

CITY Bridges

News to keep you connected to Albany City government Winter 2012

What is the South Albany Area Plan?

The City of Albany has begun developing a plan for the South Albany area and is seeking community input. The study area is generally all lands between Interstate 5 on the east and Highway 99E on the west, and vacant lands surrounding Oak Creek on the north, then south to the Urban Growth Boundary (just south of

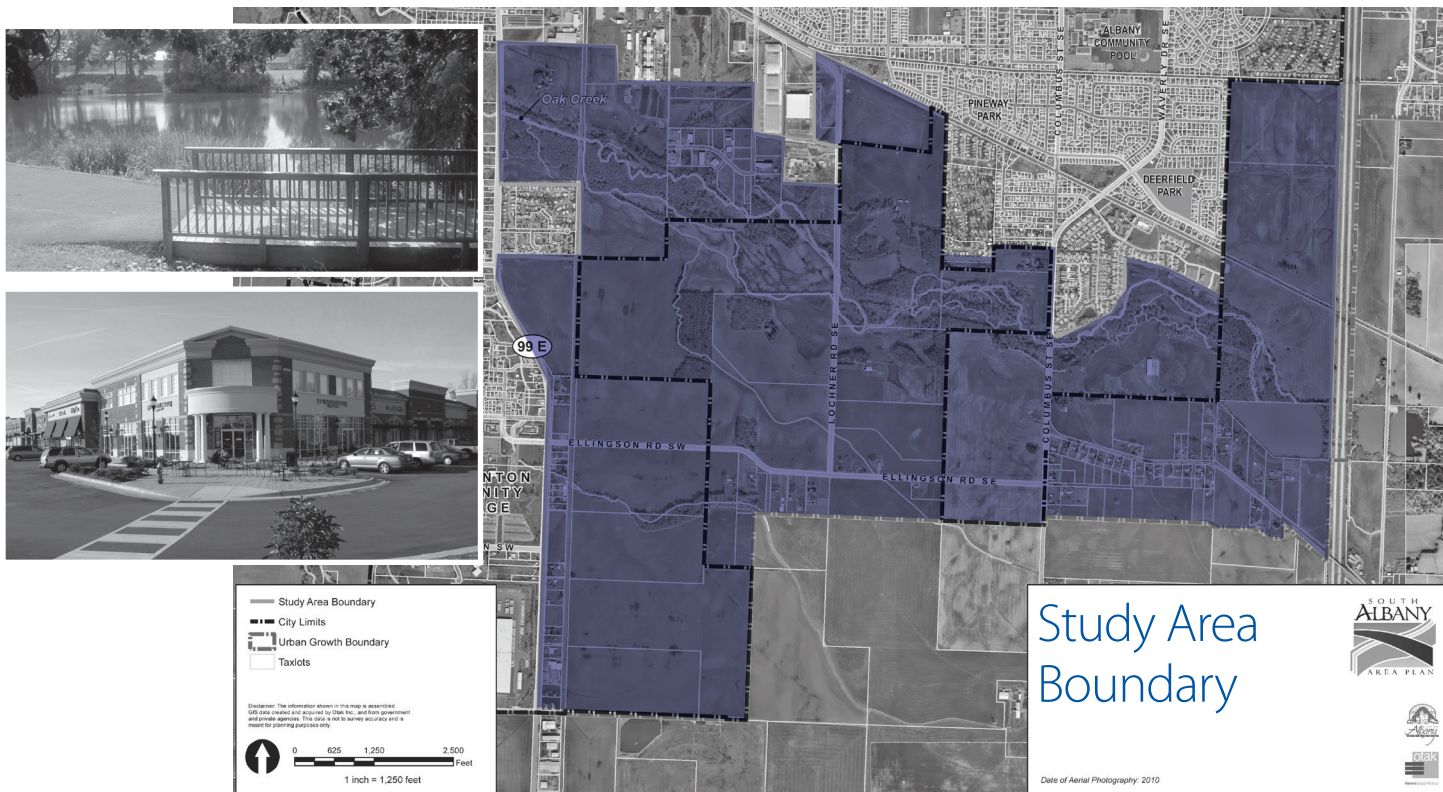
Ellingson Road). The plan will set the direction for future growth and development in this area.

