

PATHWAYS TO PLANNING

A FIELD GUIDE FOR LONG RANGE PLANNING





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Why the Field Guide

In 2017, the Monroe Planning Commission decided to update its Comprehensive Plan, last amended in 1986. As the city continues to adapt to changing demographics and regional dynamics, the need for an updated plan becomes increasingly more urgent. The updated Monroe Comprehensive Plan will be a document that synthesizes the vision of Monroe residents with concurrent planning efforts, meets local and statewide planning goals and regulations, and ultimately serves as a guide for future land use decisions.

In addition to the comprehensive plan update, the City is currently undertaking a number of new plans and projects aimed at aligning growth and opportunity with its community vision, "Monroe Tomorrow," which was adopted in 2018. These include an ecosystem restoration project with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and a riverside district master plan with the Oregon Department of Transportation.

Considering the breadth of these efforts, and prioritizing the comprehensive plan update, the City's Community Development Director reached out to Portland State University Master of Urban & Regional Planning students for additional capacity and planning expertise.

Constellation Planning Process

The project team, known as Constellation Planning, used the existing "Monroe Tomorrow" vision as a foundation for deeper dialogue around housing, economic development, communication, and planning capacity.

By building off of the established vision, Constellation Planning crafted an engagement strategy seeking to incorporate previously uncaptured voices and perspectives. The goal of the strategy was to exercise a learning-by-doing approach for planning that sought to utilize best practices for equitable engagement.

Technical Components: Buildable Lands Inventory, Housing Needs Analysis, and Economic Assessment

In developing the Field Guide alongside these technical documents, Constellation Planning sought to collaborate with the public in identifying alternatives and preferred solutions. Data collection and analyses conducted for these technical components served as a basis for community conversations around housing and economic development. Community engagement findings informed recommendations and strategies outlined in these documents.

Creating the Field Guide

The Field Guide is designed to be an interactive resource for long range planning processes in Monroe, and a reference for similar-sized rural communities in Oregon with limited dedicated planning capacity. The Field Guide and associated appendices and worksheets are therefore intended for a wide, diverse audience, including community members, Planning Commission, city staff, and planning partners and consultants.



CONSTELLATION PLANNING

A group of six graduate students known as Constellation Planning worked in parallel with the City of Monroe’s Planning Commission to create this Field Guide in 2019. The team incorporated best practices with gathered community perspectives to identify opportunities and generate relevant resources and tools. Look for Notes from the Field throughout the document for insight into the team’s process.

The Constellation Planning team consists of six graduate students:

- Sally Bernstein
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- Rhey Haggerty
- Theresa Huang
- Emily Scott



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Constellation Planning would first like to thank the community of Monroe.

From the city, we would like to thank Taylor Evans, Rick Hohnbaum, and the Planning Commission for their ongoing guidance and support.

This project wouldn’t have been possible without community partners, including the Benton County Health Clinic Navigators, Amigos de Monroe, Strengthening Rural Families, the Monroe Grade School, the Long Tom Watershed Council, and countless others who shared their time and perspective with us.

We would also like to thank Dr. Marisa Zapata, Deborah Stein, Dr. Sy Adler, Dr. Matthew Gebhardt, Edward Sullivan, Dr. Megan Horst, Aaron Ray, Beth Goodman, Robert Hastings, Sadie Carney, Charlie Mitchell, Patrick Wingard, Mari Valencia, Nick Chun, Michael Held, Jerry Sorte, Jamaal Green, Jean Paul Botto, and Joshua Ollinger, who provided us with ideas, advice, feedback, and help over the course of six months.

Constellation Planning incorporated key learnings from the curriculum taught in our time as students at the Nohad A. Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning at Portland State University throughout the Field Guide, in the Resource Summaries, and 101 supplemental documents. We are grateful to the faculty for providing us with the tools as students to develop these materials.



All photos taken by Constellation Planning, unless otherwise noted.

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WELCOME TO THE FIELD GUIDE!

This Field Guide is designed as a resource for long range planning in Monroe, Oregon. Planning is not a linear process. It is iterative, and plans come in all shapes and sizes - the purpose, the need, the problem being solved, and the time frame during which the plan will unfold all differ.

It is the intention of this Field Guide to address a spectrum of needs, challenges, and goals by integrating best practices common to long range planning into specific opportunities for Monroe. This Field Guide was created to demystify the long range planning process, with an emphasis on how to creatively build inclusive processes and craft accountable, measurable, and actionable goals and policies for Monroe.

This Field Guide is for YOU



Community Members

As an introduction for anyone interested in getting more involved or learning about planning in Monroe!



Planning Commission

As an onboarding or study tool for new and existing members of the Planning Commission to better understand available resources, best practices, and the Monroe context.



City Staff

As a resource and guide for staff who are directly or indirectly responsible for supporting and implementing planning projects in Monroe.



Partners and Consultants

As a launching point for regional partners and consultants working with the Monroe community.

HOW TO USE THE FIELD GUIDE

Opportunities

Opportunities are specific recommendations for long range planning processes in Monroe. These were identified through exploring potential needs, and are heavily influenced and inspired by varied types of community engagement in Monroe. These capture the big ideas shaped by the Monroe community and represent opportunities to grow and sustain the long range planning process in Monroe.

Resource Summaries

Look for **Resource Summaries** which provide tools, models, and other tangible sources to guide long range planning processes. They will help cover the bases throughout the planning process to ensure accurate information and instruments are being used.

Worksheets

As you read the Field Guide, look for references to worksheets. The **Worksheet** section that follows the Appendix has reusable tools and templates for carrying out long range planning processes.

Educational Manuals

There are **educational manuals, or 101s**, in the Appendix. These "how-to" guides provide more detailed information about three important components of long range planning in Monroe - planning in the Oregon context, conducting community engagement, and writing goals and policies.

