

Oak Lodge Governance Project  
Phase 1 - Economics and Governance  
Study  
December 2020  
Report on Public Input

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# Report on Public Input

## Introduction

### Executive Summary

In total, 86 people responded to a short web survey, with the vast majority identifying as living here. Questions asked about economic issues, municipal governance issues, and offered an opportunity for general comments. One subject — taxes and revenues — stood out above others, with other frequently mentioned subjects including benefits of being a city, livability and natural resources, and public process.

Nearly 40 percent of respondents' comments about economic issues related to taxes and revenues, with many hoping to learn about projected impacts from anticipated increases. Roughly one quarter of respondents asked questions about land use and several respondents asked questions about economic development opportunities. Respondents are very interested in understanding the differences between governance options in terms of the benefits and costs, with over one third of respondents expressing a desire to see a pro/con comparison. Two common themes were questions about the authorities of a city, with respondents seeking to learn what cities can regulate (typically in terms of land use), and questions about impacts or changes to relationships with existing service providers and special service districts. Responses to the final question included many comments and questions about this process and potential next steps, ranging from encouraging to suspicious, and several comments were focused on outreach and inclusion concerns.

Major findings from this input reflect a desire to see hard figures for a specific proposal to gauge individual impacts from new taxes and collective benefits from new revenue sources. There is a great deal of uncertainty about what a city can and cannot do, and how residents participate in those processes. There is also a sincere interest in being engaged throughout this process, with many comments reflecting a perception that we are at a very late stage of decision making.

Recommendations arising from these findings include:

- Clarify Scope and Purpose: It will be important to communicate to the public that the models for this study are limited and intended to match existing land use patterns and Milwaukie's service levels for a specific research purpose—modeling the study.
- Modeling should preserve special Service Districts: Modeling for city-provided services should assume that existing special service districts remain in place under current tax rates and boundaries. The Oak Lodge Water Services and North Clackamas Parks and Recreation Districts enjoy a high rate of satisfaction among the public and changes to these districts likely would not be supported by the public.
- Outreach and Education: A significant share of the public input asks questions about or comments upon subject matter that is outside the scope of this phase of study. OLGP will need to address this input with outreach and education opportunities for the public to

learn how to participate in this process, why these issues are important and timely, as well as what roles a city can play and how that is created.

## Methodology

OLGP created a community survey form in November 2020 to gather feedback on the studies being conducted by EcoNorthwest. We posted a link to that survey form using a letter to the editor in the Clackamas Review and asked a number of community leaders (including Community Planning Organizations) to share it with their communities and mailing list.

In total, 86 people responded, with the vast majority identifying as living here, three identifying as owning a business here, and two identifying as having previously lived in the area.

Along with collecting basic identifying information, an email address, a check box for those who wanted to opt in to communications on the project, and an address to ensure geographic equity (see map on page *nn*), the survey asked three key questions:

- Q1.Regarding local economic issues, what question(s) do you want to have answered? (e.g. franchise fees, commercial zoning)
- Q2.In a study that is researching local governance options (e.g. incorporation, annexation, staying the same), what question(s) do you want to have answered?
- Q3.Is there anything else you'd like to comment on or share with us?

Responses were coded and aggregated for analysis, and verbatim input has been included in the appendix.

# Results

## Analysis

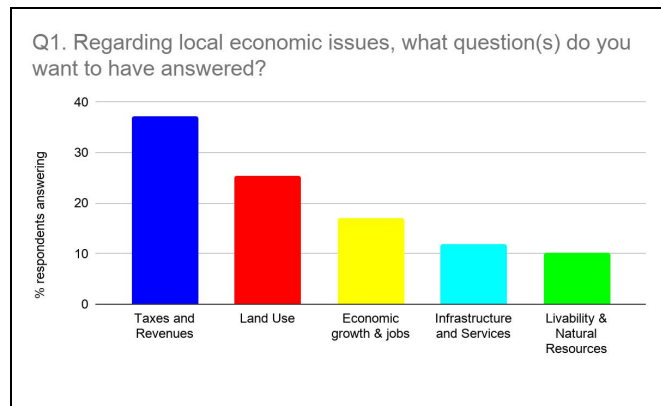
Respondents contributed a variety of questions, comments, ideas, concerns, and requests for data across more than a dozen subject areas. *Taxes and Revenues* stood out as the top subject for the economic question and second-most mentioned subject for the governance focused question, and also appears in the top five mentions for the final question. Three other subjects were in the top five of the final question and one each of the first two questions: *Benefits*, *Livability & Natural Resources*, and *Process*.

