

Metro Opt In – Willamette Falls Redevelopment Summary

Research Design: DHM Research in partnership with Opt In and Cogan Owens Cogan conducted an online survey with Opt In members to help form a future vision for the Willamette Falls site as it redevelops over time.

Research Design: Between October 25 and November 13, 2013, Opt In members were invited to participate in the Willamette Falls Redevelopment survey. Oregon City also hosted a version of the survey and conducted outreach efforts. A total of 1,943 respondents participated in the survey.

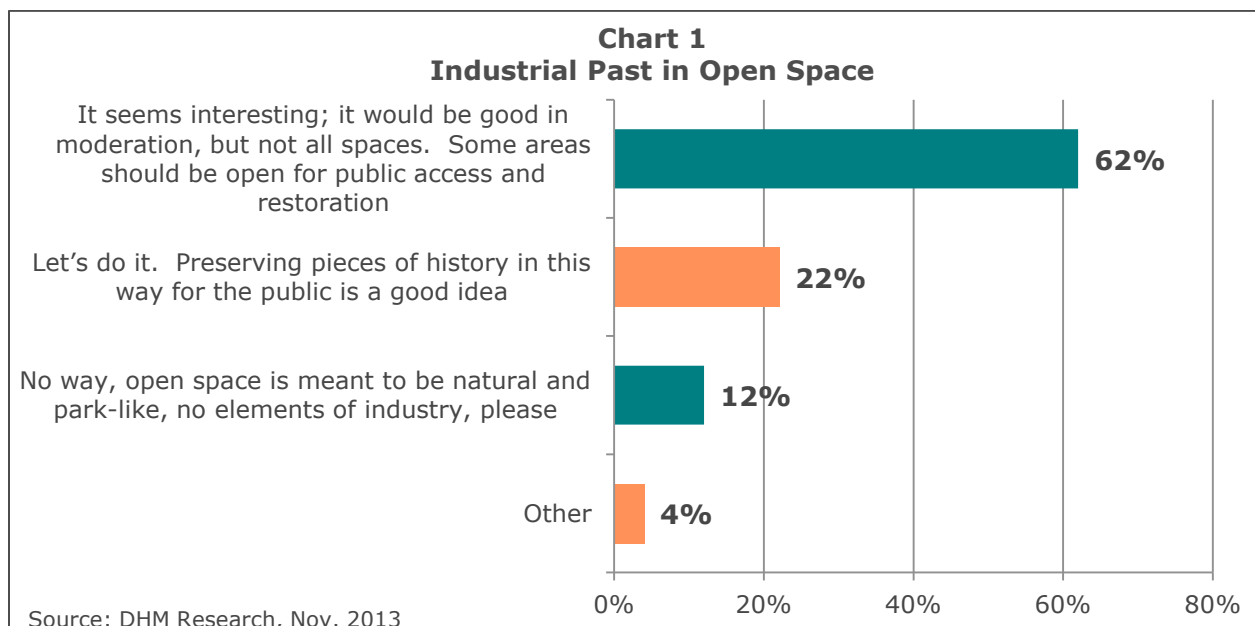
Note to the Reader: The Opt In panel is a form of public engagement. Responses to Opt In feedback opportunities are meant to engage residents in the public planning and decision-making processes. This particular outreach effort engaged over 1,900 residents. Feedback was given from:

- Residents who live across the region, including 316 residents from Clackamas County, 849 residents from Multnomah County, and 348 residents from Washington County.
- 315 younger residents ages 18 to 34 and over 200 minority residents, two groups from which collecting feedback is typically harder to obtain using traditional public engagement methods (e.g., town hall meetings).

* It's worth noting that the member profile of the Opt In panel is skewed toward those older in age, higher educational attainment, Multnomah County residents, and Democrats.