Symbol Keys



Notes from the Field

These symbols capture reflections and considerations for Monroe that Constellation Planning gathered throughout the team's time working with the community.



Community Voices

Ear symbols represent community feedback heard from various stakeholders in Monroe. The feedback has been used to identify opportunities.



PREPARING

Preparing for planning in Monroe starts with learning about the community's history, people, partners, and resources. Identifying the actors involved, community members and regional partners that can help, and sources for funding can ensure that each phase of a plan—from engagement to action—is the best that it can be.

OPPORTUNITIES

Stay connected with your DLCD representative.

Monroe's Department of Land Conservation and Development representative can connect the city with potential resources as they become available and support Monroe to ensure that the Oregon state legal requirements are met.

Work closely with community leaders.

Many individuals and groups, both organized and informal, exist in and around Monroe that support plan engagement and implementation. Partnering with environmental stewards, community organizations, and regional entities to develop communications strategies will provide a pathway for reaching diverse networks and engage a broader audience.

Include non-traditional planning actors.

Non-traditional planning actors can provide a unique perspective. Holding a role for a youth member of the planning commission is a great opportunity to keep youth involved in the planning process. A youth perspective can add value by providing innovative ideas and assisting the city with youth engagement initiatives.

Designate Planning Commission to act as Citizen Involvement Committee (CIC).

To grow planning capacity in Monroe, designate Planning Commission to act as the city's CIC. Expand the opportunity for CIC membership to the larger Monroe community in order to increase diversity of perspectives and improve communication between the city and its residents.

Be grant ready!

Monroe can be prepared for opportunities to bring in funding for long range planning by keeping current city data on hand. The city can use this data with community insights to tell a strong story about the community and its needs. Completing preliminary tasks—like maintaining an inventory of funders and tracking grant deadlines—will allow for more time to write strong, clear, and concise proposals and applications.

THIS IS MONROE!

Monroe has a rich political and social history, which directly informs current economic characteristics, demographic trends, and community needs. Monroe's place in time and location affects political, cultural, and geographical dynamics, which impact planning capacity and planning processes.

What is the history of Monroe?

What is now known as South Benton County was once home to the indigenous Kalapuyan tribes, thirteen related hunter-gatherer groups now members of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon¹. Following the genocide and forced relocation of the Kalapuya population, the area transitioned to an agricultural and industrial community for settlers seeking land.

Monroe is located along major transportation routes, such as the Applegate Trail and later Highway 99-West, which played key roles in the early settlement of the Willamette Valley in the 1840's². Its strategic location along the Long Tom River established the town early on as a central trading point between the larger towns of Eugene and Corvallis.

The Long Tom River and nearby forests provided early settlers with resources, establishing the town's permanence. The Hull-Oakes Lumber Mill, believed to be the country's last operating steam powered saw mill, operated three mills in the Monroe area during its peak production. Today, Hull-Oakes remains one of the few mills capable of processing 85-foot timber, and is a registered place on the National Historic Registry³.



Image by: pregonencyclopedia.org

The Willamette Valley is one of Oregon's most important agricultural landscapes, due to the temperate climate, fertile soils, and access to water. Since the 1930's, the prairie valley lands surrounding Monroe have predominantly been used for seed crops, like grass-seed, which cover over 56% of valley agriculture lands in the Benton & Linn County area⁴. Wine grapes, christmas trees, organic produce, and sheep and cattle production also contribute to Monroe's regional agricultural economy.

A railroad station was built in the town in 1913, offering regular passenger service between Eugene and Corvallis, allowing for the transportation of products along the length of the Willamette Valley⁵.

The rails were eventually removed. This former station now houses the Monroe Community Library, a symbol of Monroe's historical significance in Benton County. The library is one of various important educational centers that serve the surrounding community, as the city is

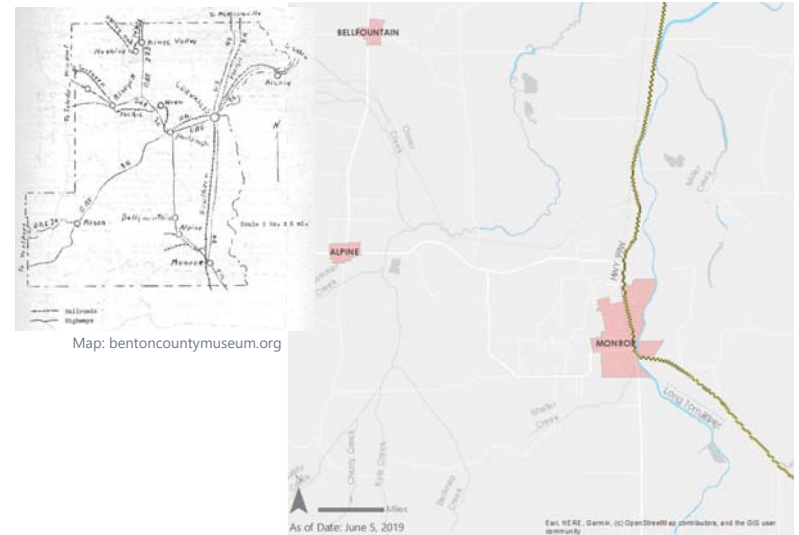


Image by: Benton County Historical Museum

also home to the Monroe Grade and High Schools.

The unique factors—fertile land, vacant industrial infrastructure, access to major transportation routes, shifting economic trends and demographics, educational centers, and proximity to nearby mid-sized cities known for large universities—all contribute to the existing conditions of the City of Monroe.

Monroe is a community at a crossroads—currently working to achieve a vision that honors its past, while planning for the future.