### Economic Issues

Questions and comments about economic issues touched on aspirations for economic development (“*Recruitment of large corporations with good paying wages*”) as well as concerns for impacts to existing businesses and residents (“*How much is this going to cost existing local businesses, not only in taxes but in fees for licensing?*”;

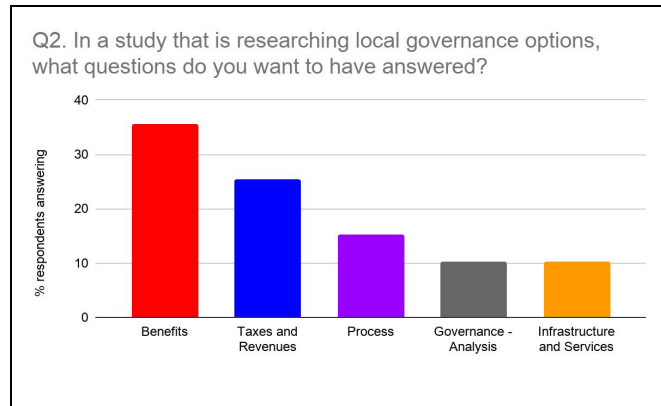
“*What will be the increased tax rate?*”). Other input reflected questions about the capacity for the area to sustain city government (“*interested in the financial feasibility of incorporation once boundaries are determined.*”) and ideas for how to improve the business climate (“*how can we attract more business to expand the tax base for the community?*”; “*Parks, new seasons market, local eateries and coffee shops.*”).

Nearly 40 percent of respondents’ comments related to taxes and revenues, with many hoping to learn what the impact will be to their property taxes and business licensing fees. Roughly one quarter of respondents asked questions about land use (“*How would zoning be handled?*”, “*Would we be able to regulate the number of car lots?*”). Several respondents asked questions about economic development opportunities (“*Zoning absolutely needs to open up to future development*”), urban services (“*Will city services be funded through additional fees or charges on water, wastewater and/or stormwater [services]?*”), and ideas to enhance livability (“*more walkable options regarding businesses/parks*”, “*We need good restaurants down here and more music venues and the arts.*”).



## Governance Options

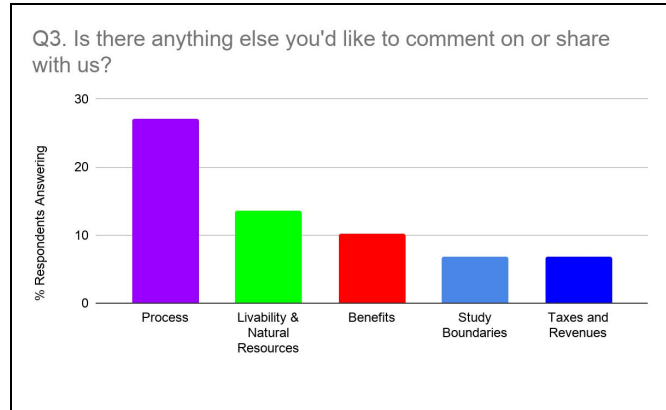
For this question, over one third of respondents expressed a desire to see a benefits comparison of the scenarios under study (*“Clear understanding of benefits and drawbacks to options”*). Other questions addressed practical considerations of annexing or incorporating (*“Is there a neighboring city that would like to Annex the Oak Grove area?”*, *“How long does a change in local governance typically take once a new system is adopted?”*), while others asked study-related questions (*“what are the geographical boundaries being studied?”*, *“[Is the study] also considering forming an incorporated “contract” city [with outsourced services]?”*).



Respondents are very interested in understanding the differences between governance options in terms of the benefits and costs (*“I would like to hear more about the advantages/disadvantages of incorporation”*, *“a simple matrix that shows the pros and cons of each”*, *“Costs and benefits of incorporating vs. annexation. What do we gain / lose with each option?”*). One quarter of respondents to this question referenced taxes or revenues (*“What will it cost the average homeowner?”*, *“Does Oak Grove have the economic base to support city hood?”*, *“Estimated taxpayer cost comparisons for schools, police, fire, utilities, etc.?”*). Other respondents had questions about the process (*“Who is providing the information on the pros and cons of either choice?”*, *“Why is Metro sponsoring this study?”*), some offered ideas for questions to study (*“What would the projected property tax cost for general government be compared to adjacent municipalities and the no-change scenario?”*, *“compare how tax base options (low/med/high) what can local incorporation “buy” if we choose?”*), as well as questions about urban services and existing service districts (*“Why are some public services assumed to be included in the incorporation/annexation analysis while others are excluded?”*, *“What services will we still want provided by the County and what may we want to provide for ourselves?”*).

## Additional Comments

Responses to this question included many comments and questions about this process and potential next steps ranging from encouraging (“*let’s get something done*”, “*Thank you for leading this effort*”) to suspicious (“*Why is Metro providing the grant what do they have to gain?*”, “*Is there an emergency or fire? This is a MINIMAL attempt to get local input.*”). Several responses offered ideas for things a city could do that would benefit the community (“*better street maintenance*”, “*law enforcement needs improvement*”), and asked general questions about the implications of joining or forming a city (“*Can the city keep its service districts?*”, “*What kind of city govt. would be established?*”).



Process related questions revolved around outreach and inclusion concerns (“*How are you intending to keep everyone in the loop?*”, “*Public funds are public funds and the taxpayers should be allowed to participate in the entire process*”) and a desire for more education on the various options (“*I’m interested in finding out more*”, “*Is there a way to answer questions about the pros and cons of each option in a very straightforward way, giving people the tools they need to make an informed decision?*”). Many respondents contributed thoughts on livability and natural resource issues (“*Parks and recreation should be of highest priority as well as middle housing development in existing neighborhoods*”, “*local control and governance is essential to protect the natural resources of our community*”).