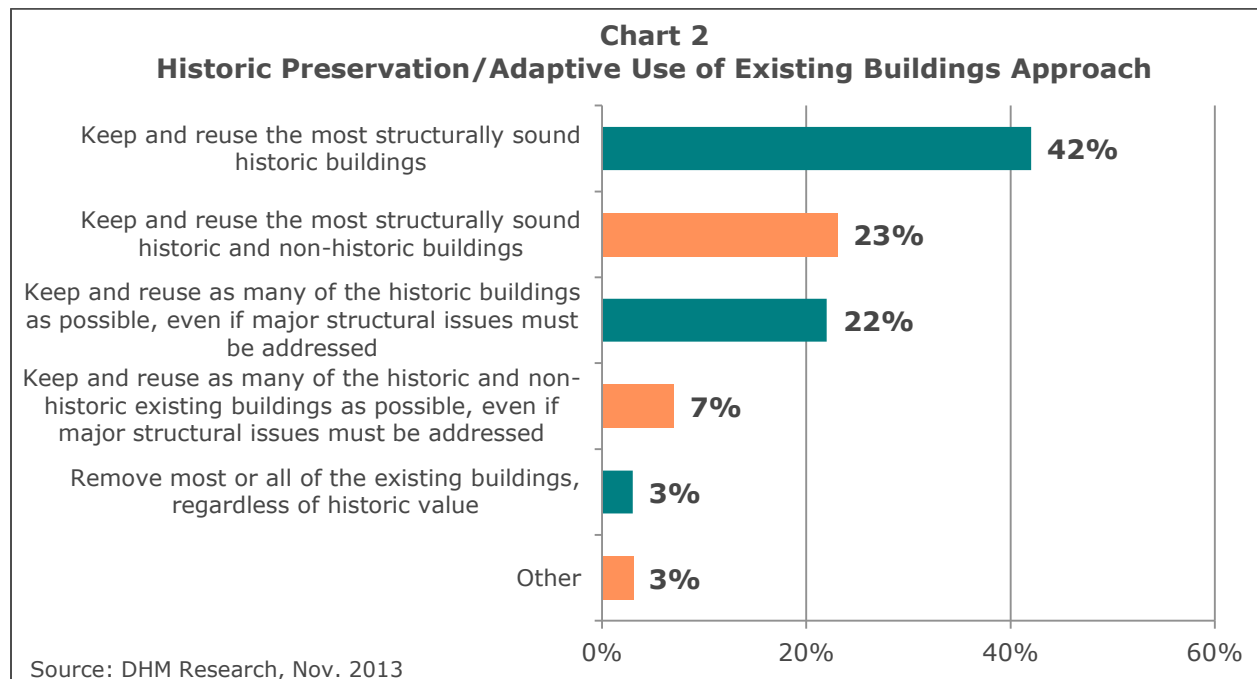
Participants were supportive of incorporating *some* elements of the industrial past in open space (Q1).

When asked about honoring the industrial history at the site, two in three (62%) felt that incorporating some elements of the industrial past sounded interesting, but should be done in moderation. The majority from all three counties as well as all other demographic subgroups shared this opinion.



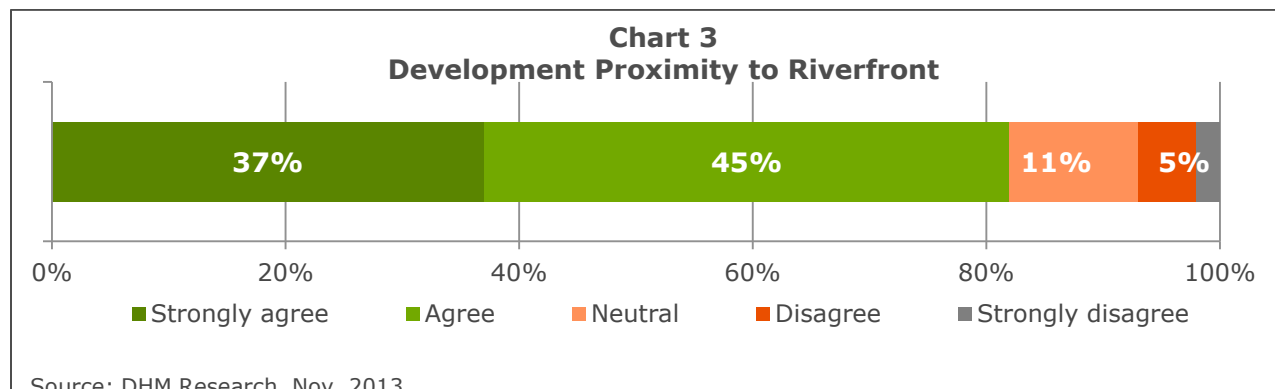
Four in ten prefer to keep and reuse the most structurally sound historic buildings on the site (Q2).