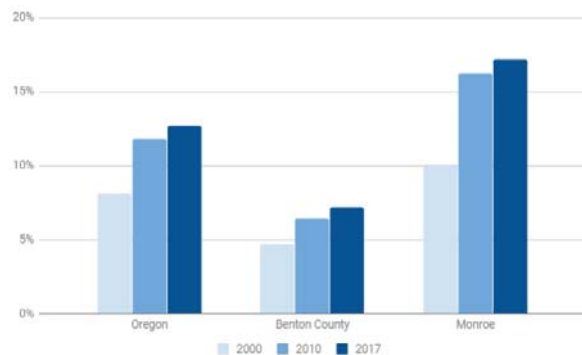
Map: bentoncountymuseum.org

Who lives in Monroe now?

The population of Monroe has grown from 191 people in 1920—the year of the first census in the newly incorporated city—to 625 people in 2018⁶. During the next 50 years, the population is forecasted to exceed 700 people by the year 2067.

This population increase can be largely attributed to the growing Hispanic/Latino population in Monroe. Compared to Benton County and Oregon statewide, the percent share of Hispanic/Latino residents has been increasing rapidly and now makes up almost 20% of the city's total population (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Percent Share of Hispanic/Latinx Population, Monroe, Benton County, Oregon (2000, 2010, 2017)



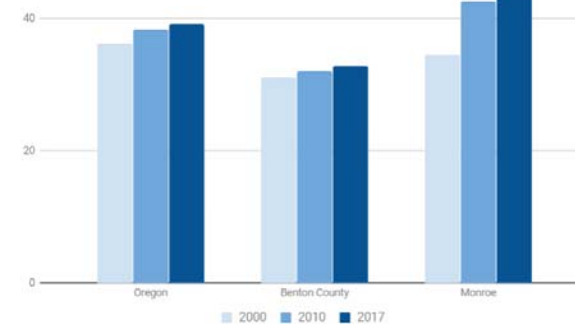
Sources: Census Bureau Decennial Census (2000 & 2010), American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2013-2017).



Demographic trends informed the development of an equity commitment, which was used to lead community engagement and communications. See the [Equity Lens and Commitment Worksheet](#) to write your own.

Despite the large youth population served by the Monroe Public School District, the population of Monroe is aging. Median age in Monroe is higher than both Benton County and Oregon, and it has been increasing more rapidly in recent years (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Median Age, Monroe, Benton County, Oregon (2000, 2010, 2017)



Sources: Census Bureau Decennial Census (2000 & 2010), American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2013-2017).

Identifying Monroe's key demographic characteristics and trends is essential to understanding community needs. By anticipating demographic change, Monroe can ensure that planning efforts provide the particular land uses, amenities, and services that the community needs.



Important facts, data, and insights about Monroe are included in the supplemental technical documents of this Field Guide. These include the Buildable Lands Inventory, Housing Needs Analysis, and Economic Assessment.

Who is part of the planning process?



Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is led by seven volunteer community members. The commission is responsible for writing long range plans, like the comprehensive plan, and assisting in development approvals. The Planning Commission is a critical connection between planning processes and the community at large.



In interviews and at events, individuals emphasized the social capital Monroe has to offer. The conversation at the community roundtable event highlighted the interest in reinvesting in Monroe through grassroots efforts.



Planner on Staff

There is one part-time planner on staff from the Benton County Community Development department. This individual serves as an important connection to county and regional planning efforts, fulfills technical needs for the City, weighs in on discretionary land use decisions like zoning, and assists with overseeing plan implementation.



Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) Coordinators

Monroe utilizes the RARE program, hosted by the Institute for Policy Research and Engagement at the University of Oregon. Typically, this position has served as Community Development Director and has managed planning processes both short and long term. The RARE program is a unique opportunity for Monroe, as the role helps to fill both technical and administrative planning capacity needs.



City Administrator

Monroe employs a City Administrator to help lead the overall direction of city planning. The City Administrator serves as a liaison to other levels of jurisdictions involved in the planning process, including the county, region, and state. This role supports the Planning Commission, and supervises other city staff. The City Administrator also works with and maintains relationships with local community members, businesses, and organizations.



"Citizen" is a term that is limited in its scope, as many residents in Monroe affected by a plan's outcomes may not all be citizens. Using the word "community" or "residents" is a recommended replacement.



City Council

Council members are the elected policy makers for Monroe and serve as the DLC-required Committee for Citizens Involvement Committee (CIC). They also provide policy-making guidelines for the City Administrator. Council Members meet periodically to review and determine major policy decisions for city improvements.



Community Members!

Community members plug into the planning process through various engagement activities and committees. Monroe's existing committees focused on planning efforts include: Business Association of Monroe (BAM), Planning Commission, and the Vision & Revitalization Committee.



"Everybody has something to give."

"Value what's already here, work with that, and make it grow."

- Community Roundtable participants

PARTNERS



"Monroe is pivotal right now with its growth, and its citizen drive, its staffing resources and time are constrained."

- Benton County Parks representative

Partnerships are key to successful long range planning. Building partnerships can bolster available resources, ensure that wider and diverse perspectives are included in planning processes, and build stronger relationships locally.

Understanding the staffing limitations that smaller cities like Monroe face, it is important to recognize potential gaps, or unfilled planning roles, when crafting a plan. Many of these gaps can be addressed through partnership.

What partnerships are essential to the planning process?

Council of Governments (COG)

The City of Monroe and Benton County are both member agencies in the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG). COGs are organizations that manage a variety of local, state, and federal programs that support local governments and communities by providing programmatic and technical assistance.



"[The] Council of Governments has a working relationship with the City of Monroe...anytime they want to request time related to long range planning."

- Council of Governments representative

Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO)

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the urban areas surrounding Corvallis, CAMPO plays a coordinating role for transportation efforts, working closely with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). They manage the regional transportation plans, as well as the local Safe Routes to School programs.

Benton County

Currently, Benton County has a regional planner that works part time to assist with planning capacity. The County has access to a wide array of resources and data (including Geographic Information Systems (GIS) spatial data) with a vested interest in the success of Monroe's long range planning efforts. The County can help integrate regional approaches to implementation and provide stability when planning capacity or staffing gaps may occur.

