)**

### **Objectives:**

1. Increase local employment opportunities to meet the needs of the residents of the area.
2. Increase the short and long term stability of the local economy.
3. Foster commercial and industrial activities to meet the expressed needs of City residents.

### **Policies:**

1. The City will work closely with Marion County, the Oregon Department of Aviation, and the Oregon Department of Economic and Community Development to evaluate and balance the net value (cost/benefit) of the industrial and commercial potential of the Aurora Airport and surrounding lands. The City will strive to minimize potential land use conflicts within

the mutual planning area in an effort to maximize the livability of the community.

2. The City will complete a public sewer system no later than 2001.
3. The City will encourage the preservation and enhancement of the community's historic character.
4. The City will promote the retention and expansion of existing business activities while promoting the recruitment of new businesses.

#### **L. Housing Policies (Goal 10)**

##### **Objectives:**

1. Provide a full range of housing choices for households of all incomes, ages and sizes.
2. Establish residential densities in accordance with site conditions and within the capacity of City services and facilities.

##### **Policies:**

1. The City will encourage a variety of housing types.
2. The City's Development Code includes a requirement for "shadow subdivisions", to allow for in-fill at higher densities after a sewer system is completed.
3. The City will encourage residential development to occur in a compact and efficient manner to facilitate the provision of public facilities and other services, while maintaining and enhancing a comfortable village atmosphere.
4. In conjunction with Marion County, the City will encourage the availability of necessary programs to assist in the provision of adequate housing for low income families.
5. The City will encourage the use of innovative housing design techniques within the limits established by state building, electrical, plumbing, and fire codes.
6. The City will encourage the provision of adequate rental housing and an adequate supply of housing for the elderly.



7. The City will encourage conservation and improvement of structurally sound residential areas and units which lend historic character to the community.
8. The City will encourage an active code enforcement program to maintain existing dwellings at minimum structural standards.

**M. Public Facilities (Goal 11)**

**Objectives:**

1. Provide adequate public facilities and services necessary to accommodate the City's growth until the year 2020.
2. Plan and develop these facilities and services in a coordinated, efficient, and economical manner.

**Implementing Actions:**

1. The City will maintain updated master facilities plans.
2. The City will continue to identify and make application for county, state, or federal grants or low interest loans to finance construction.
3. The City will implement the sewer master plan and develop related system development charges to help finance the system.

**Policies:**

1. Sewer: The City will complete a public sewer system no later than 2001.
2. The City's Development Code Ordinance includes provisions for "shadow subdivision" which will allow interim development while permitting full utilization of large parcels after a sewer system is constructed.
3. To ensure orderly and economic extension of sewer facilities when available, the City will encourage in-fill and development immediately adjacent to existing City limits before permitting development further out in the urban growth boundary.
4. The City may consider extension of a sewer line to the Aurora Airport industrial district if it is determined by the City and county that:

- a. The City is the most logical service provider; and
  - b. The extension benefits the City economically; and
  - c. Precautions prevent hook-ups to the line by property owners in the rural area between the urban growth boundary and airport; and
  - d. In full compliance with applicable laws.
5. Water : Guided by the water facilities master plan, the City will extend or require the extension of water mains and construct storage facilities as needed to accommodate increased population growth.
  6. The City will strive to preserve and protect both the quality and quantity of its water source.
  7. To ensure orderly and economic extension of water facilities, the City will encourage in-fill and development immediately adjacent to existing City limits before allowing development further out in the urban growth boundary.
  8. The City may consider extension of a water main to the Aurora Airport industrial district if it is determined by the City and county that:
    - a. The City is the most logical service provider; and
    - b. The extension benefits the City economically; and
    - c. Precautions prevent hook-ups to the line by property owners in the rural area between the urban growth boundary and airport; and
    - d. In full compliance with applicable laws.
  9. Storm Water Drainage: The City will require future development to include adequate storm drainage facilities.
  10. The City will construct storm drainage facilities in existing neighborhoods where economically feasible.
  11. The City will make appropriate code amendments to implement changes in state and federal water quality standards.
  12. Street Lighting: The City will require future development to include adequate street lighting facilities.
  13. Solid Waste: The City will support Marion County in its efforts to manage solid waste disposal.
  14. Schools: The City supports increased coordination between the school district and City, particularly in regards to educational objectives, community plans, and large scale development proposals.

15. The City will encourage the use of school facilities to increase the availability of recreational opportunities for area residents.
16. Police Protection: The City will continue to provide police protection at levels deemed adequate to maintain public safety.
17. Fire Protection: The City will continue its present agreement with the rural fire district unless and until other alternatives become feasible.
18. The City will encourage the District to hire trained fire fighters only when a volunteer force becomes operationally infeasible.
19. The City will make improvements to its water system as needed to ensure adequate storage and fire flows, and to improve its overall fire rating as funding permits.
20. Health Services: The City will encourage the continuing provision of high quality first aid care with prompt access to medical and hospital facilities.
21. Local Government Services: The City will expand government services as the need requires as funding permits.

## **N. Transportation Policies (Goal 12)**

### **Objective:**

1. Implement the 1999 update of the Transportation System Plan.
2. Encourage transportation improvements which support the community's economic development and create a pedestrian friendly atmosphere.
3. Establish a street system which is consistent with orderly growth, minimizes conflicts with adjacent land use, and provides a circulation system which is safe and efficient for both vehicles and pedestrians.
4. Encourage energy conservation through efficient transportation planning.
5. Promote a multi-agency regional transportation strategy.

**Policies:**

1. The City will be guided by the updated 1999 Transportation System Plan in developing a transportation system including, but not limited to:
  - a. Identifying public transportation services to meet the needs of those who are transportation disadvantaged.
  - b. Encouraging the use of carpools, vanpools, and other strategies to increase automobile and energy efficiency.
  - c. Providing bike paths and ADA compliant sidewalks to connect schools, parks, and shopping facilities with residential areas when economically feasible.
  - d. Establishing priorities for the expenditure of state and federal highway funds within the City.
  - e. Designating and protecting corridors for future collector streets to ensure adequate access for developing areas within the City and urban growth boundary.