

# PORTLAND'S PLAN2030



# Acknowledgments



The creation of Portland's Plan was a city-wide effort. Under the oversight of the Planning Board, the Comprehensive Planning process benefited from collaboration with all City of Portland departments, consultation with City boards and committees, and support of the City Council. Greater Portland Council of Governments served as consultants on the plan's appendices and added value to the entire plan. We also received careful review and thoughtful feedback from community partners — dozens of community organizations, neighborhood associations, and local non-profits. Finally, Portland's Plan is a product of community engagement: the thousands of people who completed the survey, attended community forums, invited City staff to stakeholder meetings, opened their classrooms, emailed comments, spoke up at Planning Board workshops, put marker to table, and wrote the headlines of the future helped bring this effort to fruition.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### **CONTRIBUTING STAKEHOLDERS**

Bicycle Coalition of Maine  
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee  
Calendar Islands Maine Lobster Company  
Casco Bay High School  
Creative Portland  
Cumberland County Community Development Office  
Cumberland County Food Security Council  
Friends of Casco Bay  
Greater Portland Convention + Visitors Bureau  
Greater Portland Landmarks  
GrowSmart Maine  
Gulf of Maine Research Institute  
Homeless Voices for Justice  
King Middle School  
Maine Center for Entrepreneurial Development  
Maine Port Authority  
METRO  
Pedestrian & Bicycle Committee  
Portland Buy Local  
Portland Downtown  
Portland Global Shapers Hub  
Portland High School  
Portland Housing Authority  
Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Portland Society for Architecture  
Portland Trails  
South Sudanese Community Association of Maine  
Think Tank Coworking  
University of Southern Maine Muskie School of Public Service  
Venture Hall  
Waterfront Alliance

### **PORTLAND'S NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS**

*with particular thanks for input from:*

Back Cove Neighborhood Association



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Deering Highlands Neighborhood Association  
East Bayside Neighborhood Organization  
East Deering Neighborhood Association  
India Street Neighborhood Association  
Munjoy Hill Neighborhood Organization  
Parkside Neighborhood Association  
Peaks Island Council  
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# Executive Summary



**THIS IS PORTLAND'S PLAN**, a comprehensive plan to guide decision making in our community for the next 10+ years. Portland's Plan continues the City's long history of comprehensive and long-range planning. The last plan was implemented in 2002, updated in 2005, and regularly appended over the last decade. Much of that prior long-range planning work is still valuable today, and this new plan stresses continuity with that work while identifying new trends and challenges for growth and change in the 21st century. This plan serves as a guide and resource in multiple ways: fundamentally, it articulates a vision of Portland's values today and for the future; it provides valuable information about the state of the city today; it establishes a to-do list for implementation; it identifies how other planning efforts, past and future, relate to each other; and it forms a framework for decision making. From the launch of the creation of this new plan, City staff sought diverse public input and strove to ultimately create a succinct and accessible document for the entire community.

People normally experience our city at the ground level: walking down the street; outside a favorite restaurant; in a park; or at individual intersections; sidewalks; or bus stops. The goal of Portland's Plan is to elevate the conversation to look at our entire city as an integrated whole from a bird's-eye view, from the West End to Riverton and from Cliff Island to Stroudwater. The plan is a statement of community values and a framework to advance those values. The plan is not intended to describe the planning initiatives of the coming years in granular detail; its role is not to create parks, specify sidewalk width, or dictate the design of new buildings, but to look at the community in its entirety and define a set of values, goals, and strategies for the next decade. More specific initiatives, such as studies, zoning, plans, or guidelines, will be the work of implementing this plan.

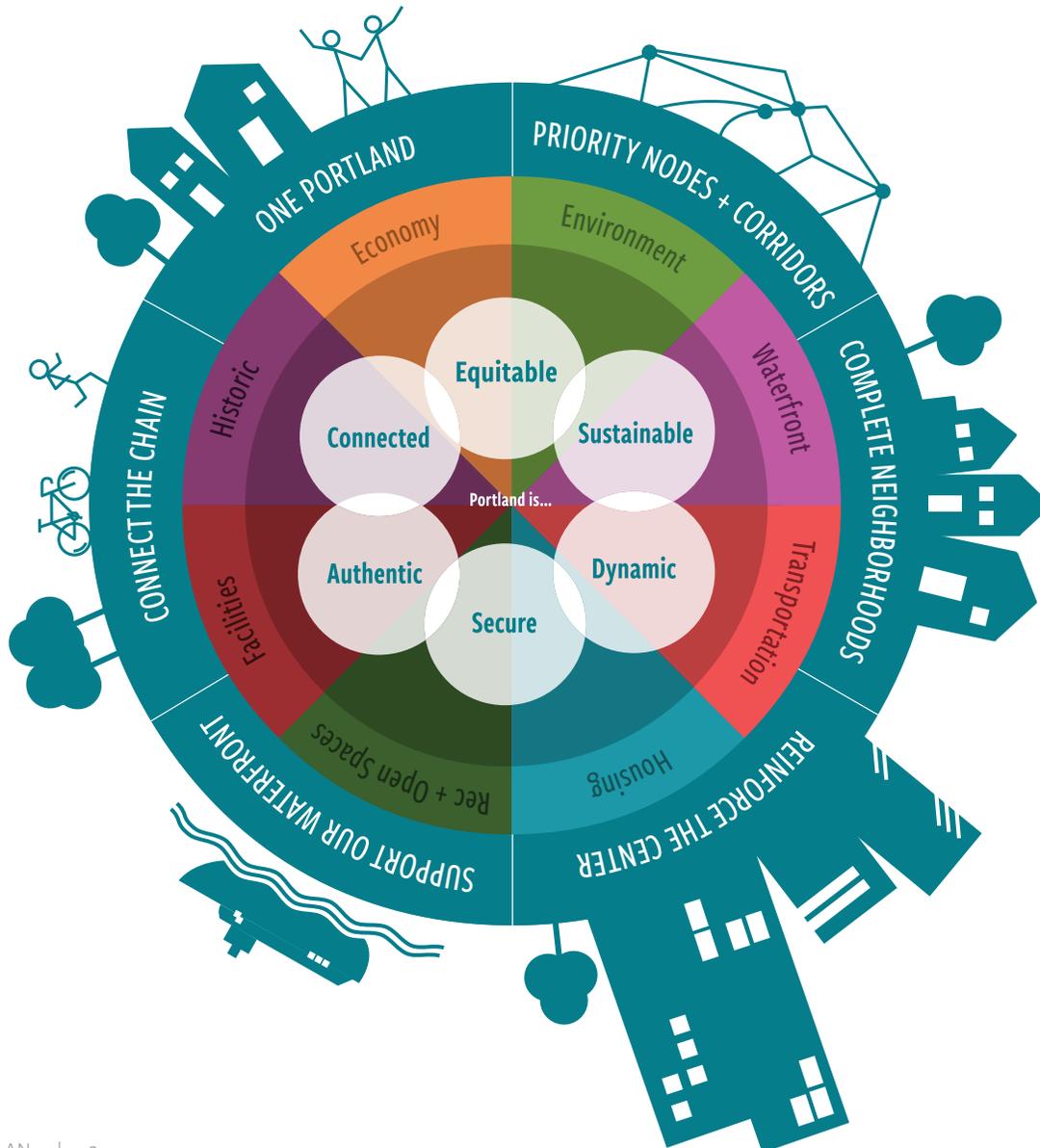
The **Vision Statement** guides all the elements of the plan. It defines the key concepts of who we are as a community and sets the standards by which future planning and policy efforts will be measured. The vision recognizes that the solutions to almost every issue we face today, from housing to infrastructure resiliency to economic development, must be examined through the vision's interconnected concepts. The Vision Statement should be viewed as a unified whole and its interlocking circles are intended to reinforce the notions that sustainability is not possible in the absence of equality and that authenticity requires connection. Each element of the vision is inextricably linked to the other elements and together they define what Portland is today and what will shape our future. Accordingly, the



values should be advanced in unison. The vision represents the input of over 3,000 Portland residents and business owners distilled into the most fundamental themes for the future of our community. The Vision Statement represents what Portland values most today and for its future.

Portland's Plan looks at Portland as one community and establishes the vision as a starting point for future planning and policy work. In that way, this document is a beginning and seeks to reframe a community conversation about where we collectively want to go as we move into the 21st century.

## Plan Structure





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As further described in **Putting Portland's Plan to Work**, however, Portland's Plan also builds off decades of previous efforts to shape and plan our community. This plan is informed by those efforts, and incorporates many of their key elements.