Responses to this question also indicated interest in understanding the benefits of being part of a city (“*I would like to understand specifically what we’d hope to gain*”, “*Please enumerate the advantages of incorporation*”) and questions about why change is being considered (“*Why can’t we leave it the way it is?*”). Other responses asked about the boundaries under consideration (“*What are the boundaries?*”, “*There is strength in numbers: the obvious eastern and southern city boundaries should be the 205 Freeway*”) and expressed concerns about impacts from increased taxes (“*I’m for local control, but close to retirement, I worry about taxes*”, “*We don’t need more taxation - especially in these crazy times when money is short for all.*”).

## Findings

### Taxes and Revenues

Across all three questions, a significant share of responses expressed concern or aversion to tax increases, although many of those were tempered by a desire to understand the cost-benefit balance that comes with local control. Respondents were interested in knowing whether the tax base is economically viable and, if not, learning what can be done to change that. There is a very strong desire to see hard numbers for a proposal; respondents want certainty and clarity about service levels and costs. Responses indicated a desire to learn the balance of tax revenue to expenditures in our area under county administration and how that would compare to scenarios where a city is in control.

### Powers, Responsibilities, and Limits of City Authority

Many respondents asked questions about the powers and responsibilities of a city, largely in terms of land use and revenue authorities. Several comments were received asking about the possibility of restricting car lots specifically, and others asked about the services that would be provided by a city and how that might change the community's relationship with existing service districts. Some respondents specifically addressed law enforcement as a service they'd like to see provided by a city, but comments about other services (parks, water/sewer, schools, etc.) indicated satisfaction with current service providers or concern that joining a city could negatively impact these service providers. While there is significant interest in local control over urban services provided by the county (especially land use planning, as well as law enforcement and street maintenance), no responses expressed an interest in a city taking over services or assets from existing service providers such as Oak Lodge Water Services District or North Clackamas Parks & Recreation District. Responses also indicated uncertainty about the role and function of cities, with comments expressing concern that if the area joined a city that zoning would be significantly altered, or that Metro's authorities over the area would change, or that small neighborhood streets would start to be reconstructed with sidewalks where it conflicted with the public will.

### Process

Questions about process indicate a lack of awareness of how this study fits into a larger, longer process that may or may not culminate in a process to change governance for the area. Many comments reveal that respondents believe that this phase of study is late-stage, i.e., that these are the only scenarios that shall be considered before consequential decisions are made. Responses indicate an expectation that because Metro is funding this stage of study through their Community Development and Planning Grant program that additional public process is warranted. This is further borne out in a meta analysis of other responses: many comments classified as taxes, land use, or services reveal the perception that key decisions have already been made and that respondents want certainty about the impacts of those decisions.



## Recommendations

### Clarify Scope and Purpose

The current phase of study is narrowly focused on identifying the marginal cost of creating a new city that replicates the service levels of Milwaukie compared to annexing to Milwaukie, compared to the baseline scenario where existing services are provided by Clackamas County. This will answer important questions about start-up and overhead costs and the area's capacity to provide services, as well as provide a foundation to model against different scenarios in future phases of study. It will be important to communicate that the models for this study are intended to match existing land use patterns and Milwaukie's service levels for this specific research purpose.

### Modeling Should Preserve Special Service Districts

Modeling for city-provided services should assume that existing special service districts remain in place under current tax rates and boundaries. There is no interest in modeling scenarios that assume a change to Oak Lodge Water Services or North Clackamas Parks and Recreation Districts boundaries, service levels, or capital assets ownership. These two service districts enjoy a high rate of satisfaction among the public and changes to these districts' boundaries or independence likely would not be supported by the public.

### Outreach and Education

A significant share of the public input asks questions about or comments upon subject matter that is outside the scope of this phase of study. The responsibility of addressing this input will fall upon OLGP volunteers as we grow our outreach program over the coming months. It is crucial that upcoming outreach inform the public that this process is in its earliest stages.

## Appendix I. Responses to Questionnaire

Q1. Regarding local economic issues, what question(s) do you want to have answered? (e.g. franchise fees, commercial zoning)