Elements being studied include zoning, transportation and other infrastructure, parks and recreation, schools, historic resources, natural areas and wildlife along Oak Creek, neighborhood

services, development standards, and financing options.

A successful planning project will result in a livable and cohesive mix of neighborhoods, mixed use centers, schools, employment sites, parks and natural areas, all connected by streets, pathways, and open space.

To learn more, call Tari Hayes, Administrative Assistant, 541-917-7566 or Heather Hansen, Planning Manager, 541-917-7564; or visit www.southalbanypian.com.



City Bridges moves on-line

Due to budget cuts, this issue of *City Bridges* will be the last in print for the foreseeable future. The same news and information will now be available through e-mail subscription.

To sign up for our new e-mail list, go to www.cityofalbany.net, look for the signup box at the top of the page, and follow the easy instructions. You can also sign up by texting the word CITYOFALBANY to 22828 with your cell phone.

You are able to sign up for different interest lists so the news you receive is tailored to your preferences. For example, you can sign up for news from Parks & Recreation and Police, or Fire and the South Albany Area Plan. More lists will be added in the future.

The City is using Constant Contact to deliver the e-mail newsletters.

For those who do not want to sign up for an e-mail list, an archive of the most recent news will be available through www.cityofalbany.net. If you do not have a computer, public internet terminals are available at both public libraries.

Everyone should be prepared for emergencies

Emergencies can happen at any time, for any reason. Being prepared can make the difference between a quick, easy recovery and a slow, difficult one.

Preparedness can be accomplished regardless of age, income, or mobility by following a few simple guidelines:

Know your location and what hazards you may be subjected to.

Get to know your community and take stock of your resources. Do you have a place to get hardware supplies, food, or services nearby? Use them.

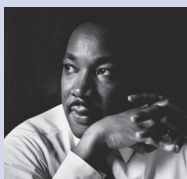
Get to know your neighbors. During an emergency, police and firefighters will be busy and may not be able to help you immediately. You and your neighbors will be the first help available; learn what skills your neighbors have that may be useful when responding to an emergency and let them know if you have any limitations.

With these in place, you will be on the way to being prepared for almost any emergency.

(Information provided by the Linn-Benton Vulnerable Population Committee.)

Remember Martin Luther King, Jr. January 18

The Albany Human Relations Commission and Linn-Benton Community College will recognize Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on Wednesday, January 18, 2012 with activities at the LBCC campus, 6500 Pacific Boulevard SW:



- A documentary about Dr. King will be shown continuously in the Diversity Achievement Center
- Pecan pie, Dr. King's favorite food, will be served in the Center
- An MLK exhibit will be posted Takena Hall
- A jazz band will play in the Hot Shot Café

For up-to-date information, visit www.linnbenton.edu/go/diversity-achievement-center

Do you live near the Santiam-Albany Canal? Sign up for Linn-Benton ALERT

People who own property or live on property adjacent to the Santiam-Albany Canal are encouraged to sign up for the Linn-Benton ALERT emergency notification system, a reverse 911 mass notification system that allows public safety officials to provide rapid notifications to Linn and Benton County residents of emergencies, evacuations, and other urgent events.

Albany Public Works Department officials especially encourage canal area residents and property owners to sign up since the City will begin using the system this winter to identify and contact households that might be affected if the canal overflows or its berm leaks.

Linn-Benton ALERT provides time-sensitive emergency and safety alerts from public safety officials in both counties. Users may choose how and where to receive alerts, including cell phones, home

landlines, work phones, or all three; by e-mail, text messages, or TTY (a device for individuals with impaired hearing). Users may also prioritize how they want to be informed.