The **Policy Guides** translate the vision into concrete policy objectives relating to core subject areas such as housing, transportation, historic resources, waterfront, and the economy. The focus on interconnection at the core of the Vision Statement is present in the policy guides as well. The reader will find concepts restated and reinforced across subject areas. Our economy, housing, historic resources, transportation system, open space, environment, waterfront, and municipal facilities and services are all dependent on each other and inextricably linked. This interconnection is a foundational concept which shaped the structure of this document. The goals and strategies articulated in these chapters will guide

additional work over the next decade and should assist the City Council and City Manager in shaping annual work plans.

**Future Land Use** adopts a focused approach to growth in targeted areas across the City. The Future Land Use section is organized around five key principles:

- **One Portland**, spreading the benefits and challenges of sustainable growth fairly across the community;
- **Complete Neighborhoods**, improving livability while retaining the key characteristics that make neighborhoods unique;
- **Reinforce the Center**, recognizing that downtown Portland remains a predominant locus of arts and culture, economic, and civic health;
- **Support our Waterfront**, identifying the waterfront as a resource central to the identity, economy, ecology, and recreational life of Portland;
- **Connect the Chain**, connecting and strengthening our open space and transportation networks.

Land use planning will guide new growth to downtown, key nodes, and corridors. Areas outside of these identified nodes and corridors are not immune from change now or in the future, but it is expected that they will largely maintain their predominant land use patterns. A successful Portland is a key component to the vibrancy of southern Maine and the entire state.

**Regional Coordination** discusses how we will strengthen regional collaboration and engage in joint problem-solving to address shared issues, such as housing, water quality, and transportation,



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

and maximize our key strengths of quality of life, quality of place, and innovation.

**Implementation** establishes a framework for advancing the vision and goals of Portland’s Plan over the course of the next decade. This document is intended to serve as a guide for the Council as it develops annual work plans, for the Planning Board as it updates the land use code, and for other City departments as they plan and prioritize their respective work. Successful implementation of Portland’s Plan will require a commitment to ongoing and meaningful engagement by City staff, elected leaders, community groups, and residents. Successful

implementation will also benefit from feedback loops where decisions are made and then measured for success in achieving the plan’s vision.

The plan’s **Appendices** contain a compendium of data to support the Policy Guides. This information serves as a foundation for the Plan’s goals and strategies and a resource on Portland.

Finally, Portland’s Plan conforms to the requirements of the State of Maine’s Growth Management Act for comprehensive plans. As required by the Growth Management Act, Portland’s Plan will serve as the basis for the City’s zoning and land use regulations.

# Vision Statement



**AT THE HEART OF PORTLAND'S PLAN** are six interconnected themes which together constitute a Vision Statement for the city. The themes emerged from more than four dozen stakeholder meetings, five city-wide community forums, and a survey effort which resulted in over 2,000 responses. They were influenced by new residents as well as those with Portland roots that stretch back centuries, business and neighborhood interests, emerging and traditional industries, grandparents and students, renters and homeowners, and shapers and makers.

The vision should provide the foundation for focusing City policies and priorities and for gauging our success. The goals and implementation strategies in Portland's Plan support the Vision Statement. Whether discussing the economy, recreation, or the waterfront, these topics are not addressed in isolation: the linked structure of the Vision Statement conveys the connectedness of the themes and the subjects that comprise the Policy Guides.





## VISION STATEMENT

### Equitable

- We will remain an open and inclusive city, celebrating diversity and providing a welcoming and safe place for residents and visitors alike.
- We will be a state and national leader in achieving a more equitable city.
- The benefits and costs of our city will be born fairly across the entire city.
- Our government will continue to be transparent and its policies fair and uniformly enforced.
- We will incorporate the needs of all our residents in planning for our future.

### Sustainable

- Portland has been built and rebuilt to endure; we will balance our historic fabric, sound infrastructure, and the best of new technology and design for the future.
- We will use sound fiscal decision making as an essential element of our city's future health.
- We will recognize our responsibility as a global citizen and that climate change will have significant impacts on our city by prioritizing a transition to a low-carbon economy and adapting to those climate changes we can no longer mitigate.
- Portland will grow in order to sustain our community, infrastructure, and economy.
- Growth should respect and seek to preserve our spectacular natural resources.

### Dynamic

- Vibrant arts and cultural life will be central to our identity.
- We will embrace innovation in order for our community to thrive.
- We will welcome new residents into our community because they enrich and sustain our city.
- We will support healthy schools as essential to maintaining a dynamic community.
- We will encourage an active and informed citizenry and facilitate civil discourse.
- Portland will plan for a built environment that encourages an active citizenry.

### Secure

- We will use compassion in our decision making and in our approach to public safety.
- We will be committed to accessible housing and healthy food for all our residents.
- We will prepare for emergencies and ready for a changing climate.
- We will strive to create a resilient economy through innovation, investment, and commitment to diversity.
- We believe a key component of security is a transparent and accessible government.

### Authentic

- We will celebrate our city's incredible history.
- The uniqueness and integrity of our neighborhoods will be maintained and enhanced.
- We will support our working waterfront as a commitment to maintaining a vibrant maritime economy in the 21st century.
- We will invest in and support our local economy.
- We will maintain our character through preservation, innovation, and excellence in design for the built environment.

### Connected

- Our success will be tied to our connections to each other, our state, and our region.
- A 21st century Portland will continue to rely on integrated transportation infrastructure.
- Diverse forums for community engagement will remain essential to a strong civil society.
- We will foster accessible linkages between where we live, work, shop, and play.
- We will enable meaningful access to the natural world and recreational opportunities as a central component of community health.

# Community Engagement



## CONTINUOUS, MULTIFACETED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

was central to the process of developing Portland's Plan. The process aspired to give as many people in the community as possible an opportunity to participate. This objective manifested not only in the quantity of public involvement opportunities, but in the diversity of ways the community was asked to engage in the development of this plan. City staff, in partnership with the Planning Board, invited the community in, but also went out to the community, attending farmers' markets, fairs, high school forums, neighborhood association meetings, and other events to talk with and listen to the residents of Portland. In all, staff attended over 50 events, engaged over 400 people and countless others who invested their time in talking about the plan and what they hope to see occur in the coming decade. In addition to community forums, school outreach, stakeholder meetings, and mobile engagement activities, the City conducted a survey effort in late 2015 and early 2016, engaging over 2,000 respondents. The approach to engagement for this plan strove to include diverse populations often underrepresented in the planning process, such as youth, new immigrants, or the previously uninvolved. The following is an overview of various events and activities that provided crucial feedback in the formation of Portland's Plan.

### 1. STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Stakeholder meetings involved neighborhood associations, local organizations, and any group of residents interested in the development of Portland's Plan. Beginning in September 2015 and continuing on a rolling basis throughout the process, City staff

attended over four dozen such meetings with Bicycle Coalition of Maine, Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, Homeless Voices for Justice, Creative Portland, Greater Portland Landmarks, Portland Downtown, the Waterfront Alliance, the South Sudanese Community Association, and many others. Stakeholders offered feedback on drafts of the plan throughout.



### 2. OPEN HOUSES

The City held two open houses on September 17th and 24th, 2015, at Deering High School and City Hall to kick off Portland's Plan. These events summarized recent and ongoing City projects and policy initiatives, and provided an opportunity for the public to engage with staff on the plan scope and process.

### 3. SURVEY

The City conducted an online survey from November 23, 2015 through January 22, 2016, publicizing the survey through press releases; on the City's website; in an article in the Portland Press



Herald; via flyers in the computer carrels at the downtown branch of Portland Public Library; on the Time and Temperature building; through CTN's City Desk; and on social media. A total of 2,105 responses were received. The survey solicited input on satisfaction with City services, streets most in need of bicycle and pedestrian improvements, support for retaining a working waterfront, levels of concern for climate change impacts, housing affordability, and the things people most value about where they live. City staff incorporated survey results into numerous presentations made on Portland's Plan, and the results informed many of the plan's recommendations.

Community forums were held on June 29th and 30th, 2016, at the University of New England's Portland campus and the Portland Public Library's Rines Auditorium. Both forums included a presentation on public input into the plan, a progress update, and two interactive activities for attendees:

- A small group visioning exercise to imagine a newspaper headline for Portland in 2026 that captures aspirations for the city's future.
- An exercise designed to solicit feedback on the emerging vision for the plan.