Recruitment of large corporations with good paying wages. Restrict auto sales and reduce McLoughlin blight - local zoning restrictions could site buildings at street side, moving parking and cars to rear. This could improve the streetscape. Would like a large hotel or convention facility. Attractive apartment complexes (cottage clusters?) for local workers.
How to ensure trailer courts aren't gentrified out. I want a 30 yr plan
taxes/fees comparison
cost/changes with: taxes, zoning, traffic, crime, services
How would zoning be handled?
safety
What does future look like,, especially corona virus wise
How much is this going to cost existing local businesses, not only in taxes but in fees for licensing which will end up being passed on to consumers.
Where will you plan on concentrating commercial and retail businesses and how do you plan on handling the growth in traffic to prevent it from spilling into neighborhood? How would you plan on managing limitations on businesses being run out of homes? What types of businesses do you want to attract? I see very little offerings or competition of certain businesses in this area, in particular grocery stores.
more walkable options regarding businesses/parks that are safe for the community
Concern for high taxes
zoning
How would incorporating or joining an existing municipality change our tax base? Would incorporating change our relationship with water, sanitary, parks, libraries, etc. or are these services outside the purvey of a town/hamlet?
The County currently underserves the area in terms of transportation infrastructure maintenance. If the area is incorporated and receives a direct share of state gas and County VRF revenue, would the dollar available amount per capita be greater than or less than what the County currently spends in the subject area?
What are the relative costs of different options. How would this impact our ability to impact local zoning. tax expenses incurred, tax receipts gained, cost of the governing body, possibilities for local economic/business growth (other than car lots),
Would we be able to regulate the number of car lots (or is that controlled by the county)? What could we do to encourage vibrant small businesses (esp. in downtown Oak Grove.)
Zoning, parks, promoting small business
Local tax rate
I would like information on allowed business uses for the commercially zoned areas along the 99E corridor and commercial lease rates for the various commercial uses, as well as vacancy/occupancy rates.

Land use, incorporating, frog ferry,
In the existing locations where there is commercial enterprise, how can we attract more business to expand the tax base for the community without causing issues such as increased traffic, congestion, pollution, etc?
Zoning
1.- architectural review of new construction: the only way to improve our community standards is to require a higher level of design. 2.- improving McLoughlin Blvd aesthetic: a.- street trees and plated traffic islands b.- introduce signage standards c.- used car lots: require design standards d.- institute visual building maintenance standards
Is it possible financially for us to become a shire or our own town. I am interested in that primarily because many of us want to beautify our community and MCGloughlin. I see Oregon City is growing new businesses and restaurants. I don't see that in Oak Grove. We need good restaurants down here and more music venues and the arts.
geographical boundaries of study area(s). existing fees, taxes, etc that are currently assessed in this area but allocated elsewhere. As well as revenue streams that could be leveraged to help this area. e.g. Cigarette Taxes, Licensing fees, etc.
What funds or other resources would incorporation provide access to—from the county, Metro, the state, federal govt., or non-profits/foundations? What money are we missing out on by not being a city? (Make this very visible to the community when approaching them about considering incorporation?)
What would incorporating get us for improving our economic well being and what will that cost?
If Oak Grove becomes incorporated, what would be the tax rates, utility fees and franchise fees and how would they compare to current resident costs?
In this “study” will the financial increases, taxes, etc. be revealed to we the public, business and home owners?
Waiting to get more information
What taxes would be incurred? What is the rate that the proposed city would be looking at? Aside from property tax for residents (which is the usual course of action to raise money), what other alternatives to finance an incorporated city? What benefits come with this (utilities are already provided as are other public items including fire)?
How will we encourage small locally owned business and discourage large outside chain-type businesses?
1. What will be the increased tax rate per \$1,000 assessed valuation? 2. What will that buy us that we don't already have from our special districts?
Zoning absolutely needs to open up to future development
I would like to know if their is plans to establish a more neighborhood vibe like other areas? Parks, new seasons market, local eateries and coffee shops.
General interest

Will there be less or more \$ available for OG/JL from the county if the area becomes incorporated? How will the use of education funds be allocated with 2 separate school districts? How would incorporation affect the enhanced sheriff district funds we now pay-would we get better (more) LE officers in our area than we do now?
Why does Metro feel the need for conducting this study? WHO in Metro is directing the study? WHO in the neighborhood is suggesting any change in the governmental structure of the community?
i think tax changes are the biggest issue
Are our taxes going to be raised, is zoning going to stay the same, who will be in charge.
Commercial zoning, How does this fit with McLoughlin Area Plan?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What tax and fee structures will be considered to fund city services?</li> <li>2. Will city services (e.g., general city government) be funded, in part, through additional fees or charges (including general fund overhead charges and/or franchise fees) on water, wastewater and/or stormwater charges? Will the study identify rate impacts to water, wastewater and stormwater services?</li> <li>3. Will the study identify the total financial impact to local business, including anticipated taxes, fees and increased utility rates? What effect will these costs have on local jobs and the local economy?</li> <li>4. How will subjective factors such as quality of life, diversity, equity and inclusion be evaluated? How will these subjective factors be compared to the economic impacts of additional taxes and fees?</li> </ol>
What tax and fee structures will be examined to fund services provided in a typical city? Will there be analysis of potential costs for contracted municipal services from Clackamas County including overhead or management costs they may choose to levy if they are no longer the direct providers?
Most interested in the financial feasibility of incorporation once boundaries are determined. What kind of tax sharing agreements with the County (and/or others) are required, and how would the new city of Oak Lodge be assured of retaining enough of the tax base to ensure a healthy city budget that could pay for new city services? The worst outcome would be to successfully incorporate and have fewer dollars available to pay for the services and improvements (such as parks) that generated the desire for incorporation in the first place.
commercial zoning, taxes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How will financial uncertainty (e.g. regional and national economic downturns) be considered in the evaluation of the scenarios?</li> <li>2. What kind of tax structures and fees will be examined?</li> </ol>
Affordable housing
Be nice to have less used car lots and an upgraded shopping opportunities. Can we make McLaughlin look less...crappy?
Zoning; telecommunications
How has the economic characteristics of the urban unincorporated area changed since 2010? What limitations to development exist with current county controlled zoning?
Franchise fees
how effects taxation, parks/rec, schools specifically OCSD.