The service is available to anyone who lives, works, or has family, friends or property in Linn or Benton Counties. It is sponsored by a partnership of Linn County, Benton County, and the City of Corvallis.

By signing up for the Linn-Benton ALERT Emergency Notification System, users agree to and accept sole responsibility for the accuracy of the information provided to the Linn-Benton ALERT Emergency Notification System. All information is confidential and not shared with outside organizations. Linn-Benton ALERT is only for use in emergency situations.

To sign up, go to <http://www.co.benton.or.us/sheriff/> or <http://www.linnsheriff.org>.

Overnight in

“Regular business hours” has a broad definition when it refers to city government operations. While most offices in City Hall typically open at 8:00 a.m. and close at 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday, City employees are on duty throughout the city limits around the clock – teaching classes at Swanson Fitness Center, patrolling residential neighborhoods and business districts, restocking library shelves, monitoring machines that clean wastewater and drinking water, taking the sick or injured to the hospital, and meeting with Albany residents and citizen volunteers.

The fall issue of *City Bridges* reported some typical duties and activities for City staff on a weekday. Here’s some of what happens in Albany overnight, 7:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m.



7:30 p.m. The Albany Police Department held its 2011 Citizens Academy graduation on November 15, 2011, at City Hall. Seventeen community members successfully completed the Academy and were honored by Police Chief Ed Boyd and Mayor Sharon Konopa. For more information on the Citizens Academy, please visit the Police Department’s page at www.cityofalbany.net.

7:00 p.m. The City of Albany has been producing City Council meeting since May 2007. Meetings are streamed live on the City website and recorded and shown on Comcast cable Channel 28 on the following Sunday and Monday evenings. From a control room behind the dais in the Council Chambers, Information Technology

Technician Michael Cox operates a system of three remotely controlled cameras with sound from the Chambers audio system. A small Tricaster computer receives live feeds from the cameras and audio. Cox switches among the cameras, controls direction and zoom, and manages captioned overlay on the screen. The live meeting is captured to a DVR for creating a DVD used for the TV broadcast. Meeting lengths vary; some take hours to complete. “It takes focus and timing to videotape a live meeting, but it is also one of the most rewarding aspects of my work here,” Cox said.



8:00 p.m. When water from sinks, toilets, and other plumbing leaves your house or business, it flows through a series of pipes and pump stations to the Albany-Millersburg Water Reclamation Facility (WRF). The WRF is a cooperative venture between the Cities of Albany and Millersburg that provides state-of-the-art wastewater treatment, cleaning wastewater through a series of mechanical and biological processes. The facility was upgraded in 2009 to meet the increased supply of wastewater from a growing population. The WRF is operated by a staff of seven full time, certified operators 24 hours a day. Treatment Facilities Operator Vince Seeno determines the status of the plant by a computer system that controls the entire facility.



CITY OF ALBANY Directory

Mayor

Sharon Konopa 541-926-6812

Ward I Councilors

Dick Olsen 541-926-7348
Floyd Collins 541-928-2961

Ward II Councilors

Bill Coburn 541-928-0649
Ray Kopczynski 541-917-0490

Ward III Councilors

Bessie Johnson 541-791-2494
Jeff Christman 541-926-0528

City Manager

Wes Hare 541-917-7505

City Hall Phone Numbers

General Information 541-917-7500
Ambulance Billing 541-917-7710
Building Inspection 541-917-7553
Carnegie Library 541-917-7585
City Manager 541-917-7500
Engineering 541-917-7676
Finance Office 541-917-7500
Fire Department 541-917-7700
Human Resources 541-917-7500
Main Library 541-917-7580
Mayor/Council Line 541-917-7503
Municipal Court 541-917-7740
Parks & Recreation 541-917-7777
Planning and Zoning 541-917-7550
Police Department 541-917-7680
Public Information Office 541-917-7507
Senior Center 541-917-7760
Transit 541-917-7667
Water/Sewer Billing 541-917-7547
Water/Sewer/Streets 541-917-7600