The November 12, 2016 community forum, held in the Portland Public Library's Rines Auditorium, unrolled the plan's Policy Guides, and asked groups sorted by topic area to read and reflect on the first full drafts. Following this forum, the draft Policy Guides were posted on portlandmaine.gov for approximately six weeks to provide further opportunities for comment.

The March 16, 2017 community forum, held at King Middle School, allowed for comment on the full draft of the plan prior to the Planning Board Public Hearing.



#### 4. COMMUNITY FORUMS

City staff held four city-wide community forums to provide opportunities for interested residents to hear about progress on Portland's Plan and to discuss their concerns and priorities for Portland's future. In an effort to maximize participation, the forums were planned for on and off peninsula locations, at different times of day, on weekdays and weekends, and all included food. Two of the four forums offered childcare.

#### 5. MOBILE ENGAGEMENT

In an effort to reach a broad spectrum of the population, City staff engaged in a variety of public involvement activities designed to take the plan to the community. Staff accepted all invitations to speak on any aspect of Portland's Plan and also actively pursued opportunities to participate in events with other groups, such as school events. Staff made a portable and interactive table in the shape of Portland and used this table to gather valuable input



at events throughout the summer of 2016. Bringing this table to people where they generally congregate — such as First Friday Art Walks, National Night Out, farmers’ markets, and school orientations — allowed residents to incidentally engage with the planning process, to mark up the table with color and small building pieces, and to converse with staff and Planning Board members about outcomes of the plan.

## 6. SOCIAL MEDIA

Use of social media and social media platforms served multiple functions in developing Portland’s Plan. First, staff used email, the City’s website, Twitter, and Facebook to disseminate information about events, availability of drafts of the plan, and the opening of the survey. Beyond disseminating information, City staff used these platforms (and others such as Periscope and Instagram), to keep the project and the process visually dynamic and accessible. Following events, results of community planning exercises were posted to #portlandplanning through 2016.



## 7. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Recognizing that Portland’s young people are often underrepresented in the planning process, Portland’s Plan involved a concerted effort to engage school-age youth. City staff visited Portland High School to make presentations twice early in the start of the 2016 – 2017 academic year, and facilitated dedicated planning workshops with King Middle School, Portland High School, and Casco Bay High School. Through these workshops, staff asked students to envision the headlines that would capture their ideal city in 10 to 20 years.

## 8. PLANNING BOARD AND COUNCIL WORKSHOPS

The Planning Board held numerous workshops on the Comprehensive Plan. Early workshops were focused on process, progress, and work plans, while later workshops focused on the emerging substance and format of the plan. Two Planning Board members served as dedicated liaisons devoted to the development of the plan and were central to the community engagement process. Planning staff also presented to the City Council on the plan’s progress.

## 9. RELATED EVENTS

Over the course of 2016 there were numerous additional events which enriched the development of Portland’s Plan. The City’s Housing Committee ran a series of community discussions and a forum on housing issues that strongly informed the substance of the plan. Portland Society for Architecture, in collaboration with the University of Southern Maine and the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, initiated their own independent charrettes to envision growth, which have resulted



in community presentations and a white paper. And GrowSmart Maine held an event, *A Panorama on Portland's Growth: Can Process Bridge the Gap* that included, among other speakers and components, a presentation on the comprehensive plan process.

### WHAT WE HEARD

Community engagement was integral to the development of Portland's Plan. City staff heard about concerns, hopes, and aspirations from hundreds of people who may not normally participate in planning activities, and they made this a richer, more robust plan for the entire community. The thousands of pieces of feedback we received informed the substance of the plan. Survey results, for instance, identified specific nodes and corridors of concern that fed into Future Land Use and transportation goals and strategies. Strong support for transit-oriented development and retaining a working waterfront, as well as concern about climate change and housing affordability, helped guide the formation of the plan's vision. By offering everything from line edits of early versions of the Policy Guides to policy proposals, the public shaped the content of this plan. We also heard community concerns on many topics not addressed by State requirements, such as public health, aging

in place, and climate change, each of which was eventually woven through the various elements of this plan.

Because there is no one technique that engages all schedules, strengths, interests or needs, continued engagement, varied in methods and venues, that seeks to include as diverse a cross section of the community as possible, is essential to carry out the vision of this plan. Robust community engagement with neighborhood organizations, stakeholder groups, and the entire community is integral to implementation of the plan.



# Putting Portland's Plan to Work



**PORTLAND'S PLAN** is an integral guide for policy decisions for the next 10+ years. It is a resource for elected and appointed officials, City staff, residents, property owners, and business owners. The plan provides a framework for consistent land use decision making, informed capital investments, interdepartmental coordination, and long-range planning initiatives. The plan also outlines the City's values and overall desired outcomes to the private sector, and is a general resource for those seeking information about the City of Portland.

Policy makers have to balance myriad factors when making decisions. Portland's Plan will be actively used to guide how priorities are established and decisions are made, while recognizing that setting policy direction, implementing regulatory changes, or investing in infrastructure requires balancing many concerns and policy objectives. For example, when considering a zoning text or map amendment, the Planning Board and City Council would evaluate whether the proposed change would advance a plan goal or strategy, as well as appraise the proposal for compatibility with the six elements of the Vision Statement. A proposal in direct contradiction to Portland's Plan would need to be modified to generally conform with the plan, or discarded. In the event of significant changes in city needs or shifting conditions, the City could pursue a change to the plan which would include public process and deliberation.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO CITY PLANS**

Portland has a tradition of robust long-range planning efforts. For decades, City staff, residents,

City Councilors, the State, and other stakeholders have worked together to develop common visions for the future of Portland. These plans have contributed to making Portland a livable city. Portland's Plan builds on the foundation of data and value that these plans provide.

Planning efforts generally fit into one of three categories:

- Comprehensive plans
- Neighborhood or specific area plans
- Subject area plans

Plans can also be a hybrid of neighborhood and area plans. Each plan serves a specific purpose, and aims to be fully compatible with past plans. Over time there have been updates or amendments to the City's adopted documents. However, the role of different plans has not always been clear. This section sets forth a paradigm for how past and future plans will relate to one another and Portland's Plan.

The previous comprehensive plan was a compilation of adopted plans that addressed broad functional areas, such as transportation and housing, and specific strategic or geographic plans; it was appended over time as new plans and studies were completed. This plan is a stand-alone document structured around an organizing Vision Statement and policy guides to advance that vision across various sectors. This new paradigm for the comprehensive plan will provide a framework for policy making that will guide and inform subsequent planning efforts and provide a new lens for examining previous efforts.



# Portland's Plan In Action





## PUTTING PORTLAND'S PLAN TO WORK

### **PORTLAND'S PLAN: ONE PORTLAND, THROUGH A CONCISE AND ACCESSIBLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Anyone who is interested should be able to read Portland's Plan in a short period of time and readily understand it. For this reason, the plan focuses on broad themes rather than technical specifics. Rather than a thousand pages of policy details that few people will fully read and few can understand, this comprehensive plan is designed to be useful and accessible to a broad cross-section of people. For example, a copy of this plan left in a public place, such as a waiting room or a reception area, should be something that anyone could pick up and read and digest in a brief period of time.

This goal means that the plan should be concise, readable, and visually attractive. It should be a City-wide policy vision to serve Portland's planning efforts over the coming decade. If there were to be a significant, broad shift in policy direction in the coming years that is contrary to the content of this plan, that could warrant an amendment to the document. However, the structure of the plan will remain based on a concise set of policy goals.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS: APPLYING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN LOCALLY**

Neighborhood plans refer to documents that make recommendations for specific areas across a host of issues important to a neighborhood's future development, which typically include some combination of topics such as design, zoning, historic preservation, environmental, transit, and economic development. Plans for specific neighborhoods or parts of the city are an important way to provide a roadmap toward

implementation of Portland's Plan. They allow for detailed analysis and should be designed to interpret and implement city-wide policies.

Neighborhood plans are important and warrant their own status. Future neighborhood plans will be adopted as freestanding City policy documents rather than incorporated into Portland's Plan. As development and public improvements take place in specific areas of Portland, the applicable neighborhood plan should be consulted as well as Portland's Plan. New neighborhood plans should seek to advance the goals of Portland's Plan as specifically tailored to the context and unique qualities of the neighborhood they pertain to. The City will continue to engage in neighborhood planning and communication as well as develop additional resources, tools, and processes to enable citizen planners, neighborhood organizations, and coalitions to contribute to or develop appropriate plans.

