

## RURAL CENTER

### INTRODUCTION

The Orient area was first settled by pioneers in the early 1850's and was known for agriculture and timber production. Two competing theories exist regarding how the area became known as Orient. One theory is that the community took its name from the Orient Steam Sawmill, the other speculates that the community acquired its name from the local school, which was so named because it was the eastern-most school in the region.

Remnants of the turn of the century community can still be found in the historic structures that are located in and around

Pleasant Home and Orient. This grouping of old homes, farm buildings, and the Pleasant Valley Church make up a concentration of old structures that is unique in Multnomah County. The area was considered as a potential Rural Historic District under Statewide Planning Goal 5 prior to changes to the implementing rules that no longer required protection of significant historic resources. The church was designated as a significant resource in July of 1980. A description of the potential historic district and map are included in the appendix.



Pleasant Home Church and Mt. Hood from Dodge Park Blvd.

Despite once being connected to Gresham by an electric streetcar system, the Orient area has always remained rural with a large number of farms. Berry farms and other agricultural uses were common throughout the area and each spring migrant workers came to prepare the fields for the harvest that would commence in mid-May. Today, nursery operations have replaced the berry farms, but migrant workers still travel to the area and commercial and community uses are found in the Orient Rural Center.

### Unincorporated Communities Rule

The Orient and Pleasant Home areas are zoned as the Rural Centers for this area of Multnomah County (see Figure 8). New State rules affecting the Rural Center have been implemented since the County's last plan was prepared. These new regulations are referred to as the Unincorporated Communities Rule<sup>8</sup>.

Through the Unincorporated Communities Rule, the State has acknowledged that some concentrated areas of residential and commercial activity have come to exist outside of urban growth boundaries. State guidelines for these areas have been constructed to help counties plan without having to fulfill a stringent "exceptions" process in their efforts.<sup>9</sup> The rule requires that counties identify and designate such areas, plan for permitted and prohibited uses, and anticipate current and future facilities needs. According to the criteria within the rule and discussions with state land use staff, the Orient area is designated as a Rural Community and Pleasant Home is designated as a Rural Service Center.

<sup>8</sup> For details on this rule, please refer to OAR 660-022, or Division 22

<sup>9</sup> Please see Statewide Goal 2 for details.

## INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

The Orient Rural Center contains about 168 acres. It is centered at the fork of Orient Drive and Dodge Park Boulevard. It contains about 123 parcels and 62 dwellings, and lies roughly east of SE Anderson Road, and west of 302<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. The northwestern section of this area is adjacent to the Metro urban growth boundary for an approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile stretch. The area is long and narrow in its configuration, differentiating it from the characteristics of a more traditional, clustered rural community. Orient Drive is also used as an alternative to US 26 for those traveling to Sandy, though traffic volumes are generally low.

The Pleasant Home Rural Center is comprised of about 3 acres. It contains 13 parcels, 6 dwellings, and is situated at the intersection of Pleasant Home Road and Dodge Park Boulevard. Pleasant Home is much smaller than the Orient area and is clustered around a single intersection.

The Rural Center contains residential uses, some vacant parcels in farm use, commercial and industrial uses, and a limited number of publicly owned parcels with public facilities, such as the Orient Elementary and Middle Schools. There are also a few parcels with dual residential-commercial use.

Development activity in the Rural Center has generally been light. Over the past ten years, only three new residential building permits have been issued in the Orient area. All have been issued since 1998.

Land Use Inventory

In order to determine the appropriate designations for both parts of the current Orient Rural Center area, a parcel-by-parcel inventory of both the Orient section and the Pleasant Home section was conducted. The inventory included site visits, inspections of aerial photographs and assessor data, and a recent inventory of area businesses. The findings from this inventory are illustrated in Figure 8. Information on land uses is also provided in Table 2, which illustrates the types and acreage of land inventoried.