Publishing Information

City Bridges is published by an editorial team from the City of Albany. Questions and input about this newsletter can be directed to:

City Manager’s Office
333 Broadalbin Street SW
P.O. Box 490
Albany, OR 97321-0144



Contributors

Michael Cox • Norma Daily • Casey Dorland
Heather Hansen • Tari Hayes • Lorri Headrick
Kim Kagelaris • Debra Shadle • Heather Slocum
Anthony Vendetti • Carmen Westfall

www.cityofalbany.net

facebook.com/cityofalbany
twitter.com/cityofalbany

Emergencies (Fire, Police, Ambulance)
DIAL 911

n Albany...



8:00 p.m. Environmental Services Technician Bruce Gaskey takes a sample of the influent at the Albany-Millersburg Water Reclamation Facility (AM WRF). Sampling of wastewater assists in determining potential problems that could affect performance of the AM WRF. There are 16 industries in Albany that discharge process wastewater to the sewer system under permits issued by the City's Pretreatment Program. The program includes site inspections and on-site monitoring to regulate potential problem pollutants. Environmental Services staff visit smaller industries and provide information including management practices to reduce problem discharges to the City's wastewater treatment system.

2:35 a.m. Ambulance transports an emergency aneurysm patient to Oregon Health and Science University Hospital in Portland. The 144-mile round trip will take the ambulance out of service for up to four hours. Albany staffs two full-time ambulances and a third not considered full-time because the firefighters on that unit may instead respond on a fire engine, depending on the emergency. Albany ambulances transport over 700 patients to hospitals outside of Albany annually.



6:30 a.m. The Linn-Benton Loop provides commuter bus service between Albany, Linn-Benton Community College, Oregon State University, Hewlett-Packard, and Corvallis. The Loop is operated by the City of Albany but funded through financial partnerships among these organizations. It's one of three public transportation programs operated by the City of Albany. Albany Transit System is a fixed-route bus system that runs in the city limits. Albany Call-A-Ride provides curb-to-curb transportation by appointment for seniors and persons with disabilities throughout Albany and Millersburg. In fiscal 2010-2011, transit programs combined provided a total of 224,859 passenger trips. Transit offices are in the REA Building (it's the little building at the Amtrak station). Information for transit programs is available at the Transit office, Albany City Hall, or at www.cityofalbany.net/bus



7:00 a.m. Public Works Operations administrative staff supports the water, sewer, stormwater, street crews, and the supervisor to meet the daily needs of the Public Works Department and the citizens of Albany. Kim Daniels is one member of this work group, which is the Department's front line for customer service. They process all customer service requests, create work orders, and work on after-hours reporting to meet customer needs. They also process requisitions and purchase orders, update fleet maintenance records, process letters and memos, and perform other administrative functions.

7:15 a.m. Children's Library Scott Keeney sorts books to be reshelfed at the Main Library in the Library's mechanized sorting room. Books and other borrowed items are deposited in an outside drop slot, activating a sensor that turns on the belt and another sensor that reads the item's inventory tag. A computer sends the items down the line and sorts them into bins for return to the proper area of the library. Library staff empty the bins every day before the Library opens to the public.



7:53 a.m. Firefighter/paramedics work 24-hour shifts starting at 7:00 a.m. every third day. They generally participate in fitness training in the morning to prepare for the physical demands of their work, subject to emergency calls, assignments, or other training activities.



What you should know about flooding in Albany

Albany sits at the confluence of the Calapooia and Willamette Rivers. Upstream, the Willamette River watershed drains approximately 4,840 square miles of mostly mountainous timberland. Development in the watershed can increase the magnitude and frequency of flooding. As fields and forests are replaced by pavement and buildings, the development changes the way the water is stored and how it moves.