### **SUBJECT AREA PLANS: EXPANSION OF POLICY GUIDES**

The City also develops specific plans for certain subject areas. These are detailed implementation documents that follow from goals and strategies established in this plan. For example, the City may develop a plan for parks and open space, for pavement management, or for sidewalks, or City partners may work with the City on an economic development plan or a regional transit plan.

These subject area plans are also important documents that similarly deserve their own status. They should be adopted on their own and utilized to help implement the broad vision of Portland's Plan.

## **HYBRID PLANS**

There may also be some plans that are geographically and topically specific. For example, the City may develop plans focused on concepts such as local food production, parking, watershed management, or Complete Streets within specific areas of the city. These plans would follow the model of neighborhood and subject plans, be adopted on their own, and help guide implementation of the overall comprehensive plan.

## **EXISTING PLANS**

There are a number of neighborhood, subject area, and hybrid plans that have been adopted over time as elements of the previous comprehensive plan. Some are quite recent, some decades old, some may be partially implemented and some are not be entirely current, but they each retain valuable information as previously adopted plans. Previously adopted plans are not incorporated into the new comprehensive plan but remain adopted policy and will continue to provide valid guidance for the City. In addition to providing policy guidance, the City's existing site plan, master development plan, and institutional overlay ordinances require consideration of adopted plans as part of development review. Existing plans should always be considered in the context of their date of adoption and their anticipated role in guiding City planning and policies. Portland's Plan is the prevailing policy document and shall provide guidance as to how to resolve any inconsistencies that may arise between these various plans.

## **STUDIES**

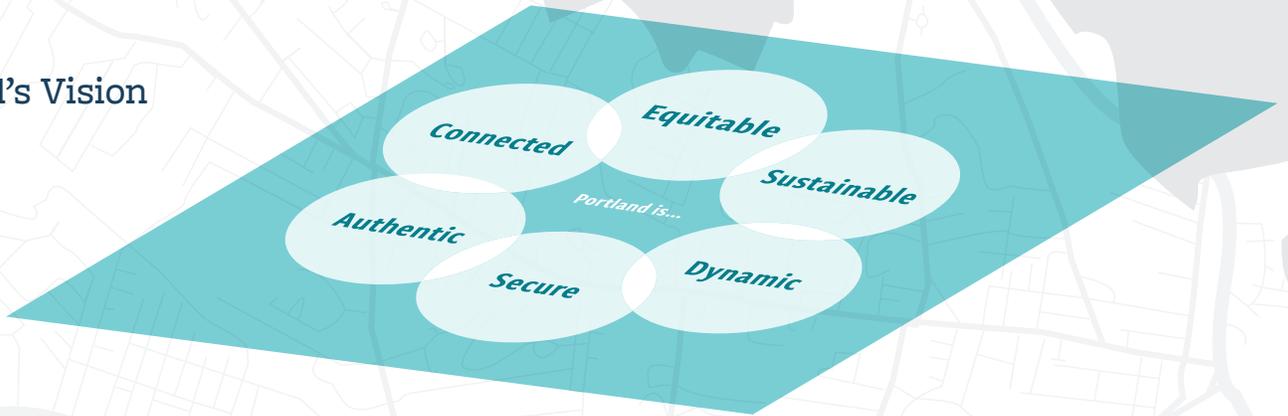
The City has also conducted a number of valuable studies on land use and other planning issues in the past. These studies serve as useful input into decision making. However, as studies, they need to be viewed in the larger context of adopted plans. These studies should not be viewed as definitive policy statements, but rather as tools to assist in policy implementation.



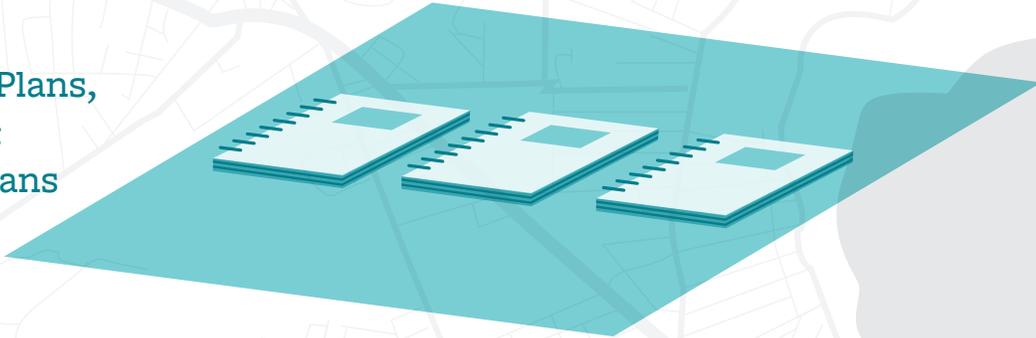
# Relationship of City Plans

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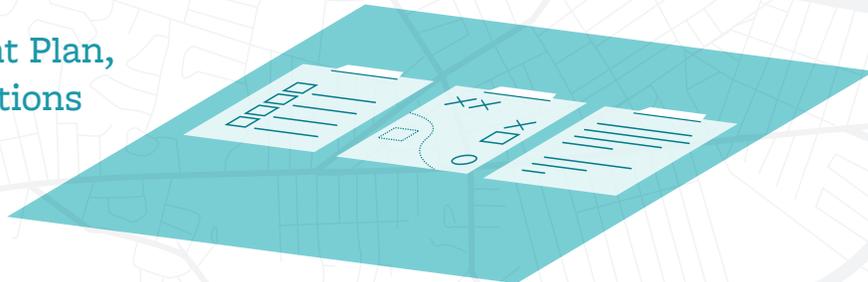
Portland's Vision



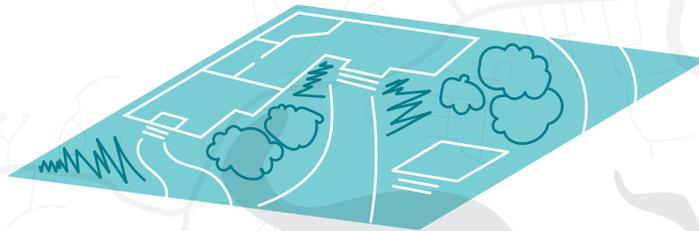
Neighborhood Plans,  
Hybrid Plans &  
Subject Area Plans



Capital Improvement Plan,  
City Code, & Regulations



Public Investments &  
Development Review



# A Healthy City

**THE ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES FACING PORTLAND** — from aging infrastructure to the water quality of Casco Bay to climate change — have local, regional, and even global implications that require both local action and regional coordination. The City is engaged in a diverse range of environmental partnerships, programs, and policy initiatives in areas such as water quality, forestry, energy efficiency, and climate change preparedness. Collectively, these efforts show the City's ongoing commitment to a more sustainable future.

Portland's urban fabric will inform our approach to environmental resiliency. Portland's forestry resources are not only in its protected open spaces, but also along shorelines, within stream corridors, and in city streets. Agriculture is thriving in the City's community gardens and in the expanding food economy in East Bayside and beyond, which provides critical capacity for food manufacturing, production, and transport. Energy consumption

is being reduced through innovations in building construction and new technologies, as well as through the energy efficiencies of multi-family buildings and the cumulative reduction in auto use enabled by a compact, multi-modal city.

Portland's built environment and natural environment are inextricably linked in any consideration of sustainable quality of place. Casco Bay has always been integral Portland's existence and remains key to the city's and the region's identity, economy, and ecology. As Maine's largest city, Portland embodies core tenets of sustainable urbanism in its compact form and function, enabling efficiencies in resource consumption, waste reduction, and resiliency. Portland's diversity of housing types and increased densities, strong neighborhoods, proximity of residences to employment, and viability for multi-modal transportation offer a durable framework to build upon and enhance.



## RECENT & ONGOING INITIATIVES

The City of Portland's environmental initiatives originate in multiple departments and include the input of many stakeholders and partners. Much of today's work stems from the City's early efforts in planning for sustainability. These include the 2007 *Sustainable Portland* report, which established a broad framework for incorporating sustainability into City decision making and made a number of recommendations to encourage sustainability citywide, and the 2008 *Municipal Climate Action Plan*, which developed a series of strategies to reduce emissions associated with municipal operations.

Against the backdrop of these planning initiatives, the City has completed numerous studies focused on specific aspects of sustainability. These include studies for impaired waterways, such as the Nasons Brook watershed, the Presumpscot River, the Stroudwater River watershed, the Capisic Brook watershed, and Capisic Pond.