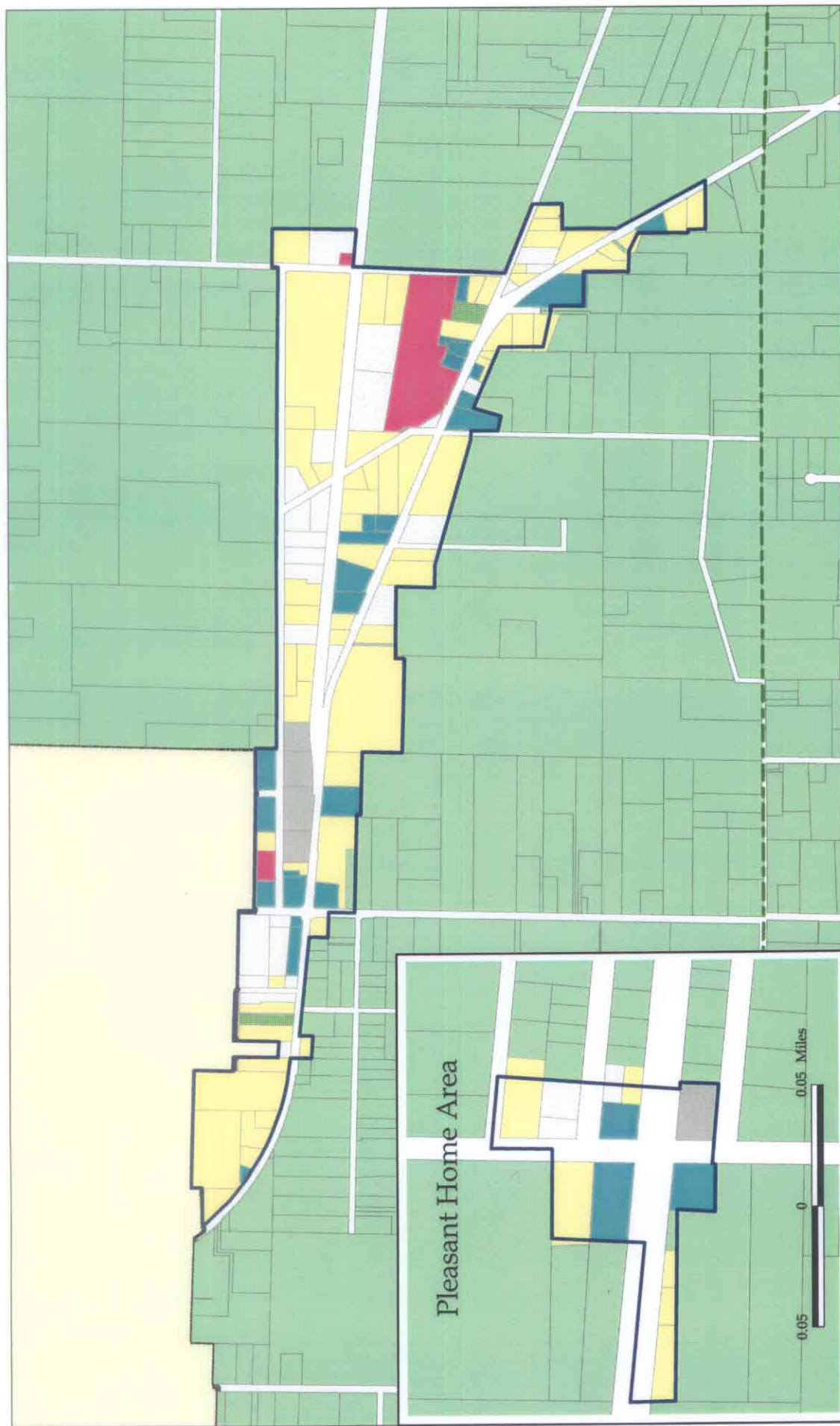
<b>Table 6: Land Uses in the Rural Center Areas</b>				
Land Use Classifications	Orient Section		Pleasant Home Section	
	Number of Parcels	Acreage of Parcels	Number of Parcels	Acreage of Parcels
Residential	62	98	6	2
Commercial	24	20	3	1
Residential/Commercial	2	2	0	0
Industrial	4	6	1	.5
Public Use	4	13	0	0
Vacant	27	29	3	.3
TOTAL	123	168	13	4

Source: Metro RLIS database combined with local site inventories. Acreage figures include only the portions of split parcels that are inside of the Rural Center boundary. These estimates do not include land in public right-of-way.

As illustrated in Table 6, the predominant use category in both sections of the current Rural Center is residential use, with a good portion of commercial uses in the Orient area. Based on this land use analysis and discussions with State planning staff the Orient area was designated a Rural Community and the Pleasant Home area was designated as Rural Service Center. The most significant outcome of this decision is that the Orient area is required to have new zoning requirements and a new zoning map to

meet State requirements (described below). The zoning in the Pleasant Home area remains largely the same.





