

Oak Lodge Governance Project to look at becoming city

Oak Lodge Governance Project Steering Committee

October 26 2020

Steering committee members: 'Any changes to the current rural governance for this urban area will be determined by the people who call it home'

A growing group of Oak Grove and Jennings Lodge residents have formed the Oak Lodge Governance Project (OLGP) and believe the demographics, economics and circumstances of our area have changed enough in the past decade to support a fresh effort to explore the advantages and possible downsides of various governance options — including, but not limited to, incorporation, annexation or remaining unincorporated.



COURTESY PHOTO - Clackamas County officials are eyeing the former Concord School in Oak Grove as a site for a new library and park.

With various projects, like the Concord Library and Park Avenue station redevelopment, there is an increased excitement about the potential of our

community. In that spirit, we applied for a grant to provide current data and analysis that will allow our approximately 30,000 residents and business owners to make informed decisions regarding the possible transformation of our unincorporated urban area. Metro's Planning and Development department has just awarded us a \$100,000 Planning Concept Grant to fund a study focused on economic realities and projections, as well as governance options and legal requirements. The studies are projected to be completed by June of 2021 and will serve as the cornerstone for collective community conversations.

Any changes to the current rural governance for this urban area will be determined by the people who call it home. Any changes will only be valid with the wider community working together to identify equitable outcomes for all ages, income levels, ethnicities and physical abilities. We want these changes to be made through extensive, resident-organized, inclusive community conversations that will reflect the various desires of the different areas in the community.

We want to continue building our neighborhoods into places where everyone has the opportunity to thrive, our local economy is vibrant and our natural resources are honored and protected.

Want to join the conversation? There is one way you can immediately participate — if you live or own a business in Oak Grove or Jennings Lodge and have a question or issue you would like addressed by the studies being created, please send it to oaklodgegovernance@gmail.com by Nov. 15. You can also complete a google form at bit.ly/2TjLB3U to ask questions or provide us with an email address to be included in future communications. We're continuing to build communications structures, and while there will be many opportunities to participate in the months ahead, the bulk of the community conversations will take place this coming summer, when the results of the study are available.

Oak Lodge Governance Project Steering Committee members include Mitra Anoushiravani, Nathan Breitenfeldt, Valerie Chapman, Jane Civiletti, Tom Civiletti, Joseph Edge, Nathan Ember, Eleanore Hunter, Chips Janger and Cole Merkel.