



# Linn County NEWS



Contact: Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, 541-967-3825 or email: [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us)

## Commissioners move toward sale of millsite sections

ALBANY — Tuesday morning, Linn County Commissioners Roger Nyquist, Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker gave initial approval to provide the city of Sweet Home with 2.69 acres on which the city plans to develop temporary shelters for the homeless and directed county staff to map out sections of the former Willamette Industries mill site that have no environmental contamination so they can be offered for sale as soon as possible.

Linn County took possession of the property 12 years ago in lieu of \$500,000 in back taxes. Since then, the county gave about 220 acres known as the Knife River property to the city of Sweet Home and has worked with the Department of Environmental Quality to quantify and mitigate areas with environmental contamination.

The commissioners recently met with the Sweet Home City Council and learned the city is not interested in taking over the property, except for the homeless site.

Several acres of those contaminated areas have been deemed “No Further Action” required in regard to environmental testing and mitigation.

County Attorney Gene Karandy estimates about half of the 150-acre property could be sold now.

Board Chairman Nyquist said, “Time is of the essence.”

He said it appears the hot housing market may be cooling and it is “time to pull the trigger,” and get the property back into private ownership.

All of the commissioners are concerned that selling the property as a whole — without DEQ waivers across the board — could someday result in parts of the site coming back into county ownership.



*The image of the old Willamette Industries water tower is reflected in a puddle of water.*

None of the commissioners support that.

Nyquist was prepared to take action immediately, but Commissioner Tucker — who has worked on the clean-up work for several years — suggested he work with the Rachel Adamec, the county’s real property manager, to develop an accurate map of the portions of the property that could be sold now.

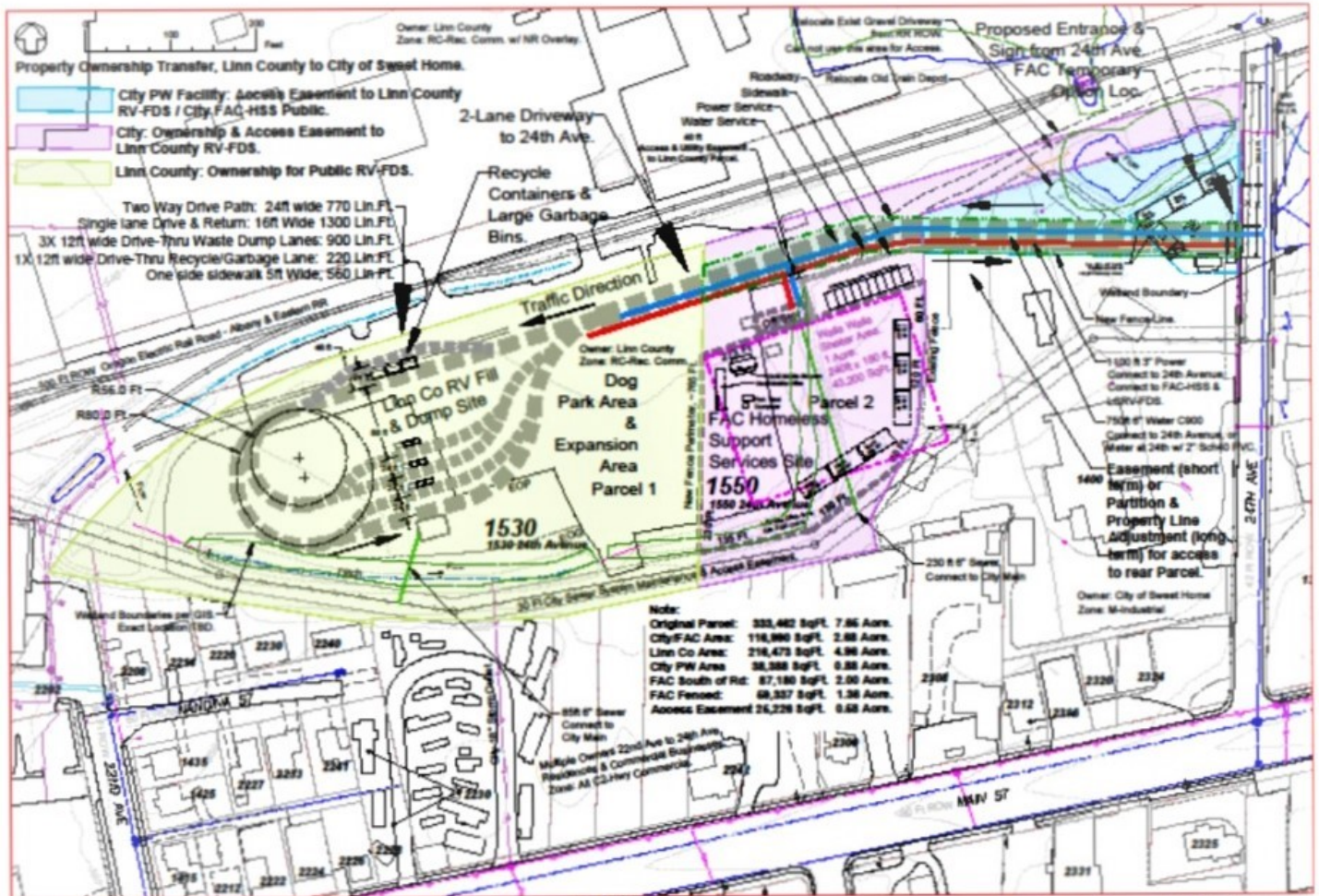
The DEQ has told the county No Further Action designations could be forthcoming by April, but prior experience has shown the timeline could

be much longer than that, the commissioners agreed.

In other business the commissioners:

- Approved an intergovernmental agreement with Oregon Health & Science University to provide public health nurse visitations to homes of children with special health needs. The agreement is for \$34,024.
- Approved an intergovernmental agreement with Community Services Consortium to provide up to 120 hours of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services to CSC clients.
- Approved an intergovernmental agreement with Western Oregon University to provide students with practicum learning at the Master’s Degree level in the area of Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling.
- Amended an agreement with Greater Albany Public Schools for transition services. A previous approval was for \$131,987, but that was increased to \$133,464. This is federal money and is used to support a Transition Program Specialist, horticulturalist, a JDEP classroom assistant, tutoring at the Albany House Shelter, a summer education program and transportation.
- Approved annexing property owned by Ryan and Jennifer Smothers into the Lebanon Rural Fire District.
- Approved a wrecking license for Aerostar Towing & Auto Wrecking of Lebanon.

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Owner: Linn County  
 300 SW 4th Ave, Albany OR 97321  
 Property: 13S 01E 29CC/2204

**Exhibit "A"**  
**1530 & 1550 - 24th Avenue**

City of Sweet Home, CEDD. 11/29/2021  
 3325 Main Street, Sweet Home OR 97386

Surveyor: TBD

Area Utilities, Primary 24th Ave Access  
 LCRVD & Homeless Support Services

Map includes the 2.69 acres of the former Willamette Industries mill site that Linn County will deed to the city of Sweet Home for development of a homeless site. It will include access to an area where Linn County Parks & Recreation will develop an RV dumping station.