# West of Sandy River Rural Area Plan

## Figure 8

### Rural Center Land Uses

- Urban Growth Area
- Commercial
- Commercial/Residential
- Industrial
- Public
- Residential
- Vacant



### **Transportation Capacity**

State requirements for Rural Communities/Service Centers are that zoning must ensure that new uses do not exceed the capacity of the transportation system. The transportation section of this plan identifies improvements needed in the Orient area based on projected land use patterns. These projections are based on the current zoning in the Rural Center and include improvements to the intersection of Orient Drive and Dodge Park Boulevard for safety reasons and to the 302<sup>nd</sup> Avenue/Orient Drive/Bluff Road intersection also for safety reasons. Changing the zoning in the Orient area to potentially allow more commercial development is likely to increase the amount of future trips in this area. Increased trips will likely require the addition of a signal at the 302<sup>nd</sup> Avenue/Orient Drive/Bluff Road intersection by the year 2020. The Task Force agreed to the recommendation for a signal when warranted even though this is a more urban-type facility. A signal already exists at the intersection of Dodge Park and Troutdale Roads. In addition, the Task Force recommended lowering the transportation level of service in the Orient area from level of service C to level of service D. This will reduce the likelihood of a signal being required in the near term and recognizes that the Orient Rural Community will continue to be an area with more intensive development.

### **Public Facilities**

The Pleasant Home Water District serves most of this area, though there are also some homes served by wells. The water district is a wholesale customer of the City of Portland. It purchases water that is pumped from the Bull Run Reservoir, and stored in a 600,000-gallon holding tank. This district serves primarily residential uses, with a few agricultural and commercial uses. A few years ago, the district placed a cap on further irrigation permit sales to allow enough capacity for future residential needs.

Most of the homes and businesses in this area are served by on-site septic systems. The Orient schools, however, use temporary holding tanks. The waste from these holding tanks, including the tank serving Sam Barlow High School, is transported to Gresham seven or eight times each day according to the school district. Reports from the Portland Office of Sanitation Permits indicate that this area has experienced a fairly high number of septic failures in recent years. This is due, in part, to the area's soil classification. Powell soils, while favorable for farming, tend to accompany a high water table. Some recent applications for partitioning have been denied by the Portland Office of Sanitation Permits because of inadequate discharge capacity.

### State Guidelines

The Unincorporated Communities Rule requires counties to adopt public facilities plans for unincorporated communities over 2,500 in population. As the current Rural Center area is significantly smaller than this, this criterion does not apply.

In addition to this criterion, however, sewer and water community public facility plans are required in any of the following circumstances:

- Existing sewer/water facilities are insufficient, or may become insufficient to meet demand
- The current plan provides for growth that cannot be served with existing systems
- The community relies on groundwater and is in a groundwater critical area
- Land in the community has been declared a public health hazard.

To gauge the development potential of the Orient Rural Center area and to determine if public facility plans were required an analysis of the area's maximum build-out capacity was conducted using the following assumptions:

- A minimum parcel size of one acre for new residential units.
- Partitioning of developed residential parcels to the maximum extent permitted by zoning.



- New zoning designations for the proposed Rural Community that follow the zoning concept illustrated in Figure 9.

This analysis revealed that, at maximum, about 80 new dwelling units could be constructed in the Orient Rural Center. Each of these residential properties would have to be served with on-site septic and stormwater control systems. There are two factors that will determine the future residential build out of this area, the desire of the property owner to subdivide or partition, and the ability to pass a percolation test for an on-site system and to control stormwater. Given that partitioning may not occur on all lots with development potential, and given the need for testing and approval for septic systems on soils with limiting characteristics, it is not likely that maximum will be realized.

For the following reasons a determination was made that a public facility plan is not needed for this area. First, because of the long and narrow configuration of the Orient section, the extension of sewer facilities into this area would be very costly – serving a relatively small number of persons given the area’s size. Second, because the Portland Office of Sanitation Permits currently issues or denies new building permits based on site inspections and percolation tests, meaning that the area’s carrying capacity is already being determined and regulated on a site-by-site basis. The County plan currently contains provisions that are intended to manage stormwater. Third, the area is not served by groundwater. Finally, the conversion to sewer, and the urbanization that may accompany it, would not be in keeping with the vision established by the community as part of this planning process, which is to maintain the rural character of the area.