Overall, there is more support for keeping and reusing the **most structurally sound historic buildings** (42%) than keeping **the most structurally sound historic and non-historic buildings** (23%). Two in ten (22%) prefer to keep and reuse **as many of the historic buildings as possible**. There is less support for keeping **as many historic and non-historic buildings as possible** (7%) and **removing most or all of the buildings** (3%).



Most agree with the current vision that most development should take place away from the riverfront, nearer to the bluff and downtown Oregon City – with areas closer to the river and the waterfall preferred for habitat restoration and public access (Q3).

Eight in ten strongly (37%) or somewhat (45%) agree with the current development vision for the site. Strong agreement is seen across all counties and other demographic subgroups.



When asked why they did not agree with the vision, two major themes appear. First, there are those who would like to see more development ensuring the site financially benefits the city. Sample responses include:

"More space should be available for industrial uses." – Male, age 55-64, Washington County

"We need real jobs making things. Zone for heavy industry. Provide tax breaks for real industry." – Male, age 55-64, Multnomah County

"We need vibrant business and condos to attract money to Oregon City more than that much green space. You can't make money off of parks to replace the cost of making them." – Female, age 25-34, Clackamas County

Second, there are those who would like to see less development and more green space and restoration. Sample responses include:

"Too much development and not enough green space keeping in mind that these falls are of native historical significance." – Male, age 65+, Multnomah County

"I am opposed to any development in this area. The entire thing should be returned to green space so Oregon City has a large interpretive park that families can enjoy." – Female, age 35-54, Clackamas County

"As much industry as is possible should be removed and the entire site should be restored to a natural area." – Female, age 35-54, Washington County

Creating a pedestrian/bike walkway along the waterfront, creating public access as close to the Falls as possible via the PGE dam structure, and removing structures to make room for open space and habitat restoration are top ranked priorities to support with taxpayer dollars (Q4).

More than two in three ranked **create a pedestrian/bike walkway along the waterfront** (38%) or **create public access as close to the Falls as possible via the PGE dam structure** (36%) as their top or second priority. These priorities were followed by **remove structures to make room for open space and habitat restoration** (27%). Other priorities supported by at least two in ten participants included:

- **Improve pedestrian and trail connection to and from the site** (22%)
- **Create a plaza/open space which could be actively programmed for events such as farmer's markets** (21%)
- **Create quiet spaces to reflect and observe nature** (18%)

All other priorities were ranked as a top or second priority by 11% or fewer participants.

The majority of participants prefer that access to view the falls up close be provided before major redevelopment begins (Q6).

Six in ten strongly (31%) or somewhat (30%) prefer access be provided for close viewing of the falls before other major development at the site begins. One in ten (13%) disagree this should be a priority. Safety and other priorities were most common reasons for disagreement. Sample responses include:

"Places for community to gather take precedence over viewing path, which would have limited traffic and use." – Female, age 25-34, Multnomah County

"Concern about safety and interfering with tear down and new development." – Male, age 65+, Clackamas County

"I think it's much more important to spend the time and money getting habitat restoration done." – Female, age 35-54, Washington County

"I frankly don't see the falls as a focal point for the project. Putting money into creating open space, trails, and doing habitat restoration - all are way more important." – Male, age 35-54, Multnomah County

Most agree with the approach to limit building heights on the site to be below the height of the bluff in order to protect views and to limit future heights and building scale (Q7).