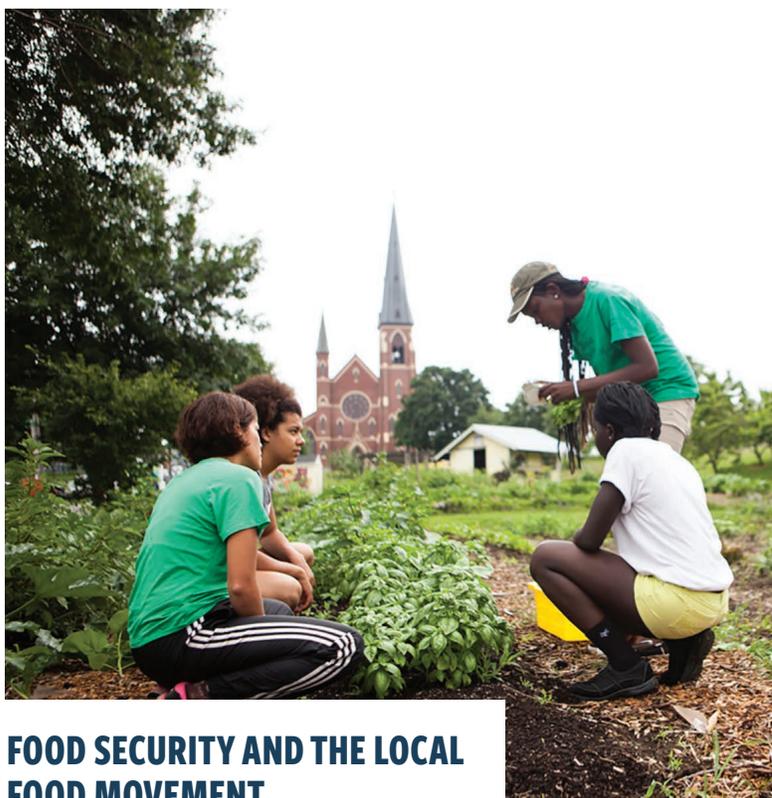
In partnership with the Maine Forest Service and the U.S. Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry programs, the City has conducted forest management plans for 90% of our forested open spaces, focusing on natural resources, habitat, water quality, and recreation and resulting in improved tree and forest health. Recent initiatives have resulted in recommendations regarding sea level rise vulnerability, through *Sustain Southern Maine: Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment* and a 2014 Urban Land Institute Report, *Waterfronts of Portland and South Portland, Maine: Regional Strategies for Creating Resilient Waterfronts*. And in 2015, the City began work on an EPA Brownfields Grant, in conjunction with Greater Portland Council of Governments, to develop an area-wide plan for East Bayside that will assist in environmental remediation and increase the potential for food production.



## POLICY GUIDE: ENVIRONMENT

Over the past decade, the City has also made a concerted effort to adapt policy to reflect a 21st century approach to sustainability. Since 2014, the City has made a series of zoning changes to promote greater residential density and infill development, coordinate this development with existing and anticipated transit service expansions, reduce parking requirements, and support alternative transportation options. Portland recently adopted energy performance standards for City and certain publicly-funded buildings, added two wind energy generation standards to the land use code, adopted a benchmarking ordinance for qualifying buildings, introduced a plastic bag fee, and banned polystyrene packaging. In 2016, the City implemented a stormwater service charge to incentivize green infrastructure and help fund water quality initiatives.

The City has continued its efforts to separate its combined sewer overflow (CSO) systems, including the installation of underground storage conduits, separated stormwater lines, and sewer linings, which have helped to significantly reduce annual sewer overflow volumes. The Waste Reduction Task Force has instituted improvements to increase recycling, reduce collected trash tonnage, and enhance the curbside collection of yard waste. In addition, the City's Council has recently set priorities for the next five years, including initiatives such as the conversion of all public street lights to LED, the construction of one of the state's largest municipal solar power arrays on the Ocean Avenue landfill, and additional improvements to the City's solid waste program.



### FOOD SECURITY AND THE LOCAL FOOD MOVEMENT

According to recent research by the Muskie School, approximately 14.2 percent of Cumberland County residents qualify as food insecure — they regularly can not access sufficient healthy food. The City supports a network of nonprofits and public sector advocates working to address this gap locally through summer meal programs and a system of food banks. Recently, advocates have worked to create better connections between the city's burgeoning local food movement, which capitalizes on an increasing awareness of the economic, social, and environmental benefits of a locally sourced food system, and the schools and nonprofits that have traditionally served as the primary point of contact on food security issues. While the local food movement supports successful biweekly farmers' markets, a strong collection of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) options, and ten community gardens that directly serve residents' food needs, the movement also drives Portland residents to support restaurants and grocers that, in turn, support local farmers and food entrepreneurs. As a result, Portland is growing a more resilient food system that can offer healthier food to everyone.



## STATE GOALS

To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State’s water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers, and coastal areas.

To protect the State’s other critical natural resources, including without limitation: wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas.

To safeguard the State’s agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources.

## LOCAL GOALS

### WE WILL:

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Identify and protect Portland’s critical natural resources.

---

Restore impaired waterbodies through local efforts and in collaboration with regional partners.

---

Support agricultural, forest, and scenic resources appropriate to our urban context.

---

Develop climate resilience through specific carbon reduction goals, comprehensive climate adaptation strategies, and protections for the city’s most vulnerable infrastructure.

---

Make energy efficiency and renewable energy measures a city-wide priority.

---

Adopt sustainable land use and transportation policies that support connectivity, walkable neighborhoods, and multi-modal transportation.

---

Minimize the generation and environmental impacts of solid waste.



## **FUTURE STRATEGIES**

### **1. ADOPT MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES**

- Track performance on key environmental indicators.
- Generate reports to keep staff, City leadership, and the public apprised of performance.
- Explore national best practices in developing metrics.

### **2. IMPROVE WATER QUALITY**

- Collaborate with local nonprofits, research organizations, private property owners, and surrounding communities to achieve cleaner waters.
- Minimize impacts to the city's waterways by reducing combined sewer overflows and implementing stormwater best management practices.
- Coordinate water and sewer infrastructure improvements with anticipated new growth areas.
- Incorporate additional Low Impact Development (LID) standards into City codes.
- Implement watershed management plans for prioritized impaired waterways.
- Support reduction in impervious surfaces and implementation of green infrastructure in local codes, through incentives, and in infrastructure investments where appropriate.
- Support best practices for Integrated Pest Management.

### **3. PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES**

- Remain current with Maine DEP Shoreland Zoning direction for natural resource protection.
- Implement land use tools for increased protection of impaired streams.

- Recognize the particular needs of sensitive island ecologies by: supporting land use policies that protect groundwater supplies; preserving valuable environmental resources such as shoreline and water resources; promoting alternative and sustainable energy resources for island communities; and implementing sustainable and low-impact measures for both maintenance and development on the islands, including stormwater management, infrastructure improvements, and management of invasive species.

### **4. SUPPORT AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES**

- Explore opportunities to develop and expand local food systems, including community gardens and urban farms.
- Increase the total number of community garden plots to provide equitable access and to meet demand.
- Support programs that increase healthy food access for all, including students in the Portland Public Schools and other City-run institutions.
- Support a healthy, resilient, and sustainable food system by collaborating with local and regional stakeholders.
- Support and recognize Portland's role as a thriving food economy in City codes and policies.
- Increase the urban tree canopy by 15% above current canopy coverage to benefit air quality, local climate, CO<sub>2</sub> absorption, and aesthetics.
- Model environmentally-sound landscape management practices, such as planting for pollinators, planting native species, and limiting the use of pesticides and fertilizers.



## 5. DEVELOP CLIMATE RESILIENCE

- Collaborate with surrounding municipalities to strengthen comprehensive climate change adaptation and mitigation planning.
- Evaluate the capacity of municipal infrastructure to meet or exceed needs associated with increased flooding impacts.
- Continue to participate in the FEMA Community Rating System, which qualifies the City for discounts on flood insurance and certain emergency financial assistance.
- Pursue strategic study, investment, code changes, and education where storm surge and sea level rise impacts are anticipated to be most severe, including the waterfront and Bayside, as well as others identified in the *2013 Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment*.