### **Residential Uses**

Residential uses are permitted by right in the County’s current Rural Center (RC) zone and comprise the majority of the uses found in the Orient and Pleasant Home areas. In addition, housing for farm/forest workers is permitted with specific provisions. Home occupations are also permitted within residences.

The current minimum lot size for new parcels for residential use in the RC zone is one acre. Dimensional requirements consist of front and rear setbacks of 30 feet and side setbacks of 10 feet, except when abutting a street, in which case the side setback is also 30 feet. Conditional uses, which are more intensive commercial and industrial uses, must demonstrate adequate parcel size for approval.

#### **State Guidelines**

According to the Unincorporated Communities Rule, county plans and land use regulations may permit any residential use and density, as long as the density of residential development is greater than that of surrounding rural areas, and as long as it will not exceed the carrying capacity of the soil for waste disposal and of existing water supply resources.

The new zoning code must ensure that residential uses do not adversely affect surrounding agricultural uses, as well as the transportation system, environmental and water regulations and resources, and regional goals. Current lot size restrictions and setback requirements should meet this requirement.

### **Commercial Uses**

Currently, the only commercial uses that are permitted by right in the Rural Center zone are farming and forestry uses and home occupations. Other uses are permitted only under prescribed conditions. They include wholesale and retail sales of products raised or grown in the area, with the location and building standards subject to the discretion of the planning director. Replacement of structures related to public safety and services may also be permitted when damaged from an emergency or disaster event.

Other uses permitted as conditional uses include local stores, shops, offices, repair shops, restaurants, gas stations, motels and guest ranches.

There is currently no minimum lot size for non-residential uses in the Orient Rural Center area.

### State Guidelines

According to the Unincorporated Communities Rule, new commercial uses permitted in Rural Communities and Rural Service Centers may include any of the following:

- All uses authorized under Goals 3 and 4 (farm and forest lands),
- Small-scale, low-impact uses, defined as those in a building not exceeding 4,000 square feet of floor area,
- Uses intended to serve the immediate community and surrounding rural area, or those traveling through the area,
- Uses that do not adversely affect agricultural and forestry uses,
- Uses consistent with the capacity of the area's transportation facilities.

Aside from the size limitations (4,000 feet for some uses), all current commercial uses permitted in the Rural Center are permitted in the Rural Community/Service Center under this plan, with the exception of hotels and motels. According to the Unincorporated Communities Rule, hotels and motels must be served by a community sewer system, which the Rural Center area does not have.

### **Industrial Uses**

Currently, the County's zoning code permits light industrial activities as a conditional use. The specific conditional uses allowed are the same as those permitted by right in the County's light manufacturing zones. For the current Rural Center area, these uses should require no more than 20 daily employees. Uses may be expanded up to 40 daily employees when:

- The expansion is a result of normal growth of the existing use and not required as a result of business diversification,
- The use employs primarily persons living within the area or in the surrounding rural area,
- The use satisfies other applicable Framework Plan elements <sup>10</sup>,
- The use satisfies the County's design review provisions.

It is possible that State guidelines may limit the type and extent of industrial uses currently provided in the Rural Center area. A generally accepted employment density for industrial uses is about 1,000 square feet per employee. The State's prohibitions on uses larger than 10,000 square feet of floor area might, in some circumstances, limit the number of employees to fewer than twenty, the current maximum permitted by the County (not accounting for expansions).

### State Guidelines

According to State guidelines for Rural Communities and Rural Service Centers, industrial uses that are permitted include the following:

- Uses authorized under Goals 3 and 4 (farm and forest uses),
- Expansion of uses existing as of the date of the rule (12-5-94),
- Small-scale, low impact uses, defined as those using not more than 10,000 square feet of built floor area,

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<sup>10</sup> Applicable Framework Plan elements include: Number 20 – Arrangement of Land Uses; Number 30 – Industrial Location; Number 36 – Transportation Systems Development Requirements; Number 37 – Utilities; and Number 38 – Facilities.



- Uses that require proximity to a rural resource as defined by the rule, such as geothermal wells, mineral or aggregate deposits, water reservoirs and natural features).
- Uses that will not exceed the capacity of water and sewer service available to the site.