Eight in ten strongly (36%) or somewhat (46%) agree with limiting building height to protect views. A small number (6%) disagree with the above approach. Common areas of disagreement center on limiting industrial possibilities by limiting height as well as requiring new development to be smaller than current buildings. Sample responses include:

"Limiting the height might/may limit the type of industry. Why restrict ourselves this early in the process." – Male, age 35-54, Multnomah County

"The presence of the bluff should have no relevance to the decision to develop non-environmentally-sensitive urban land as intensively as the market will bear. There should be no codified height limit whatsoever." – Male, age 25-34, Multnomah County

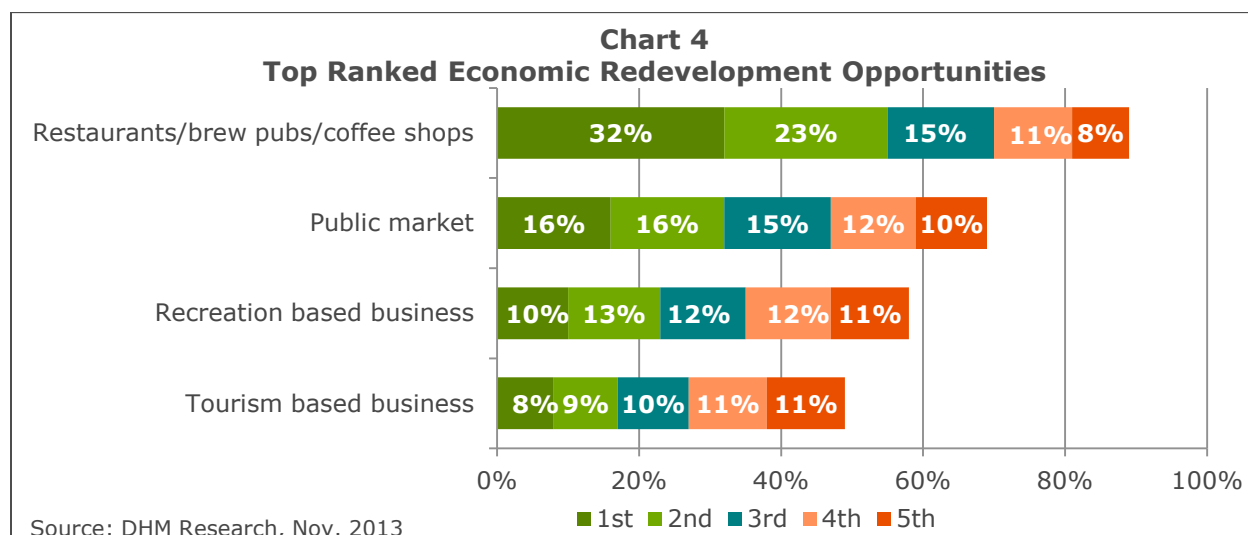
"All future building heights should be allowed at whatever height any private project developer feels is economically and financially necessary to make its business plan succeed." – Male, age 65+, Washington County

"I would like any new development to be both smaller and lower than existing buildings. I'm thinking of the future, when some of the existing buildings may need to be removed and/or repaired. Smaller and lower would preserve the more open areas." – Female, age 35-54, Washington County

"Too high. Retaining historic buildings for adaptive re-use is one thing. Creating large new towers is something else." – Female, age 55-64, Clackamas County

Restaurants/brew pubs/coffee shops were the top economic development priority chosen by participants (Q8).

More than half (55%) ranked **restaurants/brew pubs/coffee shops** as their top or second priority for economic development. This was followed by a **public market** (32%) and recreation (23%) or tourism (17%) based businesses. All other priorities were ranked as a top or second priority by 12% or fewer participants.



Removing structures not identified for preservation within the floodplain and providing restored habitat opportunities for native plants and wildlife was the highest priority restoration project (Q10).

More than half of participants prioritized removing structures not identified for preservation within the floodplain and providing restored habitat opportunities for native plants and wildlife as one of their top three restoration projects to prioritize.