## 6. SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE ENERGY PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

- Reduce city-wide non-renewable energy consumption through policies that support public and private investments in alternative energy sources.
- Explore adoption of an energy disclosure ordinance for larger commercial and multi-family buildings to reduce Portland's greenhouse gas emissions and improve the energy performance of the city's building stock.
- Pursue strategic opportunities to site solar arrays on City property, including rooftops, landfills, and suitable open spaces.
- Implement policies to support distributed energy generation technologies, such as combined heat and power systems, community solar farms, storage, and other emerging technologies that can increase resilience and reduce consumption of fossil fuels.



## LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

For years, stormwater in Portland, as in communities all over the country, has collected in the city's combined sewer system and from there traveled to the city's sewage treatment plant. In periods of heavy rain, the capacity of the system can be exceeded, resulting in combined sewer overflows (CSOs), where untreated wastewater flows directly into our streams, rivers, and ocean, often carrying pollutants with it. In the past several decades, the City has made efforts to separate municipal stormwater and sewer systems as a means of better managing periods of high runoff and avoiding CSOs, and the quantity of untreated discharge events has decreased dramatically. More recently, the City has also aggressively pursued Low Impact Development (LID) and green infrastructure strategies, which are designed to manage stormwater through natural (green) systems as opposed to engineered (gray) ones. Through LID and green infrastructure, public and private property owners in Portland are collecting and treating more stormwater in ways that mimic the natural environment — through rain gardens, bioswales, wetland restoration, and green roofs that use the inherent properties of plants and soils to filter pollutants and reduce flooding. Even more, these green infrastructure solutions provide clear and dramatic side benefits by creating habitat, enhancing air quality, improving the landscape, and supporting climate resiliency.



## POLICY GUIDE: ENVIRONMENT

- Advocate for State adoption of up-to-date building codes, and consider adoption of supplemental provisions to ensure high-performance buildings.
- Strive to be a statewide leader in creating high performance buildings in order to decrease carbon emissions in the building sector.
- Eliminate, by 2040, net CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from City operations through means such as improved efficiency of lighting and heating, installation of solar arrays, purchase of renewable electric power, and conversion of vehicles to electric propulsion.
- Encourage residents to invest in renewable energy for heating and transport.
- Encourage commercial entities to reduce fossil fuel use through expanded benchmarking, incentives for improved lighting and heating efficiencies, and purchase of electric vehicles.
- Encourage fossil fuel-free transport through support for electric vehicles, electric public transit, dedicated bicycle lanes, and vehicle exclusion zones.
- Ensure that all municipal decisions take into account the necessity of essentially eliminating CO<sub>2</sub> emissions within 30 years.

### 7. SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

- Plan for the mitigation and redevelopment of brownfields to support productive uses and a healthier environment for residents.
- Coordinate future land use policy changes with long-range regional transportation planning, including planning for transit, pedestrian, and bicycle improvements, to reduce local and regional vehicle miles traveled.

- Continue to develop land use policies which support complete neighborhoods.
- Encourage landowners and developers to incorporate sustainable design, materials, and practices in rehabilitation of historic resources and in new construction.

### 8. MINIMIZE SOLID WASTE IMPACTS

- Modernize and improve the existing solid waste program through incorporation of a cart-based collection system and through implementation of a city-wide program for collection of composting and organics.
- Increase efforts to promote waste reduction in City operations and in the community.

### 9. MINIMIZE LIGHT AND NOISE POLLUTION

- Promote the use of energy-efficient lighting that minimizes glare and light pollution while providing adequate lighting for safety.
- Maintain and enforce applicable standards that mitigate noise impacts.

### 10. INCREASE EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

- Foster education and provide easily accessible information for residents and visitors on climate change impacts, waste management, environmental resources, and steps for local action.

# An Enduring City

**PORTLAND HAS AN EXTRAORDINARILY RICH HISTORY.** The historic buildings, streetscapes, neighborhoods, and parks we experience today are the most tangible links to that history and are valuable because they tell Portland's unique story. Thanks to a combination of luck, vocal advocacy, and adopted public policy, many of Portland's historic assets have remained vital parts of the urban fabric as the city has continued to grow and evolve.

In 1990, the Portland City Council established a preservation program within the Department of Planning & Urban Development to ensure that stewardship of Portland's historic, cultural, and architectural assets is an integral part of the City's urban planning strategy. Portland's preservation program seeks to identify and document historic resources throughout the city and educate the public about their significance and ongoing contribution to present-day Portland. The program also includes a regulatory tool to effectively preserve and enhance these historic resources over time. Today, Portland's Historic Preservation Ordinance protects more than 2,000 properties, in areas as diverse as the Old Port, Stroudwater, Congress Street, the West End, India Street, and Fort McKinley on Great Diamond Island.

The intent of the ordinance is not to prevent change, but to thoughtfully manage it so that the unique character of historic buildings, parks, commercial districts, and neighborhoods is retained. Designated properties are protected from demolition and proposed alterations or additions are reviewed to ensure compatibility with a property's original design. New construction within designated historic districts is also reviewed to ensure a respectful relationship between new and old.

Although many of Portland's historic structures and neighborhoods have been documented and afforded protection, particularly on the peninsula, other lesser-known areas and structures remain to be studied and considered for preservation. Survey, documentation, and, where appropriate, designation will be ongoing priorities of Portland's preservation program. Only with a fuller understanding of Portland's existing building fabric will the potential impacts and consequences of proposed development be appropriately evaluated. Ongoing education will also be key to the success of Portland's preservation efforts. If current and future residents appreciate why these places matter, Portland will be able to retain its historic assets over time. Under the regulatory arm of the program, the City must

continue to seek a balance between preservation of its historic fabric and meeting new or changing demands, such as building code and accessibility requirements and evolving building technologies. Embracing and encouraging quality contemporary architecture will be important as well if we are to contribute elements of our own time to Portland's continuing story.

Today, the impact of the Historic Preservation program in Portland is clear: Identifying and preserving historic resources stabilizes neighborhoods, makes economic sense, and contributes to a distinct sense of place that helps make Portland such a desirable place in which to live, to visit, and to invest. A walk or drive through any of Portland's historic districts reveals exciting changes, as more and more old buildings are carefully rehabilitated according to historic preservation standards while compatible new buildings are absorbed into the mix. In addition to the economic benefits of preservation, the sustainability implications of our historic legacy are increasingly recognized. As the city grows, preservation of its historic resources remains an integral part of Portland's future.



### **INDIA STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT**

The designation of the India Street Historic District in 2015 was one of the major outcomes of a 2 ½-year neighborhood planning effort aimed at identifying the area's assets, needs, and aspirations. Historical research and a detailed architectural survey revealed that not only was India Street the site of the first European settlement on Portland's peninsula, the neighborhood also served as home to a long succession of immigrant groups arriving in Portland throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. The cultural and economic impact of each of these immigrant communities on the India Street neighborhood can be found today in the variety of religious buildings that are the area's key landmarks and in the many family businesses established in the neighborhood, some that continue to the present day.



## RECENT & ONGOING INITIATIVES

Since the establishment of the City’s Historic Preservation Program in 1990, the City has assumed responsibility for the identification, designation, and ongoing stewardship of Portland’s historic resources, which include individual landmarks, residential and commercial historic districts, historic landscape districts, and historic cemeteries. To date, the City of Portland has designated 73 individual landmarks, 11 historic districts, five historic landscape districts, and three historic cemeteries. In addition to its designation function, the Historic Preservation Program conducts development review — each year, the Historic Preservation Board and staff review more than 300 applications.

However, the City’s Historic Preservation Program entails many other ongoing responsibilities and initiatives that are key to Portland’s overall health and well-being. The Historic Preservation Program conducts historic resource surveys to identify and document historic resources

warranting potential designation and protection under the Historic Preservation Ordinance. The program provides critical design consultation and technical assistance to public, private, and nonprofit entities engaged in projects with historic resource implications and it develops design guidelines and master plans for historic districts and landscapes. Last, the program actively engages in efforts to secure funding for local preservation initiatives, support public education around the city’s history, and build partnerships with nonprofits doing preservation-related work — Greater Portland Landmarks, Committee to Restore the Abyssinian, Maine Charitable Mechanics Association, Portland Free Masons, Friends of the Eastern Promenade, Friends of Lincoln Park, Friends of Eastern Cemetery, Friends of Deering Oaks, and Friends of Fort Gorges among them.