Benton County Health Department plays a critical role in Monroe as well, as it is the only health service provider within the city. It offers a range of services in both English and Spanish.



"Link into the South Benton Community Advisory Group... they are involved and want to be plugged into Monroe."

- Benton County Planning representative

Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), the State of Oregon

DLCD is a state agency working in partnership with local, state, and federal government agencies to address planning needs. DLCD provides policy guidance and technical assistance to help cities plan for their future. Currently, there is a DLCD representative who is responsible for working with the City of Monroe. Some programs and resources they provide that apply to Monroe include:

1. Climate Change Planning
2. Comprehensive Plan Updates
3. Farm & Forest Lands Protection
4. Measure 49 (technical assistance)
5. Natural Hazards Resiliency Planning
6. Natural Resources and Renewable Energy
7. Rural Planning
8. Transportation and Growth Management (TGM)
9. Urban Planning

DLCD is also tasked with making sure all long range plans are compliant with the 19 Statewide Planning Goals.



In Monroe, the OCWCOG provided technical support to the Planning Commission in completing the land use chapter of their 2040 Comprehensive Plan.



Meeting these legal requirements is a challenge even for trained professionals. Navigating the statutes is overwhelming.

Below are the 19 Statewide Planning Goals. Not all of them apply to Monroe. The ones that do not are italicized below in blue:

Oregon Statewide Planning Goals

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Citizen Involvement | 11 Public Facilities and Services |
| 2 Land Use Planning | 12 Transportation |
| 3 <i>Agricultural Lands</i> | 13 Energy Conservation |
| 4 <i>Forest Lands</i> | 14 Urbanization |
| Natural Resources, Scenic and Historic Areas, and Open Spaces | 15 <i>Willamette River Greenway</i> |
| 6 Air, Water, and Land Resources Quality | 16 <i>Estuarine Resources</i> |
| 7 Areas Subject to Natural Hazards | 17 <i>Coastal Shorelands</i> |
| 8 Recreational Needs | 18 <i>Beaches and Dunes</i> |
| 9 Economic Development | 19 <i>Ocean Resources</i> |
| 10 Housing | |

Simply noting which goals don't apply is enough to meet state requirements.

Use the **Stakeholder Mapping Worksheet** to help identify additional planning partners.

Who else can help plan in Monroe?

Schools

The Monroe School District represents a significant opportunity for community-based leadership. Every day Monroe welcomes over 400 youth, faculty, and staff from around South Benton County at the schools. From teachers to parents to the students themselves, there is great potential to foster sustained leadership and community buy-in for planning processes. Leadership within the School District include principals, vice principals, teachers, parent-teacher group presidents, and athletic team coaches.



"The high school is a big hub for the community between events and productions."

- Monroe High School Administrator

Youth

Recognizing the link between the City of Monroe and the Monroe School District, youth leaders have the potential to play leadership roles and to contribute to a more inclusive and equitable planning process. Monroe's population is aging, and the city currently lacks ample opportunities for younger generations to grow up and stay close to home. Including young people in the planning process directly exercises the classic adage that "children are the future."



In a survey conducted during two 8th grade class sessions 14 out of the 30 students selected "Yes" that they would like "to learn more about the city's work and ways youth could get involved."



A participant at the community roundtable suggested that adding skill-based youth programming that allows kids to learn skills that translate into family businesses, like agriculture, can help ensure younger generations have the opportunity to stay in Monroe.

Environmental stewards

Because of the importance and prominence of Monroe's agricultural landscape, and because the Long Tom River runs through Monroe, it is essential to collaborate with environmental organizations working on stewardship and public access. Organizations such as the Long Tom Watershed Council (LTWC), South Benton Recreation Alliance, Sharing Garden's, and Lilliputopia Permaculture Farm all play a role in stewardship of these resources. These organizations hold educational and outreach events around Monroe on watershed and land stewardship.



Not all of the potential partners were reached during the Constellation Planning team's process. Some missed opportunities included connecting with the senior/aging individuals, youth at the high school, and conducting door to door surveys.

Amigos de Monroe and Health Navigators

Considering that the Latino population is growing in Monroe, it is essential to build pathways for engagement for them to be represented. The Amigos de Monroe group is facilitated by the Monroe Health Clinic Navigators from Benton County Health Services, providing access to resources to the Latino community. It is cultivating a strong support network and emerging leadership within the Latino community, and can support in the planning commission's goal of engagement with this demographic.



"We would love to engage with events to get to know other people in the community. They can both invite us to events and also can come to ours more."

- Amigos de Monroe participant

FUNDING

It's important to know what funding opportunities are available before Monroe needs funding. Keeping an inventory of existing opportunities will help Monroe be ready to apply for grants when they become available, and to understand potential funding when designing and budgeting for a project or program.

How do we start looking for funding?

Technical assistance grants

Technical assistance grants build internal capacity for an organization by providing the resources needed to hire a consultant or acquire external expertise for a project. Projects often funded under technical assistance grants for comprehensive planning include: Buildable Land Inventories, Housing Needs Analyses, and Economic Opportunities Analyses. Technical assistance grants can also be sought after for: demographic studies, natural resource preservation plans, transportation plans, and land use analyses.

Implementation grants

Implementation grants provide funding for implementing development plans highlighted in a city's comprehensive plan. These grants are awarded *after* the comprehensive plan is complete and the city has moved into the implementation phase.



"The best source of grants is DLCD. They have Technical Assistance grants. This last year they also had additional funding for Housing Needs Analysis. Monroe should be talking to their DLCD field representative...about grant opportunities."

- Economic Consultant

Resources Summary

Beginning with an inventory of existing plans and funding opportunities can support planning in Monroe. It is also important to know what data and information are needed and where it can be found for long range planning in Monroe, many of which are available through state, regional, and local partners.