Causes of Flooding in Albany:

Albany is subject to two types of flooding:

- Riverine flooding is the overbank flooding of rivers and streams. Here, those include the Willamette and Calapooia Rivers; Oak, Periwinkle, Cox, Burkhart, and Truax Creeks; and the Santiam-Albany Canal.
- Urban flooding results from an unusual rapid accumulation of storm water that temporarily exceeds the capacity of the local storm water drainage system.

Stream and river flooding in Albany generally results from large winter storms from the Pacific Ocean. When heavy rainfall comes at the same time as snow-melt runoff, winter storms can cause simultaneous flooding on all rivers and streams in an affected area. Historically, most major floods in Albany have occurred in December, January, and February, although flooding in other months is possible.

Past Floods

Flood records for the City of Albany indicate no regular pattern in which floods occur. Heavy rains that saturate the ground and fill rivers and creeks coupled with warming weather that melts heavy mountain snow created the major flooding that Albany has seen over the last 150 years. The last major flooding since the dams were built on rivers upstream took place in 1964 and 1996.

The February 1996 flood was the highest in recent memory but was considered significantly less than a “100-year flood,” which is a flood that has a 1 in 100 (1%) chance of happening in any given year. The record flood of 1861 had almost three times the volume of water in the Willamette River as measured at the Albany gauge. The 1964 flood would have rivaled the 1861 flood without the flood control dams but, instead, was considered an 80-year flood.

If you are in the floodplain, odds are that someday your property will be damaged. Even if you don’t live in a floodplain, knowing what to do (and not to do) in a flood can be life-saving.

Flood Insurance

Flood insurance protects you from the financial devastation caused by floods. If you don’t have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Even a few inches of water can bring thousands of dollars in

repair and restoration costs. Most homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage, and disaster relief funds cover only a small portion of flood damage.

Even if you don’t carry a mortgage, you should still have flood insurance. If you rent, your landlord is responsible for the structure but not your belongings. You can purchase a separate flood insurance policy because Albany participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The premiums are discounted because Albany also participates in FEMA’s Community Rating System program, which requires floodplain management activities above and beyond minimum NFIP standards.

Coverage applies whether flooding results from heavy or prolonged rains, snow melt, blocked storm drainage systems, levee dam failure, or other causes. To be considered a flood, the waters must cover at least two acres or affect at least two properties.

Flood insurance is available for properties within and outside of floodplains. Your property’s flood risk is shown on flood hazard maps. Different types of policies are available depending on your flood risk:

- If you live in a *high-risk area*, you will need a Standard Policy. Most mortgage lenders will require that you have such a policy before they will approve your loan, including refinancing.
- *Outside of high-risk areas*, flood insurance is also available, usually at lower cost. A Preferred Risk Policy covers both a home and its contents. While you aren’t federally required to have flood insurance in a low-to-moderate risk area, it doesn’t mean you won’t ever need it. Large floods often extend beyond the boundaries of high-risk areas and smaller floods occur outside high-risk areas as well. In fact, about 25% of all flood insurance claims come from low-to-moderate risk areas.

FEMA has the latest information about flood insurance policies and premiums at <http://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/>. FEMA’s “Answers to Questions about the National Flood Insurance Program” is at <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1404>.

Floodplain Function and Regulation

Maintaining the flow capacity of rivers and streams requires cooperation and assistance to prevent flooding and bank erosion. Here are some suggestions and information for understanding how floodplains function and how the City regulates the floodplain to protect property and lives while affording residents the ability to obtain flood insurance:

- **Do not dump or throw anything in ditches, creeks, or drains:** A plugged channel cannot carry water; and when it rains, the excess water must go somewhere. Trash and vegetation dumped into drainageways degrades water quality and contributes to flooding. Dumping is a violation of the Albany Municipal Code. Even grass clippings and branches can accumulate and plug storm drains and channels. If you see dumping or debris in ditches, creeks, or drains, contact the Public Works Department at 541-917-7600.
- **Obtain a floodplain development permit and/or building permit, if required:** Always check with the Community Development Department at 541-917-7550 (Planning) or 541-917-7553 (Building), or visit the customer counter on the second floor of City Hall before you build on or alter your property in the floodplain. A permit



