VISION STATEMENT

WORKING DRAFT
February 2014

Sponsored by the
Oregon 2050 Alliance
[Inside cover]

The Oregon 2050 Alliance is a group of like-minded organizations concerned about the future of Oregon and optimistic about the opportunities for taking concerted action that will make Oregon in 2050 a healthy, vibrant and resilient place. Alliance members include:

[to be filled in following first round endorsements]

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The Oregon 2050 Alliance is committed to action and engagement. See our Oregon 2050 Declaration @ [website to be developed]

You or your organization can become involved by contacting us at: [contact information and website to be developed]

This provisional Vision Statement has been prepared by the Oregon 2050 Organizing Committee. Members: Brian Campbell, FAICP; Arnold Cogan, FAICP; Alex Howard (OAPA); Jason Franklin, AICP; Gil Kelley, AICP; Carol Mayer-Reed, FASLA; Dave Siegel, FAICP; Erica Smith, (OAPA); Becky Steckler, AICP; Paddy Tillett, FAIA, FAICP; and Ellen Wyoming, (OAPA).
OREGON 2050
Healthy, Vibrant and Resilient

For half a century, Oregon has embarked on a path unique in the nation. By being deliberate about our focus on livability and actively planning for our future, we have achieved great things: we have saved farms and forestlands, contained urban sprawl, enhanced the walkability and desirability of our neighborhoods, lowered our “carbon footprint” compared with other regions, and fostered a diverse economy. The early aspirations for a better future born forty years ago – the Bottle Bill, the Beach Bill, and the State-wide Land Use Planning Bill – sparked a movement around livability that caught on and continue to guide us and provide us with the confidence to continue down the livability path.

Today, many of the challenges articulated a half century ago are still with us, although they have taken new forms and new trends have emerged. The threats and opportunities associated with accelerating climate change, an increasingly globalized economy, a widening gap between rich and poor, new threats to public health and waning trust in the capacity of government to deliver adequate public services are substantial. This requires us to get active and seize the future once again.

Despite these challenges Oregonians have a strength of spirit, a willingness to innovate and a love of place. OREGON 2050 aims to build on this spirit, take stock of today’s issues and engage a new generation of Oregonians to create a Vision for Oregon for the next 40 years. Oregonians from all parts of the State and from all walks of life need to weigh in on the future.

Join us! Let’s be intentional about shaping our future, once again. Together we can:

• Be more energy efficient and address the climate change challenge
• Widen our economic base to encourage more business innovation and provide access to jobs for more people
• Assure that we are an inclusive society with benefits and opportunities shared by all
• Make our communities more walkable, friendly, healthy, enjoyable and vibrant
• Connect the people of Oregon in new and better ways that will improve our economy, protect the environment and make for better informed decision-making

Join the OREGON 2050 movement!
The State of our State

[This page: a snapshot of who we are and what issues confront us (quantitatively); quick highlights that note significant and relevant changes between 1970/73 and now; a descriptive label/caption for each highlight. Quick snapshot not a dry compendium of statistics. Graphics? Sprinkle in a few "fun facts", e.g. bicycle ridership, wine/specialty food produced, working from home rates; % alternative energy production, etc.]

Oregon’s population is growing - and urbanizing

- Population in 1970, 2010 and 2050 (projected)
- Our population increasing lives in urban areas
- Under the State Land Use laws, cities have been using land and infrastructure more efficiently (LCDC data supports this) and demographic research indicates the bulk of future demand supports this.

Oregon’s economy is diversifying and continues to rely on small business

- Agricultural and (traditional) manufacturing sectors vs. service and high tech mfg. as a portion of GDP or employment
- Percent employed in small business (10 employees or less)
- Growth in patents and/or venture capital; growth in university research capacity

Oregon’s communities are increasingly ethnically diverse. We also have a growing income gap between rich and poor and relatively poor educational attainment rates, especially in communities that are struggling economically.

- Growth in Hispanic and Asian population; increase in "foreign born" or non-English speaking population
- Median family income vs. cost of home ownership (over time)
- High school graduation rates (over time)
- Time to successful/fulltime employment for college graduates

Challenges to human and environmental health persist for communities and ecosystems throughout the State

- Greenhouse gas emission trends
- Increase in childhood obesity rates
- Fish population or stream health statistics

Oregonians continue to rely on public goods and services for our health and well-being but public finances and trust in government have been eroding

- Results of recent Davis, Hibbits &Midghall Oregon Values & Beliefs survey re: investing in quality of life elements (high) vs. trust in government (low)
- Some indicator of the size of the “public economy”
Taking the Initiative

[This page and the next: photographs and images (with brief captions) of positive, on the ground activities from around the State that are making a difference and pointing the way to the future. Activities in cities and small towns, rural areas and agricultural/forestry operations.]