Tool	Summary
Existing plans for the City of Monroe These documents can be accessed online at: ci.monroe.or.us/planning-building/planning-documents	
Monroe Tomorrow (2018)	City of Monroe's current vision statement.
City of Monroe Charter (2000)	This Charter establishes the legal authorities and obligations of the city.
Wastewater Master Plan (2016)	A recommendation plan for updating and improving Monroe's current wastewater treatment system.
Stormwater Master Plan Addendum #1 (2015)	Provides a cost analysis for addressing stormwater runoffs in Monroe.
Water Systems Master Plan (1999)	City of Monroe's plan for water production, storage, treatment, and distribution.
Monroe Parks Master Plan (1999)	Current inventory of Monroe's outdoor spaces and a blueprint for Monroe's future parks system.
Comprehensive Plan (1986)	The City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan, last amended in 1986.
Development Code (2009)	Establishes the building standards of all building development types.
City of Monroe and South Benton County Connectivity Plan (2017)	A plan for developing and improving multimodal connectivity options in and around the Monroe region.
Local Wetland Inventory Map (2011)	Monroe's map of wetland inventory.
Zoning Map (2011)	Monroe's zoning map.

Topic or tool	Summary
Funding Sources	
Technical Assistance Grants	
DLCD Community Grants	A competitive grant program for small towns to assist with updating their comprehensive plans.
Ford Family Foundation Technical Assistance Grants	Technical assistance grants for rural Oregon communities to be used for: leadership development/training, hiring consultants, or engaging in strategic planning.
Business Development	
Business Oregon - Community Development Block Grant	Community development grants focused on non-metropolitan counties and cities in rural Oregon to support development of livable communities for low-income and minority populations.
United States Department of Agriculture—Rural Development	A federal grant program that offers a wide range of grant programs for rural communities on topics such as: business development, housing, and utilities.
Council of Governments Economic Development Business Lending	Delivers commercial loan packaging, closing, servicing, and collection services through various loan programs; provides administrative services, technical assistance, and economic development oriented lending services to local government and non-profit organizations.
Data Sources	
Demography	
Population Research Center (PRC)	State program for official population projections for every city and county in Oregon. These official numbers are the basis of housing and economic needs analyses.
American FactFinder	Free portal for accessing Census and American Community Survey data.
Social Explorer	Pay service that aggregates Census and other data for easier use.

Topic or tool	Summary
Oregon Spatial Data Library	Free service providing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) layers covering many topic areas for Oregon geographies.
Data USA	Free platform for viewing, mapping, and comparing data from a variety of government sources for the geography(ies) of your choice.
Land Use	
Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG)	OCWCOG can provide GIS maps based on their jurisdictional boundary around land use, hazards, and more.
Benton County Planning Department	Benton County provides a number of GIS layers as well as a map viewer that allows users to search across tax lots, hazards, infrastructure, zoning, and more.
Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)	DLCD furnishes a number of maps around land use, including urban growth boundaries and zoning. They also provide analysis of certain Oregon ballot initiatives, such as Measure 49, which affects certain tax lots.
Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA)	FEMA provides official floodplain maps for the entire United States. Their National Flood Hazard Layer GIS product and associated viewer can show where there is increased flood risk in Monroe.
United States Geological Survey (USGS)	USGS provides data on hydrography and topography (elevation, location of water bodies, etc.)
Oregon Department of Geological and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI)	Department responsible for assessing geologic resources in Oregon, including risk from earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, and more.
Economic	
Benton County Assessor's Office	County assessors provide required reporting on tax lot data, such as assessed value, ownership, and tax burden. This data is available in both numeric and mapped formats.
Tri-County Chamber of Commerce	High level information about the City of Monroe as well as a business directory.





ENGAGING

Engagement of diverse voices and perspectives from the Monroe community is critical to planning. When people participate in the planning process, it is easier for them to recognize how planning affects them, and therefore the importance of planning and the need for plans to be successful in implementation. This requires **first understanding the people affected by a plan**, which will help identify ways to communicate with them.

OPPORTUNITIES

Go to the people you want to reach.

Attend partners' events and regularly scheduled meetings to understand their priorities and the barriers they face to participating in city activities.

Integrate technical analysis and community engagement.

Share maps from the Buildable Land Inventory to ask residents where they would like to see housing and development at community engagement events. This feedback will inform the technical documents and recommendations.

Ensure shared understanding of planning processes with City Council and Planning Commission.

Schedule regular work sessions with City Council and Planning Commission to ensure understanding of goals, requirements, and processes across city government. When Council members and Commissioners attend and participate in outreach and engagement efforts, this shows appreciation for and openness to feedback from the community.

Utilize a variety of communication methods.

Post fliers in English and Spanish for events in physical locations around the city—including community bulletin boards, the bank, post office, library, and restaurants—as well as online through both the Amigos de Monroe and city Facebook pages. Send event details to city staff to distribute via the city newsletter, as well as by email to various partners.

Create accessible and relevant communication strategies with partners.

Ask local community organizations to distribute outreach materials to their networks. This will provide a pathway for reaching a diverse and widespread audience. Invest in translation services for events and materials either through contractors or by forming relationships with partners such as the Health Navigators from Benton County Health Services.

PEOPLE

Monroe is a diverse community, and there are divides in Monroe that are difficult to overcome. These include political and cultural divides, as well as divides between residents (i.e. Monroe proper vs. Monroe/surrounding area). The lack of interaction between groups has created an ongoing barrier to inclusive engagement. Recognizing the diversity of Monrovia requires the thoughtful design of outreach tools, targeted community listening efforts, and partnerships with organizations that serve the community.



"The town of Monroe resists changes. There have been some changes, but it doesn't seem like it's been easy changes for them to experience."

- Interviewee

"You can't go backwards so how do you honor the past and look at the future?"

- Small Business Development Center administrator



Monroe Grade School students expressed concerns about safety, transportation, and jobs during a class discussion about planning. Some of them shared they were eager to engage in city activities like making a trail. A few students described wanting to live in Monroe but a lack of opportunities to do so.