Historically, most flooding in the Albany area affects low-lying areas of North Albany near the Willamette River. The Christmas flood of 1964 was the largest flood in recent history but fell short of being a “100-year flood.” The 1996 flood was considered a 13-year flood, based on regulated flow with dams upriver. Weather watchers and emergency managers in the Willamette Valley are warning of the potential for heavy flooding this winter due to the La Nina weather pattern and limited capacity at the dams.

may be needed to ensure that projects do not cause flooding on other properties. If you see construction work without a building permit posted, contact the Building Division at 541-917-7553.

- **Recognize the natural and beneficial functions of floodplains:** Flooding in streams is a natural process. Understanding and protecting the natural functions of floodplains helps reduce flood damage and protect resources. Vegetation serves as a natural filter, trapping sediments and capturing pollutants; it also anchors stream banks, reducing bank erosion and providing shade, which helps reduce water temperatures. In most cases, removing vegetation near a watercourse is a violation of the Albany Municipal Code.
- **Reduce risk of damage:** Practical and cost-effective methods for reducing or eliminating the risk of flooding are available. Techniques include preparing a household evacuation plan; elevation of the home; relocating the home to higher ground; constructing floodwalls or berms; flood-proofing the structure; having a licensed electrician protect utilities and electrical components; having a licensed plumber install backflow valves or plugs to prevent floodwaters from entering drains, toilets, and other sewer connections; and storing important documents and other irreplaceable items where they are unlikely to be damaged.
- **City floodplain information services:** Flood maps and flood protection references are available at the Albany Public Library, on the City’s website, and at the Community Development Department on the second floor of City Hall. If you live in the city limits and find that your property is located within a floodplain, City staff can provide information such as a FEMA elevation certificate, if one is available for your property. They can also help you estimate the risk of flooding to your home; find ways to reduce or prevent flood damage to your property; make site visits to review flood, drainage, and sewer problems; or provide tips on how to select a contractor. For more information, check <http://www.cityofalbany.net/comdev/floodplain>.
- **FEMA’s Homeowner’s Guide to Retrofitting: Six Ways to Protect Your House from Flooding** is at <http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/mat/fema312.shtm>.

Flood Warning System

A warning of potential flooding is conveyed to the community through the Emergency Alert System. Regular pro-

gramming on radio and television will be interrupted to describe the nature of the flooding, the locations likely to be affected, and what protective action citizens in the area should take. Emergency services personnel will also conduct door-to-door notification when flooding is imminent. You should heed these warnings and take appropriate action to safeguard your life and property.

Flood Safety Tips

- **Do not walk through flowing water:** Drowning is the leading cause of flood deaths, mostly during flash floods. Currents can be deceptive; six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. If you walk in standing water, use a pole or stick to ensure that the ground is still in front of you.
- **Do not drive through a flooded area:** Turn around, don’t drown! More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Don’t drive around road barriers; the road or bridge may be washed out.
- **Stay away from power lines and electrical wires:** The No. 2 flood killer is electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to your electric utility (Pacific Power & Light or Consumers Power) or the county Emergency Management Office.
- **Shut off gas and electricity and move valuable belongings upstairs:** Be prepared in advance with a detailed checklist because warning of an impending flood may provide little time to prepare before evacuation.
- **Look out for animals:** Small animals that have been flooded out of their homes may seek shelter in yours.
- **Look before you step:** After a flood, the ground and floors are covered with debris including broken bottles and nails. Floors and stairs that have been covered with mud can be very slippery.
- **Be alert for gas leaks:** Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Don’t smoke or use candles, lanterns, or open flames unless you know that the gas has been turned off and the area has been ventilated. And don’t turn the gas back on yourself; call Northwest Natural to do it.



Aerial view of North Albany during the 1996 Willamette River flood.