In the past decade, the City has made great progress in protecting and enhancing Portland's historic architecture and landscapes. The City has conducted five historic resource surveys, including a recent survey on Forest Avenue and Stevens Avenue in collaboration with Greater Portland Landmarks. The program has designated four new historic districts in recent years, from Congress Street in 2009 to House Island, India Street, and most recently, the Portland Company complex. It has also designated three individual landmarks: the Nathan Clifford School, the Ann Freeman House on Munjoy Hill, and the Abraham Levey Block on Middle Street. Additionally, the program has developed plans for important historic resources: Fort Allen Park, Lincoln Park, and Fort Gorges. Each of these efforts has helped not only to preserve critical elements of the city's past, but, as a whole, to spur additional public and private investment in the city.

The program has also engaged in active efforts to advance public education and fund local preservation efforts. In 2013, over 30,000 century-old photographs of Portland properties were made available online through partnership between the City, the Maine Historical Society, and the Portland Public Library. And since 2010, the Historic Preservation Program has collaborated with the Economic Development Department to provide technical assistance and design consultation to building and business owners revitalizing storefronts along traditional commercial corridors such as Congress Street and, more recently, India Street.

Over the coming decade, the Historic Preservation Program will continue to serve as an advocate for preservation and a facilitator of compatible change. In order to achieve the vision of Portland's Plan, the City must continue to work to carefully manage these two roles, and to celebrate those fundamental elements of Portland that are central to its history in order to ensure that its future is as successful as its past.



## HOW DOES HISTORIC PRESERVATION BENEFIT OUR ECONOMY?

While being part of a historic district can involve an additional layer of review for maintenance and renovations, the benefits to property owners and to the community are extensive. Enacting historic preservation standards has consistently shown to stimulate private investment and increase property values. Preservation efforts also capitalize on existing infrastructure and services, offer spaces conducive to small businesses, diversify housing options, and can be a catalyst for downtown revitalization. Investing in historic resources makes good economic sense.



POLICY GUIDE:  
**HISTORIC RESOURCES**

## STATE GOALS

To preserve the State’s historic and archaeological resources.

## LOCAL GOALS

### WE WILL:

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Identify, document, designate, and preserve Portland’s historic resources, including individual structures, neighborhoods, parks, cemeteries, and archaeological resources.

---

Educate and engage residents and visitors in appreciation of Portland’s unique heritage.

---

Promote historic preservation as a key economic, sustainability, and community development strategy.

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Stabilize and enhance historic areas of the city by ensuring quality investment in existing structures and compatible infill development.

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Ensure an appropriate balance of continuity and change as Portland grows and evolves.

## FUTURE STRATEGIES

### 1. SURVEY, DOCUMENT, AND DESIGNATE HISTORIC RESOURCES

- Continue to conduct architectural surveys, particularly in off-peninsula neighborhoods.
- Undertake a city-wide archaeological survey to identify potentially significant resources associated with Portland’s agricultural, residential, and industrial heritage.
- Based on survey findings and input from applicable stakeholders, document and designate resources of historic, architectural, and/or cultural significance to encourage thoughtful building rehabilitation, deter demolition, and support neighborhood revitalization.

### 2. ADOPT MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

- Prepare annual reports on preservation activities and projects reviewed under the Historic Preservation Ordinance for distribution to City leadership, staff, and the public.
- Track performance on key preservation objectives.
- Consider national best practices in developing metrics.

### 3. ENCOURAGE INVESTMENTS IN HISTORIC STRUCTURES

- Disseminate information about existing federal and State historic tax credit programs available for the rehabilitation of income-producing historic properties.
- Pursue grant and low-interest loan programs, potentially in collaboration with local nonprofits, to assist eligible building owners with the cost of historic rehabilitation.

- Consider a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program to allow for the permanent transfer or sale of unused development potential of historic landmarks or districts to areas considered more appropriate for intensive growth, allowing direct revenue from the transfers to be applied toward prescribed preservation initiatives.
- Explore a tax abatement program for owners of historic properties to allow a period for recouping investment.



### ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Recent research by the National Trust for Historic Preservation found that the re-use or rehabilitation of existing buildings offers significant environmental benefits over new construction. According to their report, *The Greenest Building*, each year approximately 1 billion square feet of buildings are demolished and replaced nationwide, resulting in significant environmental impacts associated with demolition and waste disposal, the production of new raw materials, and new construction. The study found that reusing an existing building can result in 4 to 46% less environmental impact than new construction, depending on the type of building, location, and level of energy efficiency. Even when new construction is designed for optimal energy efficiency, it can take 10 to 80 years for a new building to offset the negative environmental implications of its construction.



## POLICY GUIDE: HISTORIC RESOURCES

### 4. ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS

- Expand the Historic Preservation Program website to include detailed information about the history and architecture of each historic district, comprehensive building inventories, and areas that have been researched or surveyed but not designated.
- Initiate a street sign program to identify and highlight historic districts.
- Expand interpretive signage programs for historic parks and selected sites.
- Collaborate with nonprofit organizations, such as Greater Portland Landmarks, on the development of interpretive mobile applications.
- Collaborate with Portland Public Schools in educating younger generations about Portland's history and architectural legacy.

### 5. ENSURE UNDERSTANDING OF PRESERVATION REQUIREMENTS

- Expand the Historic Preservation Program website to include an explanation of review standards, illustrated design guidelines, examples of model projects, and answers to frequently asked questions.
- Provide adequate staffing to ensure effective public outreach, efficient and timely permitting, follow-up on approved projects, and enforcement of ordinance requirements.

### 6. FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS

- Collaborate with nonprofits, private organizations, neighborhood associations, businesses, property owners, and affinity groups to pursue and expand support for preservation initiatives, including the implementation of adopted master plans for historic structures, parks, and cemeteries.
- Identify and secure available grants and public funding to leverage private support for preservation projects.

### 7. BALANCE MULTIPLE OBJECTIVES

- Accommodate multiple objectives, such as improved accessibility, improved energy efficiency, or climate change adaption, in alterations to historic structures while adhering to preservation objectives.
- Assess new construction techniques, products, and materials for compatibility with historic structures, and develop policies and guidelines for their use in historic rehabilitation projects.

### 8. LEAD BY EXAMPLE

- Maintain City-owned historic resources to high preservation standards.
- Continue to implement improvements recommended in adopted master plans for historic parks and cemeteries.
- Ensure that public infrastructure projects in residential and commercial historic districts reinforce and enhance the distinct streetscape character of the district.

# A Port City

**WITH OVER 350 YEARS** as a center for shipping, fishing, commerce, travel, and tourism, the Portland waterfront offers a unique mix of heritage, ecology, and innovation. Combining private and public piers in support of a full range of commercial marine activities, Portland's harbor boasts a working waterfront in the heart of Maine's largest city. The waterfront also provides public access and invites tourism with dockside restaurants, historic architecture, harbor tours, and local and international ferry service.

This largely successful balance of disparate uses, coexisting next to and sometimes overlapping with each other, is the product of decades of policy work on the part of residents, business leaders, marine industry, and local officials. Portland's waterfront policies seek to preserve marine uses, but also provide for a balance of non-marine uses which allow the waterfront to adapt to changing economic trends and evolving infrastructure needs, as well as to spur needed investment. This has proved an iterative process, one necessary for Portland's waterfront to remain responsive and relevant to evolving and cyclical conditions. As of 2016, Portland's is a vibrant port for international

trade, lobstering, fish processing, aquaculture, vessel services, passenger transportation, and recreational boating. Today, amidst flux and challenges, the city's working waterfront is expanding.

Portland's interwoven and adjacent marine-related and compatible non-marine uses provide a unique bridge between the city's maritime activity and the commercial, tourist, and recreational city. Even so, finding a balance between these sometimes competing, sometimes mutually beneficial, always shifting waterfront environments is an ongoing challenge. The waterfront faces simultaneous issues associated with aging infrastructure, public access, development impacts, and climate change. It is clear that investing in initiatives that both directly and indirectly support the city's historic, marine-related industries while allowing the waterfront to adapt to new and marine-related industries and emerging water-dependent uses is the path toward a sustainable, healthy waterfront in the future.



91% of survey respondents support continued protections for Portland's working waterfront.



## RECENT & ONGOING INITIATIVES

The foundational document informing current waterfront land use policy in the City of Portland, the 1992 *Waterfront Alliance Report*, established the framework that has underpinned Portland's waterfront resurgence. Though Portland's waterfront and supporting policies continue to evolve, the 1992 report — based on extensive stakeholder engagement — provides a resilient structure for waterfront land use in the city. That structure, at its core, established a priority hierarchy of uses, from water dependent to marine-related and compatible non-marine, and identified primary purposes, uses, and activities best suited for the Eastern, Central, and Western Waterfronts.