Possible images and captions for:

- Main streets
- Waterfront parks/redevelopment
- New public library, neighborhood school or college library building
- Watershed health activities
- Specialty food/spirits production (using Oregon produce)
- Community health initiative
- High tech expansion w/employment/training commitment
- Sustainable agriculture demonstration
- Farm to table/farm to school
- Wind or wave turbine (?)
- Local cross-cultural initiative(s) - urban and rural

In defining the project or activity, the captions could also convey two important themes of this document:

- the connection between public policy and local initiative, and
- the power of partnerships.
Challenges

[This page: These challenges are distinct from the global trends presented in the earlier “State of Our State” section – this page gets closer to the ground by describing typical obstacles to action and engagement and sets up the need for institutional change and creating a “movement”.

Keep to four or five typical obstacles, such as:

- Lack of traditional public finance for common goods – the need to reinvent means and to leverage/partner

- Changing methods of disseminating/receiving information and getting engaged – does a traditional “town hall” meeting still work? (digital media and diverse population)

- Political gridlock and special interests, compounded by decline in reporting on in-depth issues, short media attention span

- Lack of basic knowledge of “civics” (no longer taught in schools) – unfamiliarity with deliberate processes for collective action

Illustrate these with examples.
A Vision for Oregon in 2050

The 2050 Vision begins with five key goals – essential qualities that will define Oregon in the future. These goals will help guide actions to make sure those desired qualities are realized. [Edit to fit one 1 page or use 2 pages, with icons or signature images.]

GOALS

1. Reduce climate change vulnerability and enhance natural system health

Global climate change may be the overriding issue of our time. We must reduce its potential effects and prepare our communities for those effects that are now unavoidable. Similarly, maintaining the health of our underlying natural systems and water quality is critical to our long-term survival. While aggressive measures need to be taken, it is possible to accomplish them with great benefit to the economy and our livability.

2. Progress toward a productive, inclusive and sustainable economy

The Northwest is blessed with natural resources, skilled workers, strong trade relationships and a tradition of innovation and entrepreneurship, which form the foundation for economic revitalization. To be truly healthy and resilient, however, our economy must continue to invest in education and innovation, and provide real opportunity for all, not just the more affluent. Increasing exports while nurturing local production for local consumption and employment is key, as is bridging the urban-rural divide. Public, private and non-profit sectors all play important roles in the effort to achieve this outcome; none can do it alone.

3. Extend efforts to create a healthy, informed and equitable society

The increasing rates of obesity and asthma, rural poverty, rising costs of health care, housing and transportation, and inadequate educational attainment by much of the population all threaten our region’s livability. As Oregon’s population becomes more diverse as people immigrate here from other regions and parts of the world, our communities will be most productive and vibrant if we focus our efforts to optimize public health, restore the robustness of public education and provide access to the opportunities and benefits of society for all people.

4. Renew and deepen efforts to make vibrant cities and towns

Our cities and towns are where it all comes together – innovation and learning, economic activity, social and civic interaction, recreation and everyday living. To ensure our communities perform well in all of these ways and for all residents, our cities and towns should be designed and developed to encourage walking, gathering, mixing cultures, expressing art and learning, making the connection with nature and providing space for (and celebrating) urban commerce and rural production. Focusing on great communities will also help achieve the first three goals.

5. Reinvigorate and reshape our systems for increasing civic engagement and cultivating leadership and effective governance
Growing dissatisfaction with major institutions (governments, big business, news media, etc.), and generational and technological changes mean that keeping our Northwest values alive and fresh requires rethinking our institutions and our means of communicating and engaging one another on societal issues. The good news is people really care about the livability of the Northwest, maybe more than ever. Let's take advantage of this sentiment and find ways to involve as many people as possible in making constructive institutional changes, including how we provide efficient, valued services to the public in the present, while also providing the means for investing in the future needs of our communities and region.

**PRINCIPLES**

The Goals above describe where we want to go. But how do we get there? Long-term policy and institutional change is difficult. These principles provide some of the essential tools about how to frame and guide our actions, whether they are at the local, regional or state level.