Table 1
Habitat Restoration Projects

Restoration Project	N=1943
Remove structures not identified for preservation within the floodplain and provide restored habitat opportunities for native plants and wildlife	56%
Increase roughness in and along the river edge to create improved habitat and resting opportunities for upstream migrating salmon and lamprey	45%
Restore and revitalize the intake basin/lagoon area of the upper falls at the south end of the site for native plants and wildlife	45%
Restore natural channels or "tail races" so water flows through the site	40%
Remove industrial structures along the waterfront to establish shoreline habitat for native plants and wildlife	37%
I don't have enough information to answer this question	15%
Public money should not be used to finance habitat restoration	5%
Other, please specify	2%
Don't know	0%

Strong support was also seen for other projects including:

- **Increase roughness in and along the river edge to create improved habitat and resting opportunities for upstream migrating salmon and lamprey and restore and revitalize the intake basin/lagoon area of the upper falls at the south end of the site for native plants and wildlife** (45%)
- **Restore natural channels or “tail races” so water flows through the site** (40%)
- **Remove industrial structures along the waterfront to establish shoreline habitat for native plants and wildlife** (37%)
 - Clackamas County residents (43%) were more likely to prioritize this than those from Multnomah County (36%) and Washington County (33%).

Willamette Falls Redevelopment Project
October 25th – November 13th; N=1,943
DHM Research

Survey Introduction

Welcome!

Help guide the future of Willamette Falls in downtown Oregon City: weigh in on redevelopment and community access options developed with help from more than 2,000 Oregonians. The Willamette Falls Legacy Project will use this information to shape a final Master Framework Plan, to be submitted as part of a land use zone change application in Oregon City next spring.

Start

Please take a few moments to orient yourself to the site with this aerial image showing the boundary of the site, the Willamette River, Hwy 99E, the upper falls and lagoon area, and downtown Oregon City.

Image: Site aerial with labels and boundary

Historic and Cultural Interpretation

Honoring the history and culture of Native Americans, pioneers, and workers who have had history on the site for the past 140 years and into time immemorial is important. Sharing historical and cultural information with the community requires public access and a healthy habitat to provide space and place. It also is supported by development to help finance the improvements. It is important to keep in mind that the preservation of historic structures and creation of open space and healthy habitat comes with a cost. Please consider each of the core values as well as taxpayer costs to preserve and/or re-use historic structures when assessing your opinions on historical and cultural interpretation of the site.

1. To honor industrial history, how do you feel about incorporating elements of the industrial past in open space? Please keep in mind there would likely be a cost to both remove structures as well to preserve them and make them safe to the public.

Image: Mill Ruins

Response Category	N=1943
Let's do it. Preserving pieces of history in this way for the public is a good idea	22%
It seems interesting; it would be good in moderation, but not all spaces. Some areas should be open for public access and restoration	62%
No way, open space is meant to be natural and park-like, no elements of industry, please	12%
Other	4%
Don't know	0%

- Preserving at least some of the existing buildings on the site has been a goal for the project, both for preserving some of the iconic history of the site and for the environmental benefits of “recycling” these structures for new uses. Fifteen (15) of the 53 buildings on the site have been evaluated as historically significant, and of those 15 only a handful are in reasonably good structural condition. Keeping in mind both public and private costs necessary to adaptively re-use historical structures, what approach would you prefer for historic preservation/adaptive use of the existing buildings?

Image: Toronto distillery district, map of identified historic preservation buildings and labels

Response Category	N=1943
Keep and reuse as many of the historic and non-historic existing buildings as possible, even if major structural issues must be addressed	7%
Keep and reuse as many of the historic buildings as possible, even if major structural issues must be addressed	22%
Keep and reuse the most structurally sound historic and non-historic buildings	23%
Keep and reuse the most structurally sound historic buildings	42%
Remove most or all of the existing buildings, regardless of historic value	3%
Other	3%

Public Access

Public access to the site can be supported by public-private partnerships which help finance public access, habitat restoration, and interpretive opportunities. Habitat restoration and historical and cultural interpretation make public access opportunities more meaningful. Please take into consideration each of the core values as well as potential taxpayer dollars necessary when assessing your opinions on public access for the site.

- During the visioning phase, community members said they prefer most development to take place away from the riverfront, nearer to the bluff and downtown Oregon City – with areas closer to the river and the waterfall preferred for habitat restoration and public access.

To check in, take a look at the aerial photo showing development and public access areas; would you say that you agree or disagree with this scenario?

Image: development blocks and blended open space overlay aerial.