Who do we need to consider while planning?

Youth

Every day Monroe welcomes over 400 youth from around South Benton County to attend the Grade School and High School. Youth care about where they go to school and want to contribute to the community. Their voices can also provide creative ideas, and they can become future leaders.



"Talk to us during school. Bring other people for other times."

- Student at Monroe Grade School

Residents and visitors from the surrounding area

As the only city in South Benton County with community amenities like schools, a post office, health clinic, bank, and library, Monroe is an important hub for the region. Due to its location on Highway 99-W, which connects Corvallis to Eugene, Monroe has a lot of traffic. Recent private and public investments like the new Long Timber Brewery and the Monroe Community Library draw people from out of town. Local events such as the Vino, Vintage & Victory Festival and the farmers market also attract additional visitors. These people infuse the town with resources and should be included in planning.



"I live outside of Monroe but services still affect me."

- Community Roundtable participant

Older adults

Monroe's population is aging, and this shift in age composition is impacting the types of services and urban forms that the community needs. Older adults can provide insight into what qualities can make Monroe more livable and accommodating to this growing sector of the population.

Underrepresented populations

Partnering with Benton County Health Services, Strengthening Rural Families, and the Monroe Relief Nursery can support Monroe in reaching people that may not be currently involved in planning efforts and face barriers to do so. These partners can inform understanding of what information is needed and relevant to their stakeholders, and possibly even offer translation or childcare in partnership with the city. See the **Monroe Community Partners** list in the **Resource Summary** at the end of this section for more ideas of partner organizations in Monroe.



"We feel hidden and not valued. Language makes it difficult to engage... everything is in English. This stops us from participating."

- Amigos de Monroe participant

"[We] would like to know what the city is doing but don't understand."

- Amigos de Monroe participant



The barriers to engagement for the Latino population in Monroe are large. Barriers shared by community members include:

- Language
- Comfort with government processes
- Access to information
- Resources such as time and capital

COMMUNICATION

There are several methods for outreach and engagement that can be incorporated into Monroe's planning process, each serving different purposes. Framing—or choosing what to say, how to say it, and what to leave unsaid—can be done deliberately to ensure community conversations are productive and inclusive. When hosting community events and crafting surveys, strategically framing conversations can alleviate community divides and engage the community as a whole.

How do we select the format and methods for engagement?



The Focus Group

A discussion based event with small groups of community members, a facilitator, and a defined scope of conversation.



The Workshop

A design-based approach toward collaborative visioning. Workshops can be conducted as stand-alone events over the course of a few hours, or they can be modified activities that are conducted at already-scheduled events with a quick designed activity for community members to participate.



The One-on-One Interview

Conversations with questions written ahead of time, designed to obtain information, understand perspective, and if needed, allow anonymity.



Surveys have proven to be challenging in Monroe due to low response rates. If using a survey, make sure to allow for enough time and distribute it in different ways and formats like through social media, at the library, and at local school events.



During the comprehensive plan update, a focus group was used to ask participants what types of housing Monroe could promote, types of economic development opportunities Monroe should focus on, and what forms of communication could be utilized to better connect community members to city hall.



A scenario activity was conducted at Monroe's Vino, Vintage & Victory Festival. The team provided dot stickers and sticky notes for festival attendees to "vote" for a particular future scenario for Monroe.



Prioritizing one-on-one interviews helps to:

- Understand existing networks and respect ongoing work already taking place in and around the community,
- Allow in-depth and personal perspectives, and
- Help craft a path forward toward organized and focused engagement on a broader scale.



How can we connect with people in Monroe?



Use existing social media channels

During interviews and conversations with Monroe residents, Facebook was mentioned often as a means of communication. The town currently communicates on the Facebook group “Let’s talk about our town Monroe”. The community uses this group as a message board and a platform for sharing events. The Amigos de Monroe group has recently created a Facebook page where city-led events and announcements are shared with members, translated into Spanish.



Have a physical presence

At the Community Roundtable several participants shared that they appreciated having physical signs at key community hubs. These hubs can include a variety of locations, such as the farmers market, bank, stores, post office, churches, schools, and the health clinic.



Participants at the community roundtable event were excited about the new farmers market. They emphasized that it would be an ideal space to promote local business and could include a booth for the city to promote community events and current projects.



At a community roundtable event, participants offered creative methods for event outreach, including: announcements on local TV channels, in previews at local movie theaters, and setting up a phone number where the caller would hear a voice-recorded message listing upcoming events.



Link with and promote partners

Monroe Grade School staff shared that it would be beneficial to list city events in the school newsletter. Tapping into the school’s existing methods of communication allows for broader dissemination of information to those stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, and staff).



“Attendance in meetings are great—unless they are in the evening. Question or input specific can be more efficient than a meeting.”

- Monroe Grade School administrator



How do we frame community conversations in Monroe?

Know the audience

It is critical to understand the audience or recipients of planning communications, so that communication methods can be tailored to meet audiences' specific interests and needs.

A stakeholder analysis for the City of Monroe revealed that: 1) the Latino population of Monroe requires the translation of materials, and 2) to this population, housing is a primary concern. It can therefore be determined that investment in translation is essential to ensure their participation, and that housing discussions are more relevant to their priorities as a community.

Allow time for education and information sharing

Many people don't know what planning is! Education about why a plan is being made or updated should be built into every engagement event.

It is important that Monrovia understand why planning is important. Otherwise, they may not choose to become involved in planning processes. Because planning is a means of community decision making, sharing the purposes and goals of planning is essential to ensure that long range plans respond to community needs and priorities.



"[I] ended up driving out to the farms and meeting them and dropping information and trying to get them to spread the word among each other."

- Benton County Health Clinic representative

"Connect with as many resources...not only get them to learn about the resources [available] and how to apply, but [to] get them comfortable to connect with other people in their community."