1. The grant application indicates that one deliverable is “project timeline and optimal scenarios for analysis with community engagement support from Incorporation for Equity”. Does this mean the community engagement consists of the opinions of the IFE steering committee, or does IFE intend to solicit views of the entire community before the final consultant work order is developed?

2. While the grant application indicates an economic analysis will include “a comprehensive cost comparison of various government structures and service arrangements”, the Work Order only appears to analyze the status quo, annexation, and incorporation. Without public input prior to the consultant’s work, it seems the decision has already been made that those are the only options.

3. What sort of taxes and fee structures are likely to be considered to fund anticipated services? Existing special districts such as Oak Lodge Water Services currently bases rates on the cost of services provided. If Oak Lodge or other special districts are absorbed into an incorporated city, there will be likely be municipal overhead costs tacked on to the operating and capital costs, which will require rate increases to the customers.

4. Would a proposed incorporated city intend to absorb responsibility for transportation infrastructure currently maintained by Clackamas County? If this is being considered, what is the anticipated revenue from state gas tax and county vehicle registration fees? How does that revenue forecast compare with the current actual infrastructure expenditures by the county within the study area?

5. Under Task 4 in the ECONorthwest Work Order, it appears some services are assumed to be included in the incorporation analysis, while others are not. What drove the inclusion/exclusion of specific services from this analysis?

What will my zoning be? High density housing? How much will my taxes go up? What nonconforming upgrades will I need to make?

Why are you looking at transforming our district? What do you hope to gain by that?

Sustainable business environment?

I would start with seeking more information about the implications of incorporation and how they impact both the decision-making capabilities for the area and what types of economics will they address, like ways to draw sustainable businesses to the area and the implications for tax increases?

I’m not sure what my questions, I haven’t lived here long and don’t have a good understanding of what being unincorporated means

Q2. In a study that is researching local governance options (e.g. incorporation, annexation, staying the same), what question(s) do you want to have answered?

<p>Would like police, city council etc. available to address local rather than countywide issues. Want strong representation when dealing with local issues. For these reasons do not want annexation to Milwaukie; don't see that as an improvement.</p>
<p>1, 5, and 10 year costs of incorporation to be shared by residents, given the development of governing structures.</p>
<p>Different options for different areas in the community. How can we separate the vote for creation of areas from the tax base for those areas. Can this be split into 2 different votes at 2 different times.</p>
<p>I would like to hear more about the advantages/disadvantages of incorporation.</p>
<p>what are the governance options</p>
<p>How will residents be included in governance?</p>
<p>I would be open to incorporation of our area under the right conditions.</p>
<p>cost/benefits/leadership</p>
<p>Tax implication? Prefer to incorporate with Jennings Lodge or Osk Grove not Milwaukie</p>
<p>A lot, we have been down a similar path in Damascus. A lot of money was spent planning and doing studies which eventually went no where. Limits should be put on "studies".</p>
<p>What would the projected property tax cost for general government be compared to adjacent municipalities and the no-change scenario?</p>
<p>Clear pros and cons of each option. What we have learned from previous attempts at incorporation. A sense of what our community is thinking- the core values most important to them connected to this question. I would love to see this not become immediately polarizing, and I think that takes getting a good sense of where people are, and more importantly- why.</p>
<p>equal comparison between all three, future problems and benefits with each option, area that is being considered, methods for reaching everybody, issues involving new library and the county with all three options</p>
<p>Would we do a better job at protecting parklands? How would this affect taxes?</p>
<p>What will be the responsibilities, potential capital and operations budget and the general, who, what, why, where, when and how</p>
<p>What will it cost the average homeowner to incorporate?</p>

I would like to see the financial costs, logistics and timeframe of three options. 1. Annexation into Milwaukie of Oak Grove and Jennings Lodge, 2. Incorporation of Oak Grove & Jennings Lodge into one city or each area is incorporated separately into two cities.

We need to get out from under the thumb of the Clackamas County commissioners, I.e., incorporate. The argument against has been it will raise taxes. How do we mount a campaign to fight this idea? If the Republicans in the county fear-monger the rest of the population, the idea will die in committee. There needs to be a coherent defensible strategy with an argument to defend against the fear-mongering.

My tax rate

Incorporation: what are the benefits & negatives?

I would like to know the benefits of becoming a shire. I feel independence from the county is good. Can we then make our own tree ordinances and building codes

as above, what are the geographical boundaries being studied. Would this include a combination of the above or a larger incorporation of the entire area(whatever that area is). what types of governance (hamlet, city, etc.) . How to education and come together as a community as to minimize misinformation, fears, opportunism, etc..

Practical examples of what a city can accomplish that can't be done by an unincorporated area.