Response Category	N=1943
Strongly agree	37%
Agree	45%
Neutral	11%
Disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	2%
Don't know	0%

3a. If you disagree, why?

Response Category	N=1943
Don't know	

4. Creating high-quality open space and removing large structures on the site will require the use of taxpayer dollars. Please review and rank the top five project priorities you would support with taxpayer dollars:

Response Category	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
Create a pedestrian/bike walkway along the waterfront	19%	19%	15%	12%	8%
Connect trail south to Canemah National Historic District and Canemah Bluffs Natural Area	3%	5%	11%	9%	13%
Create a plaza/open space which could be actively programmed for events such as farmer's markets	8%	13%	12%	14%	10%
Create smaller public spaces in development areas, for example, courtyards and green roofs	2%	4%	5%	8%	9%
Remove structures to make room for open space and habitat restoration	19%	8%	7%	6%	7%
Create an amphitheater	2%	2%	3%	3%	5%
Create quiet spaces to reflect and observe nature	8%	10%	8%	9%	9%
Create an open lawn area near the waterfront	4%	7%	7%	7%	8%
Create active recreation opportunities	3%	3%	3%	4%	6%
Create a splash park and kids' play area	1%	2%	3%	3%	4%
Create public access as close to the Falls as possible via the PGE dam structure	23%	13%	11%	9%	9%
Improve pedestrian and trail connection to and from the site	8%	14%	15%	15%	11%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

5. In thinking of the lagoon/intake basin area near the PGE dam (*show location on aerial and show image of present day, slide 66*), there are possibilities to re-use the buildings for active uses like a boathouse, restaurant, or brewery. There is also the possibility to remove the buildings for open space next to the lagoon. Which scenario do you prefer?

Response Category	N=1943
Reuse the buildings	12%
Create open space at the lagoon	36%
Both, keep just one or two buildings for active uses and also create open space	49%
Other	3%
Don't know	0%

6. Keeping in mind the need to responsibly use taxpayer dollars, should access to view the falls up close be provided before major redevelopment begins?

Image: use slide 57, aerial highlighting viewing platform and walkway to platform at PGE dam

Response Category	N=1943
Strongly yes	31%
Yes	30%
Neutral	26%
No	9%
Strongly No	4%
Don't know	0%

- 6a. If you disagree, why?

Response Category	N=
Don't know	

Economic Redevelopment

The project aims to create and expand the jobs lost with the closure of the Blue Heron Paper Mill. The Willamette Falls Legacy Project presents an opportunity to bring new types of industry to Oregon City and ensure that redevelopment creates jobs and prosperity in the region. This project also aims to complement and support Oregon City's current Main Street and strengthen its downtown. Tourism, tech and light industry are all potential options for redevelopment on the site. Economic redevelopment is supported by public open space, healthy habitat, and historical and cultural interpretation by creating meaningful land values and helping developers reach their goals for investment. This allows the public sector to work with private partners and ensure that the four core values meet the needs of all parties, including Oregonians who have advocated for each of the goals in the master framework plan. Please take into consideration each of the core values when assessing your opinions on economic redevelopment opportunities for the site.

7. Current buildings within the blocks identified most suitable for development range from 45 - 65 feet tall. The adjacent bluff east of the site is about 100 feet above the site and no existing buildings surpass the height of the bluff. The project team plans to limit building heights on the site to be below the height of the bluff in order to protect views. The team also plans to allow future heights and building scale to be similar to the

heights and sizes of existing buildings on the site today. This allows for different uses than currently exist in Oregon City’s downtown. Do you agree / disagree with this approach?

Image – cross section showing heights and sizes.

Response Category	N=1943
Strongly agree	36%
Agree	46%
Neutral	12%
Disagree	4%
Strongly disagree	2%
Don't know	0%

7a. If you disagree, why?