- Benton County Health Clinic representative

Use technical analysis

These are created through data collection, analysis, and stakeholder interviews. Technical documents serve as a foundation for long range planning efforts, providing a factual basis for implementation.

Monroe can use current demographic, land use, housing, and economic data to both inform the public about the current state of the community and start conversations about community needs. This information lives in a variety of existing technical documents and plans, and it can be used in conjunction with community input to strengthen planning processes.



Community members shared that they would simply like to "gather and talk." The farmers market, annual festival, and other partner events offer consistent venues and platforms for conversation.

Build off vision statements

Vision statements are created by gathering public input through various outreach strategies, such as workshops and surveys. Findings from these outreach strategies provide the basis for identifying community values and crafting the vision statement. The vision statement should in turn inform the goals, strategies, objectives, and policies written into long range plans.



Monroe's housing vision from "Monroe Tomorrow" was used during the Community Roundtable to spark a discussion around priorities for housing in Monroe. The facilitator asked participants to reflect on which specific words resonated with them the most. This exercise provoked thoughts about the current housing situation and what characteristics of future housing developments are important to have. "Socially" and "Environmentally" were the top two resonating words.

Get creative at events

Use mapping activities at public events to illustrate and share technical planning information. This provides a chance to both communicate with the public about plans in their community and educate the public about planning in general. At the Vino, Vintage & Victory Festival, attendees could engage in a mapping activity where they could point out where they live, think about where in Monroe they like to visit, and see firsthand how technical planning information relates to the layout of the city.

Emphasize shared values

By highlighting shared values in community conversations, the conversation can shift from the individual to the collective. This will allow for more creative, solutions-oriented thinking. The **Framing Worksheet** can help!



"We need to be able to help each other by sharing our stories."

- Amigos de Monroe group member



Resources Summary

Topic or tool	Summary
Monroe Specific Resources	
Existing community events	
Planning Commission	Monthly hearing for updates on planmaking in Monroe held at Monroe City Hall.
City Council	Monthly public hearing for city business held at Monroe City Hall.
South Benton Citizens Advisory Committee	Monthly meeting on engaging residents of South Benton County held at Alpine Community Center.
Amigos De Monroe	Monthly meetings organized by the Benton County Health Services Health Navigators held at the United Methodist Church.
Dragon Pride	Monthly meeting of coaches, teachers and community members (5-10 individuals) held at the Monroe High School.
Parent Teacher Group (PTG)	Monthly meeting of teachers, parents and other staff held at the Monroe Elementary School.
South Benton Senior Nutrition Program Lunches	Open to seniors in South Benton County, every Tuesday and Thursday held at the Monroe American Legion Hall.
Potential community partners	
Long Tom Watershed Council	An environmental nonprofit focused on community-based watershed restoration and protection. Works to complete education and restoration projects to improve local water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.
Website: longtom.org Contact (phone): 541-338-7055	
Strengthening Rural Families	Promotes health and wellbeing of families in rural communities through education, advocacy, and coalition building. Two main programs are Rural Parenting and Rural Health. Organization has locally based community coordinators in each of the primary areas they serve (including Monroe).
Website: ruralfamilies.org Contact (phone): 541- 929-2535	

Tool	Summary
Potential community partners	
Monroe Relief Nursery	Provides support for, and mentoring to, at-risk children and families. Opening a clinic in Monroe Fall 2019.
Website: oldmillcenter.org/monroe Contact (phone): 541-757-8068	
Lilliputopia	A tiny eco-farm based in Monroe city limits promoting conservation and sustainability. Specialize in dry farming, have natural building demonstration, and offer mushroom cultivation. Also perform research in collaboration with OSU and offer demonstration of sustainable practices. Farm stand open during summer.
Website: lilliputopia.com Contact (email): lilliputopia@gmail.com	
Benton Recreation Alliance	Seeks to connect residents with each other and with the regions outdoor recreation opportunities to advance health, safety, and economic vitality of communities served.
Website: afrana.org/programs/southcountyalliance Contact (email): sbcra@afrana.org	
South Benton Senior Nutrition Program Lunches	Open to seniors in South Benton County, every Tuesday and Thursday, held at the Monroe American Legion Hall.



ACTING

After Preparing and Engaging, it's time to Act and write the plan! Policy and goal writing is a key part of plan making—but acting also refers to the implementation of the plan itself. There are many opportunities for Monroe to do “actionable” plan making. Actionable goals and policies use technical analysis and community engagement, and clearly define how the plan itself will be implemented in concrete ways.

OPPORTUNITIES

Directly link engagement findings to goals and policies.

Keep recorded quotes and feedback from community members on hand during the policy and goal writing process. Showing a direct link between what community members identify as needs to goals and policies helps to keep the plan relevant and holds decision makers accountable.

Keep track of where goals and policies come from.

Take notes when crafting goals and policies, and make sure technical or engagement findings exist that support whatever goal or policy is made. These findings serve as evidence to show why a goal or policy was made.

Write action plans to connect policy to implementation.

Create action plans when writing policies so that the planning becomes reality. An action plan outlines which strategies, partners, resources, and priorities are needed to make a plan happen. They can be used as a way to track progress on goals and policies, and keep everyone accountable to their commitments.

WRITING ACTIONABLE GOALS AND POLICIES

Actionable goals and policies tie the vision of the community to concrete policies, with strategies to realize them. Combined, goals and policies set direction and provide the legal basis for zoning, regulation, and capital investments. A goal becomes actionable when it is tied to a clear policy and action items that can be monitored and evaluated, with a responsible party assigned.

How do we write goals and policies?

Planning Commission and Staff develop

The Planning Commission and staff are responsible for writing the goals and policies for long range planning in Monroe. After completing technical analyses, community engagement, and a review of other plans, they use this information to collectively write the components of a plan.

How do we write actionable goals and policies?