Where will the support come from for a city, and where will the pushback come from, and who will be apathetic? Will businesses already located here have increased fees or taxes? How much more will residents have to pay in taxes? What demographic will not have the energy, bandwidth, or interest in the incorporation conversation? What are the percentages of these different demographics within the whole?

For an area our size and economic base, what will it cost/tax to replicate basic municipal services (water/sewer, fire, police, roads, building codes, etc)?

Is there a neighboring city that would like to Annex the Oak Grove area?

How long does a change in local governance typically take once a new system is adopted?

How many times and money do we spend to "study" the incorporation of Jennings Lodge when we do not want it! Who keeps kicking the dead horse and getting these studies going?

What is the overall benefit?

What is the overall downfall of staying as we are?

What are the pros and cons of incorporation vs annexation?

Will the group also considering forming an incorporated "contract" city? (One where most or all of its services are contracted out, so we don't have duplicate administration and operations costs. For example, police, fire, water, waste services which already exist.)

Costs and benefits of incorporating vs. annexation. What do we gain / lose with each option?

Explore the options that will bring us an investment in our community: Oak Grove and Jennings Lodge residents pay significant Property taxes , yet instead of support like Lake Oswego, Milwaukie, or Happy Valley, we are cursed with Car-lots, , Empty buildings and a degenerating Mc Loughlin Blvd!

Which city (or cities) would be annexing this area? Milwaukie or Gladstone? Could only portions of Oak Lodge be annexed? Or perhaps the northern part annexed to Milwaukie and the southern area to Gladstone? Do either of those cities have an interest on annexation of all or parts of Oak Lodge?

I'd like to know how to turn our area into a financially viable neighborhood with local businesses that create a family neighborhood vibe.

Do the citizens of the unincorporated areas have any say if a neighboring city wants to annex the area?

More government means MORE TAXES !!! I'm opposed to paying more of my retirement income to some governmental entity and particularly METRO. NO NO NO more government.

tax

Taxes

Who is providing the information on the pros and cons of either choice

What impact will each option have on property and other taxes, housing densification, probably many other questions I can't think of right now.

Why is Metro sponsoring this study?

1. What criteria will be used to evaluate and compare governance options? What opportunities will the public have to provide input on the evaluation criteria and evaluation process before publication of the draft report?

2. Why are some public services assumed to be included in the incorporation/annexation analysis while others are excluded? Why were fire, EMS, and parks & recreation excluded? Why were water, wastewater and stormwater included? Were existing service providers consulted regarding these assumptions?

3. What other alternatives and governance models will be considered other than just incorporation or annexation into a city? Will options such as formation of special services districts be considered (e.g., formation of a special services district for planning and code enforcement rather than incorporation)?

What are the perceived benefits for residents if we are advised to incorporate or annex to existing cities?

Changing right-of-way/easements



1. What is the problem the study is seeking to resolve?
2. Why is there no real public input process to crafting the scope of the consultant contract? This certainly has not been the case for the extensive public processes for library location and size and various parks projects and funding. Why is this different?
3. As tax dollars are being used for the study, and public employees are working on this, why aren't meetings with the consultants and Metro staff public meetings?
4. How can this be considered a community driven process, given Metro's control of it?
5. Isn't it a conflict of interest for Metro to be the funder, the project manager and select the consultant to do the study? Isn't one of the principals on the consultant team an ex-Metro employee?
6. Why is this grant and process the only one of this type being handled in this Metro controlled manner?

Stay the same

Does Oak Grove have the economic base to support city hood? Annexed to Milwaukie. That sound interesting.

What services will we still want provided by the County and what may we want to provide for ourselves?

What is the cost benefit situation? Seems like very small tax base here.

How much will taxes go up on businesses and residents; what zoning laws will change; how much freedom to do what we want with OUR property will we lose?

I want to be able to compare how tax base options (low/med/high) what can local incorporation "buy" if we choose? How does that compare to what other local cities pay? How is all of that disconnected from actual governance models (city/hamlet/etc)?

Clear understanding of benefits and draw back to options

I would appreciate as an outcome, having a simple matrix that shows the pros and cons of each type of governance to include costs, authorities, rights, and responsibilities as they would apply to Jennings Lodge area residents and businesses.

1. There are references in the Work Orders for both 3J Consulting and ECONorthwest that refer to the study area as "unincorporated community of Oak Grove". While there is a reference to Jennings Lodge CPO, it is not clear if the study area includes only Oak Grove, or if it also includes the Jennings Lodge area.
2. A frequent complaint of residents in the study area is lack of input into comprehensive plan and zoning decisions. Would a proposed incorporated city adopt the existing county comp plan and zoning code, or develop a new code?

What problem(s) would the changes solve?

Estimated taxpayer cost comparisons for schools, police, fire, utilities, etc.?

What benefit is there to annexation or incorporation? All I see is higher taxes.

Where can I go to get a clear understanding if the differences between these options?

The issue of becoming a city (which I believe thus is) had been tried many times in the past and has never been successful. Why are you wasting tax payer money by trying this again.

The pros and cons of each of the above items

I feel a bit limited in my knowledge to pose a question. When there are forums to join in and hear more, I can imagine some questions will emerge.