More intensive uses than those listed above may be permitted when:

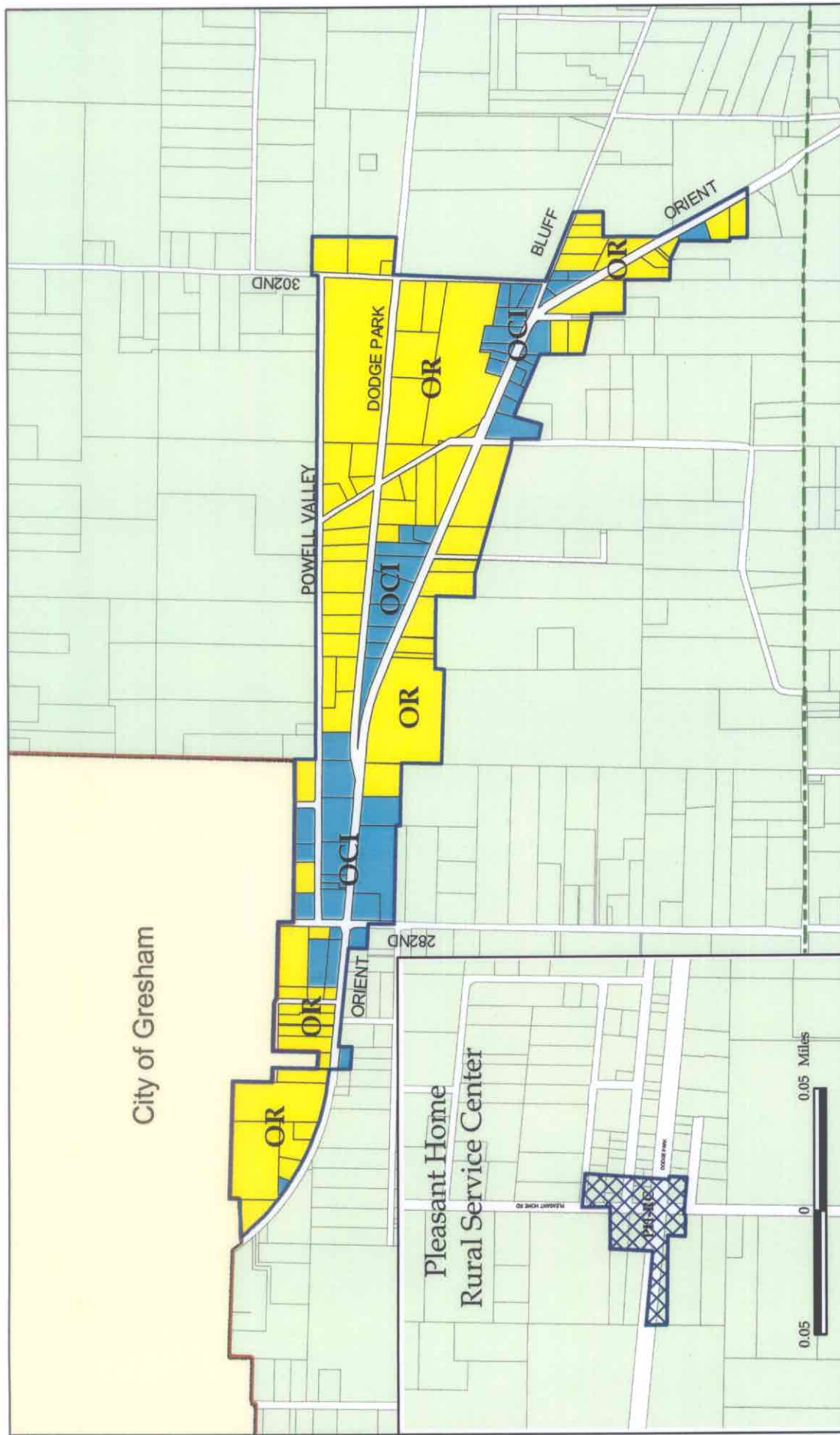
- The uses do not require exceeding the projected work force within the community and the surrounding rural area,
- The uses would not rely upon a work force served by uses within urban growth boundaries, and
- The work force need determination considers the total industrial and commercial employment in the community and is coordinated with employment projections for nearby urban growth boundaries.