[These principles – to be further articulated - involve:
• Science based/systems thinking
• Willingness to risk and innovate (and learn from it)
• Collaboration, partnership and engagement
• Designing for multi-objective outcomes
• Short-term actions leading to longer term goals]

**MOVING FORWARD**

(Perhaps move this section to “Growing a Movement” on p. 13 or retain, rework and re-label this section "Strategies")

An Oregon 2050 Alliance is being formed among allied interest groups to promote this Vision and to motivate action. The Oregon 2050 Alliance welcomes discussion and refinement of the Vision and would also particularly like to broaden the network and engage others in Action. See our provisional list of Opportunities for Action on the following pages. Alliance members will:

• Endorse the Provisional Vision and Goals (comments and additions welcome)
• Commit to taking action (either through an existing program or from the following Opportunities for Action list) that is instrumental in moving a community, region or the state toward these Goals.
• Assign an organization board member or executive to the Alliance Coordinating Committee. The exact form of the obligation would be determined by the Coordinating Committee itself, but would include facilitating collaboration among Alliance members, and helping forge partnerships for specific actions across a wider group of organizations.
• Longer range tasks may include things like helping create strategies for change, including development of communications tools for a “campaign to move the public will”.

We hope the Alliance will become the spark of a much broader, intergenerational, State-wide movement. (See “Growing a Movement” near the end of this document.)
Opportunities for Action
Enhancing livability, prosperity and sustainability in Oregon

To succeed in shaping Oregon’s future livability, the Oregon 2050 Goals must be put into action. Here are 21 initial areas of action that represent opportunities to work across disciplines, interests and geographies to realize the five major Goals. Each action area cross-references (in parentheses) other action areas that are especially related – dialogue between groups working on related actions can build momentum and effectiveness. Groups are encouraged to think about: potential partners, specific action steps - including short term actions that will “get the ball rolling” - and opportunities to inform, educate and engage a wider audience. The following list is divided into 3 categories: landscape scale (state or regional) issues; community scale issues; and opportunities for how we keep pace with change, engage people and make decisions. Oregon 2050 Alliance members and other participants should fill out these action areas, suggest new ones or adapt actions that are already underway to ensure they are well configured to make progress toward the Goals.

Landscape scale actions:

1.  **Prioritize Energy Efficiency and Shift to Renewables** (see also: 3, 6, 8, and 21)

   Buildings and transportation offer the greatest opportunities to reduce energy use and air pollution. Create a mix regulations and incentives that will maximize energy efficiency and promote sustainable low-carbon energy generation, including some amount of local/decentralized sources.

2. **Produce and Buy Local – Sell Global** (see also: 3, 7, 21)

   Substituting local production for importing food and products for local consumption keeps jobs in the region and reduces transportation costs. Also, by completing value-adding manufacturing processes locally (fine furniture making v exporting timber) for national and global distribution can create local wealth and employment. Balanced economic development should be our objective.

3. **Enhance the Urban-Rural Connection** (2, 14, 17)

   Oregon will benefit from exploiting and enhancing urban-rural connections – including growing the farm-to-table economy, increasing local tourism, and providing training, education and research. The interdependence of urban and rural economies can be accommodated to through targeted transportation, infrastructure and recreation investments, as well as through business-to-business activity. Recognition of this interdependence should be evident in policy decisions affecting each.

4. **Maintain Healthy Working Lands and Waters** (3, 14, 17)

   Stewardship of working lands and waterways is essential to balanced and sustainable use of resources. Food, forests, wildlife and manufacturing all depend on these.
5. **Safeguard the Health of Natural Systems** (2, 3)

Salmon and owls are indicative of the health of rivers and forests; where they flourish, we know that a balance between man and nature exists. Redefine the indicators of a successful urban environment in balance with the diverse needs of its occupants and with nature.

6. **Expand Regional Transportation Options** (11)

We need to be able to look holistically at the efficient movement of people and goods to improve on the inefficiencies of today’s segregated systems. Consider the potential of little-used modes such as higher speed rail, better intermodal connections and active transportation modes.

7. **Create an Inter-Connected Regional Open Space System** (3, 7 and 19)

Design roads and other infrastructure to minimize barriers to walking and bicycling connectivity and wildlife movements across changing landscapes. Recognize the inter-dependence of man-made and natural systems and spaces. Implement connections through coordinated local actions.

**Community-scale actions:**

8. **Promote District Energy Systems** (1, 5, 9, 15, 16, 19)

Localized generation and exchange of heating and cooling surpluses within a district can produce net savings in energy use as well as reducing generation and transmission costs. Base permits on district efficiencies, not just individual building efficiency standards. Evaluate on life-cycle cost, not initial cost.

9. **Create Walkable Neighborhoods** (10, 11, 12)

Walkable neighborhoods are safe, convenient and pleasant urban environments in which one can walk to dozens of destinations. Walkable neighborhoods are conducive to a healthy, low impact lifestyle giving independence to youth and elders. Consider policies and actions that will improve the walkability of neighborhoods.

