

# CORE VALUES for RE-IMAGINING WILLAMETTE FALLS

Willamette Falls is one of the nation's most beautiful and historic natural wonders. The largest waterfall in the Pacific Northwest, Willamette Falls was long an important cultural and gathering place for Native American Tribes. Lewis and Clark made many references to the "Falls of the Multnomah" and the tribe that lived there.

The Falls sit at the end of the Oregon Trail, and throughout the late 1800s this was the heart of a thriving frontier city. This became the site of energy generation for Oregon's early industries, including the state's first paper mill and the world's first long distance electrical power transmission line from the Falls to Portland.

The Blue Heron Paper Company, which closed its doors in 2011, was the last in a succession of businesses that contributed to a strong working waterfront in Oregon City. The 23 acres formerly occupied by the mill are for sale, with purchasers interested in the site.

Oregonians now have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to re-imagine Willamette Falls and its surroundings as master planning for the Blue Heron site gets underway. You can help define how this area is transformed for economic redevelopment, public access, healthy habitat, and historical and cultural interpretation.

A successful master plan will rezone the site and will reduce and remove barriers for redevelopment. Finding the right balance between certainty and flexibility for the public and a future owner will be driving goals for the framework plan. Early catalyst projects will be critical to maintaining momentum for the site's eventual transformation.

Project partners have identified four interrelated core values that will help guide the vision and redevelopment of the site.



### Public Access

Ensure access to the falls and places for people to gather



### Economic Redevelopment

Provide jobs and prosperity



### Healthy Habitat

Maintain, restore and protect the unique ecosystem of fish, wildlife and plants along the river



### Historic & Cultural Interpretation

Provide opportunities to connect to history as well as current cultural practices related to the Falls



## PROJECT PARTNERS

The State of Oregon, Metro, Clackamas County, Oregon City, and the Trustee (and/or Buyer) of the Blue Heron site.



[www.rediscoverthefalls.org](http://www.rediscoverthefalls.org)



# Public Access

July 2013



# Key Facts

## Access

### Vehicle:

Access to the site for vehicles is only available via Main Street. Additional access would require extensive engineering and would be costly

### Rail:

The Union Pacific rail line adjacent to the site is very active, including regular Amtrak passenger service

### Pedestrian:

The PGE Dam offers an exciting opportunity to get close to the Falls and experience seasonal change in flow and dam management processes

The rail spur south of the mill site offers an opportunity for a pedestrian and bicycle connection to Canemah and nearby public open spaces

### Boat:

This project will consider the boater's experience of the site and potential new dock locations

### Bicycle/Regional Trails:

The McLoughlin Promenade offers incredible views of the site and could become part of a loop trail that includes the site and railroad spur line and future connections to Canemah Bluff, a Metro-owned natural area.

## Greenway Setback

There will likely be a 25' setback from Ordinary High Water, within which public access may be provided. Unless existing structures/platform within the setback are reused, then no new development in the greenway is permitted.

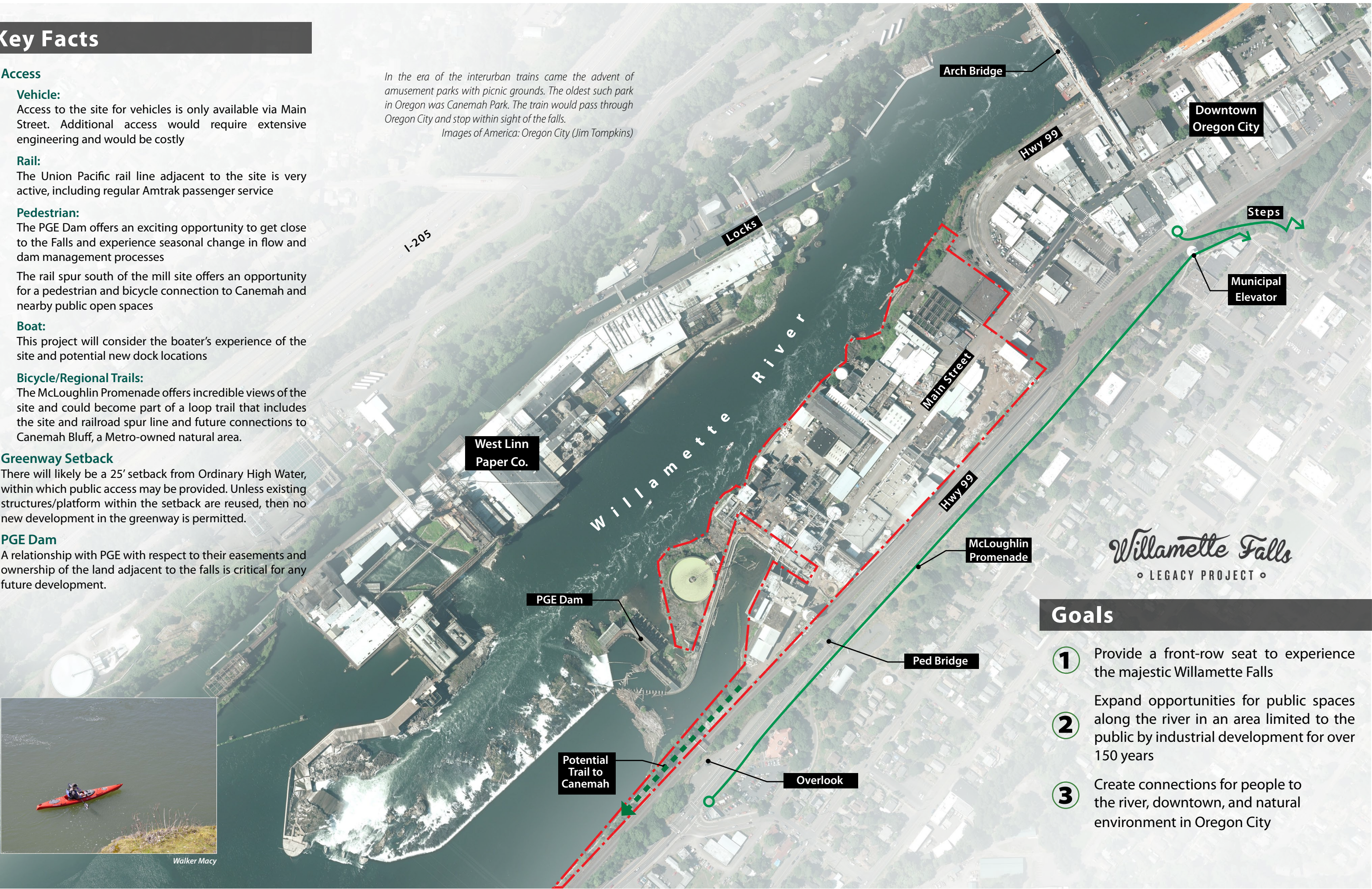
## PGE Dam

A relationship with PGE with respect to their easements and ownership of the land adjacent to the falls is critical for any future development.



Walker Macy

*In the era of the interurban trains came the advent of amusement parks with picnic grounds. The oldest such park in Oregon was Canemah Park. The train would pass through Oregon City and stop within sight of the falls.*  
*Images of America: Oregon City (Jim Tompkins)*



*Willamette Falls*  
• LEGACY PROJECT •

## Goals

- 1 Provide a front-row seat to experience the majestic Willamette Falls
- 2 Expand opportunities for public spaces along the river in an area limited to the public by industrial development for over 150 years
- 3 Create connections for people to the river, downtown, and natural environment in Oregon City