Utilize community engagement and technical analysis

Remember that technical analysis is there to frame and support planning efforts, but community voice should guide policies and goals within that context. How to use community engagement and technical analysis in writing actionable goals and policies is described in detail in the following sections.

Develop an action plan

An action plan moves a plan forward from “words on paper” into something on the ground. It can increase efficiency and accountability by giving agencies and community members direction on how they can help make the plans that they have often spent years creating tangible. See the **Action Plan Template Worksheet** for guidance on how to create one.



Considering that because it is required to present long range plans before City Council and the Public, Action Plans can make plans more transparent and allow people to better visualize how it will actually happen.

Measure effectiveness

Goals and policies should trigger actions, consider also using the **Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis Worksheet** to help gauge effectiveness. Examining policies for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats can help to measure how strong or relevant a policy is for Monroe.



“I am interested in how I can have a say but where does my information go?”

- Monroe Grade School employee



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The information gathered through engagement is the best tool for creating actionable goals and policies that capture the Monroe community's unique perspectives and voices. Let the plan serve the people by directly incorporating the feedback received throughout the engagement process into written goals and policies. Actionable goals and policies that are supported by concrete evidence will help make a plan happen.

How do we reflect community engagement findings in goals and policies?

Identify themes

Keep engagement data on hand when writing goals and policies. Review direct quotes and feedback from community members and take note of recurring themes. Work to translate those recurring themes into policies reflecting what matters to community members directly into planning documents.

Reflect lessons learned

Incorporate missed opportunities or considerations into long range plans to show what was learned through the engagement planning process. Learned about barriers community members face when connecting to the city? Think of a goal that works to address these issues for the future of Monroe!



"We may not know the technical aspects, but we had the visioning and mission of the community which helped so much."

- City of Monroe employee

"Keeping in mind the community vision and goals and making that the backbone for each chapter."

- City of Monroe employee



When crafting housing goals for the housing element of the comprehensive plan, the Planning Commission found that housing affordability was a concern raised in a community roundtable, at Amigos de Monroe meetings, and in housing surveys. This helped the commission come up with a goal for the city to support the provision of affordable housing.



The Comprehensive Plan Update process produced a wide variety of feedback data. Keeping takeaways organized by which event they came from was helpful for linking who was saying what. Overall takeaways changed depending on which groups were being engaged:

- When interviewing stakeholders, many of whom were already connected with the city in some way, conversations centered on partnership potential and communication strategies.
- When engaging with students in their classrooms, amenities and entertainment were a central focus point.
- When tabling at a local festival, folks who live in Monroe and others who visit expressed a desire for Monroe to capitalize on its agricultural and artisanal roots.



TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

Technical analysis provides a factual basis for crafting goals and policies. Technical analyses examine measurable elements of a community and place (e.g. public utilities, demographics, and infrastructure). Data from these analyses should be used not only to help write goals and policies, but also to provide reasons as for why decisions were made. This will support transparency in the planning process.

There are a variety of ways to link technical findings to goals and policies. These will change depending on what element of the plan is being written and what takeaways the analysis provides.

What types of technical content is used to write goals and policies?

Required technical analyses

Land is a critical component for managing and directing future growth and change. Use data from the Buildable Lands Inventory (BLI) on available land, projected land needs, and re-developable land to shape policies on infill, density, economic development, and where future housing should go. Other important technical documents that help guide policy crafting include the Housing Needs Analysis (HNA) and Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA).

Existing plans

Existing plans serve as foundational analyses for Monroe planning and can be found at the resource table at the end of the Preparing section. These plans serve as stepping stones and guidance for aligning future needs when preparing a new long range plan. Incorporating other recently completed plans ensures that community goals are aligned and momentum can be maintained for implementation.

Other technical findings

State the technical findings at the beginning of the component of the long range plan that they apply to. For the Natural Resources, Historic Areas, and Open Spaces chapter of the comprehensive plan, for example, an updated wetland inventory is listed right at the beginning of the chapter before goals and policies.



It was helpful to keep physical copies of key data takeaways from the Housing Needs Analysis on hand during a Planning Commission goal and policy writing session. All commissioners were able to reference static information—like how many housing units would be needed over the next 20 years—to keep the conversation about housing goals on track.



ONE LAST FIELD NOTE!

The opportunities, resources, and tools in the Field Guide are meant to be actively used — photocopied, edited, and adapted throughout any long range planning process to be used by city staff, the Planning Commission, and community members who are interested in getting more involved.



Monroe has many opportunities to build on!

Reflect on planning capacity.

Use this field guide as a reference when evaluating planning processes. Always ask the following including:

- Are we **preparing** by working closely with partners to be grant ready?
- Are we **engaging** by being inclusive of all community residents in our communications and methods?
- Are we writing **actionable** goals and policies that reflect using technical analysis and community engagement?

Invest in relationships with the community.

Flip the perspective! The city's role is not limited to enforcement; it can also serve as a resource for community building. The city can be a center and resource for equity and inclusivity, providing concrete opportunities for those that don't know how to engage or may be intimidated. Continue to invest in creating pathways for underrepresented voices into the governing process.

Don't reinvent the wheel.

Just like Monroe's comprehensive plan, this Field Guide was developed to outline and guide the growth of the community. Use the tools, data, information, ideas, and reflections recorded to strengthen planning processes in Monroe.

Tap into community momentum and networks.

Planning is hardwork for every city, regardless of size and available funding. Planning requires making difficult decisions and trade-offs, which can be challenging. But, planning staff and Planning Commission do not exist in a vacuum - their work directly affects the lives of their community members. People need to talk to each other throughout a planning process. Ultimately, Monroe's networks are what will carry plans forward to implementation and onto more small victories.

Keep documenting and celebrating small victories.

Small, incremental changes are transformative as a whole. Keep long range plan alive by using built-in benchmarks, action plans, and annual reports. Recognize and track progress, and refer back to the goals and policies when assessing change in Monroe.

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