Response Category	N=
Don't know	

8. What types of economic redevelopment opportunities most interest you? Please rank your top five choices

Please rank your top five opportunities, 1st through 5th:

Response Category	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
Arts	5%	7%	10%	10%	10%
Education	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%
Recreation based business	10%	13%	12%	12%	11%
Public market	16%	16%	15%	12%	10%
Office	2%	4%	3%	5%	6%
Tech office	4%	4%	5%	4%	4%
Light industry	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Restaurants/brew pubs/ coffee shops	32%	23%	15%	11%	8%
Retail	3%	6%	8%	10%	11%
Residential	3%	4%	6%	7%	7%
Hospitality/Hotel	3%	4%	6%	8%	9%
Tourism based business	8%	9%	10%	11%	11%
Other	4%	0%	1%	0%	2%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

9. In thinking about parking for the downtown area overall, how close should a shared public parking structure be for you to visit the site? Universal accessibility and ADA compliance would be observed to ensure individuals of all abilities are able to access the site.

Response Category	N=1943
I would travel up to 10 blocks to access the site from a shared public parking facility	25%
I would travel up to 5 blocks to access the site from a shared public parking facility	48%
I would travel up to 2 blocks to access the site from a shared public parking facility	22%
I would only park and visit the site if the parking facility were on site	6%
Don't know	0%

Healthy Habitat

Restoration projects that meet the healthy habitat core value can be made possible with financing from approved economic redevelopment. Habitat restoration and historical and cultural interpretation make public access opportunities more meaningful. Please consider each of the core values when assessing your opinion on healthy habitat for the site.

10. Public financing will be necessary to make possible many habitat restoration opportunities. Keeping in mind taxpayer costs, which three habitat restoration projects would you prioritize?

Response Category	N=1943
a. Remove industrial structures along the waterfront to establish shoreline habitat for native plants and wildlife	37%
b. Increase roughness in and along the river edge to create improved habitat and resting opportunities for upstream migrating salmon and lamprey	45%
c. Remove structures not identified for preservation within the floodplain and provide restored habitat opportunities for native plants and wildlife	56%
d. Restore and revitalize the intake basin/lagoon area of the upper falls at the south end of the site for native plants and wildlife	45%
e. Restore natural channels or "tail races" so water flows through the site	40%
f. I don't have enough information to answer this question	15%
g. Public money should not be used to finance habitat restoration	5%
h. Other, please specify	2%
Don't know	0%

Closing Questions:

11. What inspires you most?

Response Category	N=

12. What have we missed?

Response Category	N=
Don't know	

13. What would keep you involved to help implement the vision?

Response Category	N=
Don't know	

14. Could you consider yourself a Community Champion for the Willamette Falls Legacy Project, meaning you would want to stay involved and ensure the project is implemented over the course of the following years?

Response Category	N=1943
Yes	39%
No	19%
Not sure	42%

What is your age range?

Response Category	N=1943
Under 18	0%
18-24	2%
25-34	14%
35-54	39%
55-64	27%
65 or above	16%
Refused	1%

What is your gender?

Response Category	N=1943
Male	45%
Female	55%
Don't know	1%

County

Response Category	N=1513
Multnomah	56%
Washington	23%
Clackamas	21%

When it comes to politics, do you consider yourself more of a Democrat, more of a Republican, or more of an Independent or a member of another party?

Response Category	N=1943
More of a Democrat	53%
More of a Republican	12%
More of an Independent/Other	29%
No answer	7%

What is the highest level of education you have had the opportunity to complete?

Response Category	N=1943
8 th grade or less	0%
Some high school	0%
High school graduate	1%
Some college/community college/2-yr degree	20%
College degree/4-yr degree	34%
Post graduate	40%
No answer	3%

Ethnicity

Response Category	N=1943
African	0%
American Indian/Native American	0%
Asian or Pacific Islander	1%
Black/African American	0%
Hispanic/Latino	1%
Slavic	0%
White/Caucasian	85%
Middle Eastern/North African	0%
Two or more races	4%
Other	2%
Refused	8%

Just your best guess, what is your household income before taxes?

Response Category	N=1943
Less than \$10k	2%
\$10k-\$14,999	2%
\$15k-\$24,999	3%
\$25k-\$34,999	4%
\$35k-\$49,999	7%
\$50k-\$74,999	13%
\$75k-\$99,999	12%
\$100k-\$149,999	11%
\$150k-\$199,999	4%
\$200k or more	3%
Refused	39%

