# Evergreen and Grand Commercial Corridors: Issues and Opportunities Community Engagement Summary

## Introduction

In the first stage of the planning process, the project team engaged the public to help identify issues, opportunities, and priorities that will shape a community vision for the Evergreen and Grand corridors with a focus on what types of land uses are appropriate along the corridors and how people can best access them. Over fifty people provided their input, either at the February thirteenth kick-off open house held at the Red Cross building at Fort Vancouver or through the online survey offered for those who were not able to attend in-person. Participants included residents, property and business owners, and a representative from the Washington School for the Deaf.

## Issues, Opportunities, and Priorities

A host of issues and concerns were identified through these outreach and engagement opportunities. The top concern expressed was the need to improve walkability and the lack of safe access throughout the corridor for those walking and biking, especially for students at Harney Elementary school and the Washington School for the Deaf. Another top concern was that recent development was out of context with the surrounding neighborhood and that measures need to be taken to ensure future uses are consistent with historic character of the corridors. Other concerns included the function and appearance of the public realm being poor, disrepair of some existing buildings impacting neighborhood desirability, and impacts of homelessness within the corridor.

Participants identified many uses that they felt were missing in the corridors. In addition to a preference for pubs, coffee shops, cafes, and amenity uses noted by many participants, the need for small-scale local- or regionally-owned retail shops and a grocery store was strongly expressed. Participants also conveyed that the corridors lacked access to parks, plazas, and open space.

Responding to these concerns and missing uses, participants expressed the need for improvements to sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting to make the corridor more livable and inviting, additional neighborhood-serving uses such as retail stores, restaurants, and pubs, community event facilities, and public green open spaces.

Participants also identified uses that they did not want to see in the corridors. Frequently mentioned undesirable uses included large chain stores; auto-oriented uses such as auto/RV dealerships, gas stations and repair/service stations; cannabis businesses, fast food restaurants; mini-marts; strip retail centers; and loan, check cashing, or pawn shop uses.

Opportunity concepts and sites for development were identified. To draw investor interest, many expressed a desire to create ‘focal points’ for both Evergreen and Grand that are distinct and authentic to the Hudson’s Bay neighborhood. The opportunity site most frequently mentioned along the Evergreen corridor was the Crosley Lanes bowling alley where many expressed either a desire for redevelopment or improvements to the building. Along the Grand corridor, vacant and underutilized parcels on the west side of the street were frequently mentioned.

## Next Steps

The input from these engagement efforts will help shape a long-term vision and corridor vision concepts that will be brought forward for community consideration. In the next stage of the process, the community will help to further refine the long-term vision, goals, and objectives, and identify preferences for how to achieve the vision using a range of land use and transportation options provided for the corridors. Outreach and engagement opportunities will include a second open house and online survey (anticipated to be scheduled in mid-April), as well as stakeholder meetings.