10. **Restore a Balance of Uses to High Traffic Streets** (1, 9, 11, 12, 15)

Most of the roads and highways built in the past 75 years were designed with the narrow focus of moving vehicles efficiently. In the larger purview of natural systems and livability, they often create barriers or otherwise curtail the balance of uses and activities. Transform these high traffic streets into complete streets that are equitable and can be functionally integrated with the communities that they serve.
11. **Restore Urban Waterfronts for People and Nature** (10, 13)

Waterfronts provide contrast and respite to an urban environment through sight and sound. Many urban waterways that served as sources of transportation and industry are now underused and isolated from centers of growth. Reconnect and revitalize urban waterfronts to benefit from their potential to enrich urban lives and restore the balance and visible interface between man and nature.

12. **Build Town Squares and Gathering Places** (3, 4, 9, 12, 13)

Urban public spaces should include a range of places, parks and plazas of complementary sizes and purposes to accommodate a wide variety of social interactions. Each should offer different opportunities: some active, some passive, some indeterminate.

13. **Address the Realities of Poverty in Cities and Towns** (1, 2, 6, 8, 17, 19, 21)

Cities should serve the poor as well as the more affluent. Affordability involves much more than housing costs: travel, healthcare, access to education and all the other necessities of life are part of the equation. Ideas and actions for affordable living are needed.

14. **Sustain Nature in the City** (4, 5, 7, 11)

A fundamental need for people to relate to the natural world (biophilia) is increasingly recognized as a necessary part of civilized living. Nature’s important role can be coincident with the natural corridors network.

15. **Turn Gray to Green Infrastructure** (8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 21)

Engineered infrastructure often favors certain human needs at the expense of natural systems. The natural environment can often provide low impact alternative solutions: storm water detention by forests, and micro-climatic control by urban tree canopies, for example. We should broaden the scope of infrastructure design to include natural systems and avoid negative collateral outcomes.

16. **Make Communities More Resilient** (8, 9, 14)

There is strong evidence of an increase in extreme weather events, and of a net rise in sea levels. Also, major seismic events and tsunamis are probable. We should identify and implement practical and ecologically responsible steps to limit catastrophic damage to vulnerable communities on coasts and waterways.

Actions aimed at improving the way we engage people and make decisions:

17. **Keep Pace with Social and Cultural Change** (2, 3, 6, 9, 13, 16)

Our society is constantly changing in ethnicity and age demographics, abilities and cultural values. We evidently lack the ability as an organized society to keep pace with these changes. Through planning and design we must become more sensitive to these changes and more agile in our accommodation of them.
18. Sustain Livability by Adapting to Change (17, 19, 20, 21)

Livability describes a collection of values as evidenced in the physical environment and these change with demographics, personal values, technology, climate and many other factors. In order to sustain the quality of our lives we must understand the dynamics of each system with enough precision to make valid decisions for the future.

19. Match Decision-Making Structures to the Areas Affected (1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 13, 18)

Jurisdictional boundaries rarely coincide with functional boundaries such as watersheds. Redefine the purview of regional land use decisions to include all relevant factors regardless of boundaries, reconciling conclusions with local conditions. Translate into actions.

20. Communicate Effectively with All Citizens (2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 13, 16)

Given the exponential proliferation of information over the Internet, it is critically important to discover how to use technology to conduct better research, inform citizens and actively engage community members at every level of society in decision-making.

21. Allocate Public Monies Strategically (all)

Taxation and decision-making systems have become so complex that the simple premise of matching taxes to investments that we agree should be publicly shared has been lost. A return to strategic and equitable public investments is overdue. Such investment in urban infrastructure that is in balance with nature will provide the greatest return on investment and preserve our livability.
Growing a Movement

[This page: Short introductory text about how this initiative began and who the Alliance is, plus a statement about our belief that a broad-scale/bottom-up movement is needed to make the kinds of institutional changes that are need to keep Oregon healthy, vibrant and resilient into the future. This would be followed by two annotated graphics:

1. A diagram of the *arc of engagement*, from previous discussions; this shows expanding the circle of those engaged while moving from *Vision* to *Action*.

2. Our 2-year timeline to grow the Alliance and move to action with an initial focus on the 2015 legislative session.

Finally, this page will restate contact information and give tips about how to initiate and share actions.]
Resources

[This final page will list groups, activities and publications/sites that help individuals and groups get into the actions, flesh them out and get started. It also acknowledges that there are many groups already working on good things. The future Oregon 2050 website can be listed first to serve as a portal/cooordination point.]