What the differences-economically and socially- are

### Q3. Is there anything else you'd like to comment on or share with us?

Parks and recreation should be of highest priority as well as middle housing development in existing neighborhoods.

I am concerned that government begets government, that politics and egos will abound. Soon we will have sidewalks everywhere and our more rural "suburb" will become citified. These are my "fears".

How do we ensure we don't turn into Portland through this process?  
What are the physical boundaries of this proposed study?

How much will property taxes increase? Property taxes are already high and any increase can harm current residents. Will we actually gain more services from taxes going up considering fire and police services will need to be contracted out? Usually with incorporating it costs the residents more and do not actually gain much from it other than paying more to live there and getting some more rules and regulations. Will it end up with a bunch of covenant type of laws? Personally any tax increases are a BAD idea considering how much this COVID issue has hurt people and businesses.

I really want to see better street maintenance. There are too many streets that are gravel or broken up/patched pavement. I would also like to see major visual improvements to the McLoughlin corridor.

We moved from Damascus where they tried to do a similar option. It was not successful. We will keep informed, this is a large issue

let's get something done

What can be done to save our green spaces?

Street maintenance could be improved, local control of zoning is needed, law enforcement needs improvement.

Thank you for leading this effort.

Is the OGCC meeting effectively addressing the items above, or is this up and beyond their sphere of influence?

I'm for local control, but close to retirement, I worry about taxes

The McLoughlin Blvd corridor is an embarrassment to all who live here.

Yes, My concerns are about housing. I wanted to build a mother-in-law apartment in my front yard or put up a yurt. At the county, I was told no yurts as they are temporary. I think that's silly as they allow them in Washington County and cause no known harm. They are a great temporary structure and we need housing. My neighbors had a son move out from NY in his RV when he lost his job only to be told that he could not (in a decent RV) park in their yard, so 5 adults and 3 children ended up in a two bedroom house until they could find their way.

When I went to the county about building, they told me that if I build in front, it has to be bigger than my existing house and if I build in the back it has to be smaller. That certainly is an archaic way of looking at things, as in. many situations including mine that may not work. I don't understand the ordinance that the front house on any property has to be the larger.

The biggest concern is that they told me I could not build under a tree canopy or over tree roots. I live in an Oak Forest. When I told them that, they said, "Just cut down the trees and you can build." I told them I don't want to cut down the forest, I can here to live in the trees. So the county has no tree ordinance to protect what is here.

anticipated initial revenue & expenses of incorporation (will taxes go up and if so what are the costs/benefits). Many bottom-lines and some individuals pride is currently based on keeping the status quo, any data to show the individual and lager financial upside of any change would be powerful. Education/Marketing/Communication based on data. There will likely be a lot of resistance to change and we often struggle to envision what could be and/or what we are currently missing out on. Thus clear factual messaging of why, what, where, how.

PS Thanks so much for continuing these efforts! I was very excited to hear you got the grant!! THANK YOU ALL!

- 1) Not only what things can we access and accomplish as a city, but equally important, what things can we avoid—such as sometimes being governed by county commissioners who are not in alignment with our community's values or more oriented to the rural areas.
- 2) CPO frustration at only being allowed to submit recommendations and the lack of power inherent in that.
- 3) A city would have more influence in and bargaining power in Metro and in the state. It would have parity with other cities, and could interact as equals with them and also team up with other cities for common goals.
- 4) What kind of city govt. would be established?
- 5) Are there currently community members who are ready and willing to run for or be appointed to city positions? A city govt. is a good concept only if there are good, capable people who will fill its vacancies. Otherwise, it could backfire as a step forward.
- 6) Milwaukie has seven active neighborhood associations which meet regularly and report to the city council. Should we adopt this model if we incorporate to keep our city govt. in touch with the people they serve (the word serve being key here, rather than the word govern)?
- 7) I like Ed Gronke's suggestion of starting with a small city, building a high level of citizen engagement, and later annexing more areas if that's in the cards.
- 8) I think other cities can be studied as sources of ideas we might want to replicate.
- 8) A few cities and counties around the country are starting public banking (it's not limited to states). As a city, we could encourage the Metro tri-county region to launch a public bank.  
<https://www.publicbankinginstitute.org/>
- 9) A city could partner with Tri-Met to establish last-mile electric shuttle service and also high speed electric bus service along McLoughlin Blvd.
- 10) A city could express support for an electric bike/ped ferry service to eventually link locations from Oregon City to Vancouver, independent of whether the county expresses support.

Please enumerate the advantages of incorporation.

Ask we the residents and business owners if we want this before you waste more money that would be better spent elsewhere!!!

If the area incorporates, would the community need to build a city hall? Are there suitable places? What kind of cost would be entailed to build and maintain it?

We don't need more taxation - especially in these crazy times when money is short for all.

I believe local control and governance is essential to protect the natural resources of our community. We need to prevent the type of exploitation that occurred on River Road where the retreat center was and an outside developer ruined a beautiful piece of property by clear-cutting it.

There is strength in numbers: the obvious eastern and southern city boundaries should be the 205 Freeway.