Both state guidelines and Multnomah County's code contain provisions for allowing more intensive uses or for expanding existing uses. While both sets of guidelines follow a similar intent, the state provisions will require the County to adopt a more specific basis for determining why a proposed use or expansion would be appropriate (e.g., not rely upon a work force served by uses within urban growth boundaries). Due to the proximity of the Rural Centers to the UGB, the plan does not attempt to justify uses more intensive than the small-scale low impact uses provided for in the Rule.

### **Overview of Recommended Zoning Map Changes**

The new zoning designations required in the Orient area are shown on Figure 9. The new zoning map generally zones current residential areas as residential and commercial uses as commercial. The new zoning designations are designed to maintain compatibility between adjacent land uses and recognizes those areas that are likely to continue as "nodes" of commercial activity. In addition, it may be possible to combine both industrial and commercial uses for Orient into a single zone to allow more flexibility of location within the limited area of the community. Some additional commercial zoning was added at the request of property owners and the Task Force. In almost all cases, vacant parcels are zoned as residential. As noted earlier, the Pleasant Home section will not receive individual zoning designations, due to its classification as a Rural Service Center.





West of Sandy River Rural Area Plan

Figure 9  
Rural Center Zoning Concept

- Orient Rural Community Zones
- Commercial and Industrial
- Public Facilities and Residential
- Pleasant Home Rural Service Center Zone



## **Current County Plan Policies and Strategies**

The following is an overview of the County's current policies and strategies for the Rural Center, as detailed in the County's Comprehensive Framework Plan.

Currently, the Orient Rural Center area is planned and zoned to permit few uses by right, mainly farming and associated uses and single-family residential uses. Policy 7 (Rural Center Island Area) of Multnomah County's Framework Plan describes local objectives for the Orient Rural Center. The purpose of the centers is to provide rural services for the residents and businesses located in the rural areas of the County. The intensity and types of uses must be appropriate to the character of the rural area. The policy relates primarily to uses that are permitted within the area, and to expansions of the area boundary.

Currently, suitable uses within the Rural Center are to be ensured by:

- Gauging the need of proposed uses with respect to the area's acknowledged purpose,
- Determining that sufficient land exists for the use,
- Establishing development standards, and
- Ensuring that natural resource areas are minimally impacted.

Expansions of the Rural Center area shall:

- Not include EFU land, unless it is the only land available,
- Not impact natural resources or rural residential areas,
- Be adjacent to current RC boundaries, and
- Not be primarily for new residential development.

Local strategies for achieving the Rural Center policies include the following:

- Low-density residential development and farm/forestry uses as primary uses
- Commercial and industrial uses as conditional uses or uses under prescribed conditions
- Address the standards that should apply when altering conditional uses, as well as standards for parking, landscaping and setbacks that are consistent with the character of Rural Centers
- Establish procedures for monitoring land availability and land absorption
- Update the Rural Centers study on at least a five-year schedule.

Based on analysis and discussions with State land use planning staff the Orient area is classified as a Rural Community and the Pleasant Home area is designated a Rural Service Center as defined by the State Unincorporated Communities Rule. A new zoning map and new zoning requirements (described in the Appendix) are created for the Orient area. The new zoning scheme for the Orient area meets all of the requirements of the State's Unincorporated Communities Rule. New policies and strategies are required for the Orient Rural Community and the Pleasant Home Rural Center.

## **NEW POLICIES AND STRATEGIES FOR THE RURAL CENTER AREA**

The following policies and strategies are intended to assist in development of ordinances to carry out the desires of the community within the standards set by law, including implementation of the Unincorporated Communities Rule. Some of these policies have significant implications on how the Orient Rural Community develops in the future.

### **Orient and Pleasant Home Rural Communities**

#### **Policy 21**

The County's policy is to plan for the Orient and Pleasant Home Rural Communities to provide for community development that is consistent with and implements the Community Vision. Key elements of



the vision are to maintain the rural character of the communities, to support the agricultural economy of the area, and to ensure that new non-agricultural businesses primarily support the needs of residents and tourism.

*Strategies:*

- 21.1 The County should adopt plan policies and ordinances that meet the state Unincorporated Community Rule codified as Oregon Administrative Rule OAR 660-022-0000 through 0070.
- Orient should be designated and planned as a Rural Community because it is composed primarily of residential uses.
  - Pleasant Home should be designated and planned as a Rural Service Center in order to allow the maximum flexibility in location of uses in the limited land area.
  - Revise the RC zoning ordinance to reflect the needs of the Pleasant Home community consistent with the Division 22 OAR for Unincorporated Communities.
- 21.2 Ensure that new or expanding uses minimize impacts to EFU zoned land that is adjacent to the RC zone by requiring “right to farm” measures to be implemented. These measures can be in the form of maintaining a larger setback between the new development and the zone boundary, and/or requiring recordation of a covenant that recognizes the rights of adjacent farm managers to farm their land.

