

**W**ith a population of approximately 29,000 residents, River Road and Santa Clara represents an unusual patchwork of City and unincorporated land. Currently, Santa Clara is 40% City residents and River Road is 30% City residents, and the numbers continue to grow with new development.

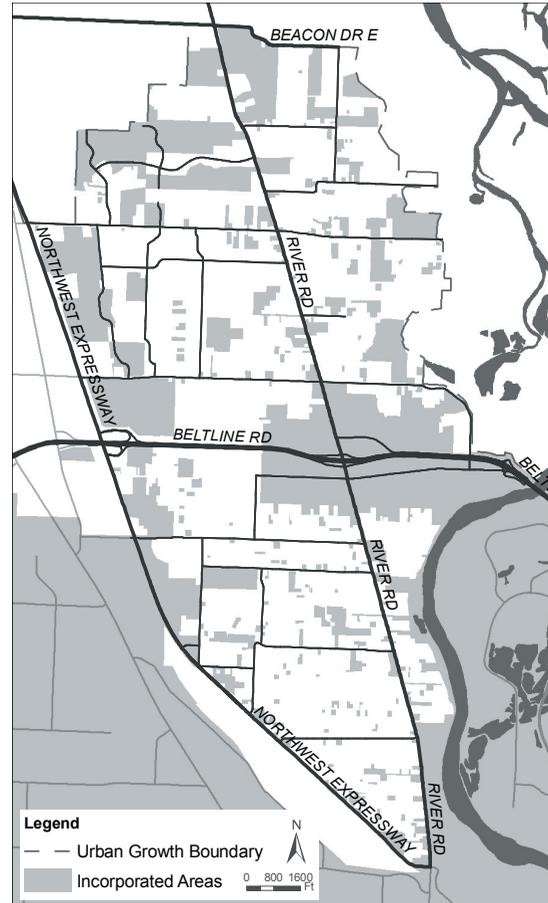
In most areas of Eugene, the City provides fire, police, road, planning, recreation, and library services. In contrast, an unincorporated resident in Santa Clara or River Road has three to four different providers for the same services.

What does the future hold for River Road and Santa Clara? How will continued growth and development be managed? These questions have stimulated the City of Eugene to begin planning the transition of the area from a rural landscape to an urban community.

This project is an outgrowth of the 2002 Urban Services Committee final report, prepared by a group of River Road and Santa Clara residents in collaboration with the City of Eugene.

For a copy of the 2002 Urban Services Report or background on the project, see our web site at [www.rrsctransition.info](http://www.rrsctransition.info).

### **River Road/Santa Clara Neighborhoods**



The shaded areas on the map are annexed to the City of Eugene, and the white areas are not incorporated. Most residential and commercial development occurs within the Urban Growth Boundary. The Santa Clara neighborhood is located north of the Beltline, between Northwest Expressway and the Willamette River. The River Road neighborhood is south of the Beltline, between the Northwest Expressway and the river.

### **For More Information**

The Project web site includes updates on planning activities in the neighborhoods, meeting summaries of the River Road Santa Clara Task Force, and other related links.

[www.rrsctransition.info](http://www.rrsctransition.info)

Write to the project at:

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# **River Road/ Santa Clara**

## **TRANSITION PROJECT**

## Goals of the Transition Project

A major goal of the project is to establish a partnership with residents of River Road and Santa Clara, City and County staff and elected officials, and special district providers. The outcome of the project will be a Transition Plan for River Road and Santa Clara. The Plan will identify strategies to:

- forge new and creative methods and practices for the most effective and efficient delivery of urban services,
- preserve community and neighborhood values, and
- retain where feasible community institutions

A Task Force of neighborhood residents guides the process and builds on the recommendations of the River Road Santa Clara Urban Services Committee. Committee members expressed the following ideas in their 2002 final report:

*“As we early suspected ... strong resistance to the City would continue unless citizens of this area have a voice in their own destiny.”*

*“We wish the Eugene City Council and Lane County Board of Commissioners would set aside the mind that has us trapped in ‘stand-off transition’ and help to find some creative new directions to collaborate with our communities.”*

*“River Road and Santa Clara residents are concerned and knowledgeable about their neighborhood. They want to be involved in resolving issues and to begin a collaborative effort so that jointly the City and residents can come up with a plan that reflects the unique characteristics of our community.”*

## History of the Neighborhood

River Road and Santa Clara have been neighbors to the City of Eugene almost since the City was founded in 1853. River Road was once part of Oregon’s first overland link between Portland and California – the Old Territorial Highway. This stagecoach road connected the southern Willamette Valley to the rest of the region in 1865, and the fertile agricultural lands in River Road and Santa Clara were immediately attractive to settlers.



Fruit and nut orchards, as well as larger ranches, defined the landscape for decades.

However, change began redefining the River Road and Santa Clara communities as early as 1950. Houses replaced many of the filbert and walnut groves in the River Road area by 1950, and by 1975, curved streets and cul-de-sacs

became common in many parts of Santa Clara – though the neighborhoods remained outside of the Eugene City limits.

In 1982, a regional plan – the MetroPlan – determined that all new development inside the Urban Growth Boundary would be annexed to the City – beginning the patchwork of City and unincorporated properties in River Road and Santa Clara. Today, this transition from rural to urban and urbanizing communities is accelerating, creating questions and challenges about the future of the River Road and Santa Clara areas.

## Issues and Challenges for Residents

Under the MetroPlan, River Road and Santa Clara have evolved into a complex mosaic of residences and businesses with a fragmented system of services for police, fire, recreation, library and transportation. This disjointed system, involving several agencies, has created duplication, inefficiencies and frustration for both residents and service providers. In addition, not only are more people moving into the River Road and Santa Clara areas, but the diversity of this growing population is also creating new demands for services.

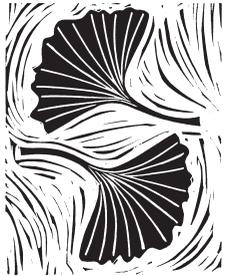
## Opportunities for the Future

Urbanization has also created tensions between the City of Eugene and River Road and Santa Clara residents – tensions which were heightened in the 1980’s by mandated hook-ups to the sewer system and the MetroPlan approach to annexation. In the 1990’s angry residents contested the legality of the sewer process. Today, many residents seek to resolve past issues, build community, improve public decision-making, and plan for the future.

The City has contracted with a team of consultants to address these community planning needs. David Reed & Associates is working with residents in River Road and Santa Clara to identify ways to improve services and explore possibilities for retaining the character of existing neighborhoods as growth occurs. The team includes a Transition Manager, Facilitator, Outreach Specialist, and Governance Specialist.

## The River Road Santa Clara Task Force

Central to the Transition Project is the River Road Santa Clara Task Force, a group of twelve residents who have volunteered to meet monthly to discuss, research, and make recommendations on a variety of issues related to land use and services in the neighborhood. Nominated by local residents and appointed by the Transition Manager, the Task Force members include members of the Santa Clara and River Road Community Organizations, a business owner, small-scale developer, farmer, accountant, community volunteers, and former teachers in the local schools.



## Outcomes for the Neighborhood

Specific recommendations for the neighborhoods will come from the River Road Santa Clara Task Force. In addition to facilitating the Task Force, the Transition Project is dedicated to:

- Improving communications with residents, elected officials, city/county staff, and other service providers.
- Solutions for community problems that are supported by local residents and leaders.
- A vision for the future of River Road and Santa Clara that incorporates the themes of the 2002 Urban Services Committee Report – trust, equity, voice, and collaboration.