Yes please, For years we have worked to upgrade this area! I would like to propose a "Depreciation Tax" on any commercial owner that owns a building and property that is vacated and deteriorating! ( Time limits and \$ Fees need to be regulated) These empty buildings hold up economic progress and lower values, while out of state land lords gain Tax breaks for potentially phony "losses!" Three years ago I counted over 60 empty buildings or businesses on Mc Loighlin Blvd.

Seems like it might be useful to have a summary of the previous incorporation study or project that was done a number of years ago, especially why it didn't pass then, what the various issues were then. That way, people can see how we've grown and what needs to be answered now. Build on the history, in other words.

Good local restaurants, breweries, coffee, parks and recreation.

What are the boundaries?

Is there any greater citizen support for incorporating now than there was 10-12 years ago?

Why is metro providing the grant what do they have to gain

How are you intending to keep everyone in the loop? Is there a way to answer questions about the pros and cons of each option in a very straightforward way, giving people the tools they need to make an informed decision?

1. Since this is advertised as community-based process, why aren't meetings of the OGGP Steering Committee conducted as public meetings?
2. What opportunities will members of the public, local businesses and potentially affected public agencies have - before publication of the draft report - to provide input on the work scope, project approach and alternatives being considered?
3. Who are the "decision makers and stakeholders" that will review and comment on the draft reports? What opportunities will members of the public, local business and potentially affected public agencies have to review and comment on the draft reports?
4. The project description identifies the study area as "generally the area serviced by Oak Lodge Water Services District." Is this OLWSD's service area for water or sanitary services (they are notably different)? What is the specific study area?
5. What outreach efforts are being used to engage local business?
6. What is the scope, schedule and budget for additional studies beyond the current Phase 1 effort?
7. What happens with these questions and comments? Will these questions/comments the OGGP Steering Committee's responses be provided to the public? If so, how? If not, why not?

At a time when this country is facing significant issues such as a failing economy, a serious pandemic and people struggling just to exist just how much public involvement will occur. This survey became more widely known to the community this week and is due Sunday?

This community has always held public involvement as a high standard of expectation for all elected officials. Since this is advertised as a community based effort why aren't these meetings public?

In reading the Metro work orders for the analysis it is clear to me that they don't consistently name Jennings Lodge. What does that mean? Is the focus on Oak Grove?

There seems to be a problem with the description of the geographic limits of the work study. It says it is generally the area serviced by OLWDS. Are you talking about the service district for water or sanitary service?

I would like to state in the interest of full disclosure that I serve the community as the current President of the Oak Lodge Water Services Board of Directors.

Is there an emergency or fire? This is a MINIMAL attempt to get local input. Lots of people would be interested in commenting if they knew about this and were given more than 15 minutes to do it. The time frame, maybe by design(?), could not be worse. In my long public experience nothing was put out to the public between the middle of November and January. Whether it's Thanksgiving, Hanukkah or Christmas, Covid 19, contested elections or concerns about the economy and civil unrest, citizen's attention is diverted. This looks like an attempt to hide a fully formed consultant contract, to study something very important, from the residents and tax[payers of Oak Grove and Jennings Lodge. Start the process in January by developing a full list of options to be examined and criteria by which to evaluate them, in open meetings with real citizens from the area.

I await your response.

Milwaukie (Oak Grove, Jennings lodge) doesn't want to be part of Portland.

Why can't we leave it the way it is? What is wrong with tradition?

I'd love there to be a limit on used car lots!



Roughly, what would the boundaries be for our newly formed area?

Please use every means possible to reach out to all residents, businesses, and others to get as much info and feedback as possible. Trust the process, and listen to allies and challengers as well. I feel strongly that a process like that will build connections between us all, no matter what the outcome.

1. What is driving the speed of this process? It seems like this is a very difficult time to solicit widespread community involvement, and excludes members of the community that either may not have access to, or are less skilled with, electronic communications methods.
2. Where are the questions and comments from this survey going? Are they being winnowed out by the IFE Steering Committee, or are they all being forwarded to the consultants?
3. Is input being solicited from the McLoughlin Area Business Association?

I would like to understand specifically what we'd hope to gain.

The question of incorporation vs annexation vs staying unincorporated should not be decided until we can have several face to face public meetings. On-line meetings and "studies" will not encompass the input from the majority of citizens in the area at this time. I feel the County and Metro may use the corona virus limitations for holding public meetings as a means to determine the future of our area without adequate input and debate.

I bought my house as a long term investment in the land. I want to see the zoning reflect opportunities for that, but not limit me with nonconforming frontage upgrades or taxes with little benefit

Yes, this is a back door attempt at becoming a city, holding the citizens out of the whole process and using Metro and their money (tax payer money) to try and pull this off. What are you trying to hide? What do you hope to gain. Public funds are public funds and the taxpayers should be allowed to participate in the entire process.

What is best for Oak Grove in the long run.

I do appreciate the effort being made by the Committee and will be participating in zoom gatherings to learn more.

The removal of the dam on Kellogg Creek of which I am in favor so the creek will run wild again.

I'm interested in finding out more.