*Commercial and Industrial Development*

*Policy 22*

New commercial and industrial uses within the Orient Rural Community will be small-scale and low impact in nature as defined by the State Unincorporated Communities Rule. These uses will not adversely impact agriculture or forestry uses and will reinforce the rural nature of the Orient Rural Community and the Pleasant Home Rural Service Center.

*Strategies:*

- 22.1 Multnomah County will update the Community Development Ordinance to implement the Unincorporated Communities Rule for small-scale, low impact commercial and industrial uses. Due to the proximity of the communities to the Urban Growth Boundary, the plan does not attempt to justify new uses that are larger than the small-scale, low impact limits in the Rule.
- Existing commercial uses may expand up to the small-scale, low impact limit of 4,000 square feet subject to approval criteria in the ordinance.
  - Expansion of existing industrial uses shall be subject to the small-scale, low impact limit of 10,000 square feet and to approval criteria in the ordinance.
- 22.2 Multnomah County will update its implementing regulations to ensure that new or expanded commercial and industrial development will not result in public health hazards or adverse environmental impacts.
- 22.3 Multnomah County will update its implementing regulations to ensure that new or expanded commercial and industrial development will not exceed the carrying capacity of the soil or of the existing water supply and waste disposal services.
- 22.4 Ensure that new and expanded commercial or industrial uses are subject to Design Review in order to ensure compatibility with the community character.

- 22.5 Develop zoning ordinance standards for lot coverage of commercial and industrial development that allow adequate development area while ensuring the rural character of these areas is retained.

### Residential Development

#### Policy 23

New residential development within the Orient Rural Community and the Pleasant Home Rural Service Center will not increase the number of dwellings that would be allowed in the community under the existing zoning ordinance, and will continue to reinforce the rural nature of the areas through the zoning code.

#### *Strategies:*

- 23.1 Multnomah County will update the zoning ordinance to implement the Unincorporated Communities Rule for residential development
- 23.2 Include provisions in the residential zone that allow for Type A home occupations outright, and Type B home occupations through an administrative review process and design review.
- 23.3 The zoning code for new residential parcels in the Rural Center will be at least one acre in order to not increase residential density and to ensure that the carrying capacity of public services and the environment is not exceeded.

### Design

#### Policy 24

Accommodate the changing conditions within the Orient Rural Community and the Pleasant Home Rural Service Center while preserving their rural function and appearance.

#### *Strategies:*

- 24.1 Multnomah County should develop and adopt design standards regulating commercial and industrial development which reflect and enhance the rural character of the Orient Rural Community.
- 24.2 Multnomah County should allow flexibility of setback and parking requirements to accommodate irregular lots and existing development to help preserve the rural character of the area.

### Protection of Views

#### Policy 25

Multnomah County should identify and help preserve critical viewsheds in the Orient Rural Community and Pleasant Home Rural Service Center and balance protection of scenic views with flexibility of use by property owners. The county should rely on education – i.e. providing information regarding identified viewsheds to property owners – rather than regulations to implement this policy.

### Transportation

#### Policy 26

Enhance all modes of travel in a manner consistent with the rural character of the Orient Rural Community and Pleasant Home Rural Service Center.



*Strategies:*

- 26.1 Provide pedestrian and bicycle access to schools, transit and commercial activities within the Orient Rural Community and Pleasant Home Rural Service Center, consistent with the rural character of the area.
- 26.2 Review the existing parking standard for schools to ensure sufficient parking is provided to meet demand.

*Preservation of the Night Sky*

*Policy 26*

In keeping with the rural nature of the Orient Rural Community and Pleasant Home Rural Service Center, Multnomah County will require lighting in these areas to be low intensity and designed in a manner that minimizes the amount of light pollution.

*Strategy:*

- 26.1 Multnomah County will update the Community Development Ordinance to insure that new development meets lighting standards that minimize the amount of light pollution in the Orient Rural Community and Pleasant Home Rural Service Center.