There have been subsequent studies, planning, and policy work since the *Waterfront Alliance Report*, such as the 1998 *Port of Portland Cargo and Passenger Study* and the 2000 *Investing in Our Waterfront* report. The City undertook an extensive, multi-year master planning effort for the Eastern Waterfront in early 2000 which resulted in a vision for redevelopment of this area, including policy goals, design guidelines, and a height



study. In 2010, the City completed a comprehensive inventory, policy study, and zoning rewrite for the Waterfront Central Zone with the aim of calibrating the zone to allow for a balance of private investment in pier and wharf infrastructure, as well as continued support for commercial vessel berthing and support activities. And in June 2015, the City rezoned the easternmost portion of the waterfront to the Eastern Waterfront Port Zone and B-6 Mixed-Use Zone, including modifications to the permitted heights and building envelopes. As a common thread throughout, the City reaffirmed its commitment



to policies that ensure continued opportunities and functional autonomy for marine economic activity.

In addition to this planning and policy work, there have been a number of waterfront initiatives in the past decade with major impacts on the form and function of the waterfront. Since 2006, the waterfront has seen a resurgence in international passenger ferry service with the construction of the Ocean Gateway Marine Passenger Terminal as well as the reinstatement of ferry service to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia in 2014. In 2016, the Maine Port Authority was awarded a \$7.5 million grant for improvements to the International Marine Terminal (IMT), which will build on prior phases of investment in the IMT that connected the terminal to the national rail system for the first time in decades and vastly expanded the terminal's freight handling capacity.

Plans for future improvements are currently underway. The City is in the process of planning a road and utility extension along the Thames Street right-of-way, in keeping with *A Master Plan for Redevelopment of the Eastern Waterfront*, to facilitate future development in the Eastern Waterfront. Plans to design and construct facilities on West Commercial Street, in keeping with the 2016 *West Commercial Street Multi-Modal Corridor Study*, have just begun. And the City is developing plans for enhanced recreational waterfront access at two locations: the East End Beach and ramp (through the East End Waterfront Access Project), and the Amethyst Lot, which has been slated for transformation into a newly designed and reimagined signature open space for recreation and active water use on the Eastern Waterfront.



## THE EVOLVING WATERFRONT ECONOMY: AQUACULTURE

During the early 1990s, when modern working waterfront preservation policies were developed, Portland's waterfront was highly dependent on ground fishing as a foundational industry. Following the 1990s, the dominance of ground fishing declined dramatically, with the resulting void largely, but not entirely, filled by lobster harvesting, distribution, and support industries. The Portland waterfront is now heavily dependent on the lobster industry.

While we celebrate our success as a lobster port and service center, history cautions against overreliance on a single fishery as the foundation of a community asset as important as the Portland waterfront. Fortunately, aquaculture — the farming of marine animals and plants for human consumption and utilization — provides tremendous opportunities for the marine economy and the future of our working waterfront. Currently there are fewer than 10 aquaculture businesses operating on the Portland waterfront, but significant growth is on the horizon. The State of Maine is investing in the industry with over \$20 million in research and development grants. The number of aquaculture leases is expanding, as are the number of species being farmed. The growing U.S. market acceptance of seaweed as food, as nutritional supplement, and as a component of biotechnology dramatically increases the potential for aquaculture to transform the local marine economy.

All growing industries need space to evolve, experiment, and innovate. To foster this evolution, Portland needs to preserve the capacity within its waterfront to allow newly emerging marine sectors, such as aquaculture and its support industries, to expand. By doing so, we create new sources of high-quality seafood and secure our place as a working harbor into the next generation.



## STATE GOALS

To protect the State’s marine resources industry, ports and harbors from incompatible development and to promote access to the shore for commercial fishermen and the public.

Coastal communities include the additional required goals:

\_\_\_\_\_

To promote the maintenance, development, and revitalization of the State’s ports and harbors for fishing, transportation and recreation;

\_\_\_\_\_

To manage the marine environment and its related resources to preserve and improve the ecological integrity and diversity of marine communities and habitats, to expand our understanding of the productivity of the Gulf of Maine and coastal waters and to enhance the economic value of the State’s renewable marine resources;

\_\_\_\_\_

To support shoreline management that gives preference to water-dependent uses over other uses, that promotes public access to the shoreline and that considers the cumulative effects of development on coastal resources;

\_\_\_\_\_

To discourage growth and new development in coastal areas where, because of coastal storms, flooding, landslides or sea level rise, it is hazardous to human health and safety;

\_\_\_\_\_

To encourage and support cooperative State and municipal management of coastal resources;

\_\_\_\_\_

To protect and manage critical habitat and natural areas of State and national significance and maintain the scenic beauty and character of the coast even in areas where development occurs;

\_\_\_\_\_

To expand the opportunities for outdoor recreation and to encourage appropriate coastal tourist activities and development;

\_\_\_\_\_

To restore and maintain the quality of our fresh, marine and estuarine waters to allow for the broadest possible diversity of public and private uses, and;

\_\_\_\_\_

To restore and maintain coastal air quality to protect the health of citizens and visitors and to protect enjoyment of the natural beauty and maritime characteristics of the Maine coast.



## LOCAL GOALS

**WE WILL:**

—————  
Prioritize and promote Portland’s unique mix of water-dependent, marine-related uses and compatible non-marine uses.

—————  
Recognize and reinforce the respective roles of the Eastern, Central, and Western Waterfronts.

—————  
Celebrate, promote, and protect Portland’s lobster and fishing industry as a foundation of the region’s economy and a feature of civic pride.

—————  
Maintain and modernize infrastructure to support the working waterfront and port capabilities.

—————  
Ensure the future of the marine economy through support for emerging marine industries and mitigation of market trends that could compromise the

balance between marine industries and competing development.

—————  
Recognize and reinforce waterborne transport of goods and people as foundational to our community.

—————  
Promote passive and active recreational access to the waterfront.

—————  
Create a resilient waterfront in the face of sea level rise, including increased storm frequency and intensity trends.

—————  
Develop effective public and private partnerships to promote the Port of Portland as an economic engine for the State of Maine.



## FUTURE STRATEGIES

### 1. ADOPT MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

- Identify metrics, collect data, and adapt existing waterfront policies.
- Evaluate the capacity of existing waterfront zoning and technical standards to address changing economic drivers that result in new marine uses, dimensional requirements, and infrastructure needs.
- Inventory marine and non-marine use and occupancy in the Central Waterfront to inform evaluation of future opportunities for marine use expansion potential.

### 2. INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE

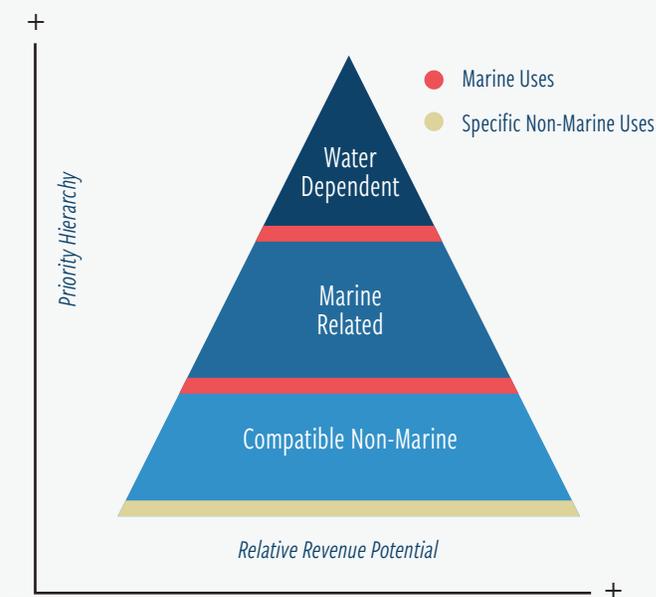
- Seek funds and create incentives to improve facilities for marine industries, including the maintenance and expansion of public and private berthing, dredging, and land-side infrastructure.
- Develop a capital improvement plan for the Eastern Waterfront for public and private investment in public facilities, including road and utility extensions, to facilitate planned and future development consistent with *A Master Plan for Redevelopment of the Eastern Waterfront*.
- Continue to explore funding for pier maintenance in the Central Waterfront.
- Support private, federal, and State investment in the Western Waterfront.

### 3. EXPAND WATERFRONT ACCESS

- Expand waterfront access for the public where possible and appropriate.
- Program, design, and transform the Amethyst Lot into a signature waterfront open space for community boating, recreation, and active marine use.

- Implement improvements to the East End Beach to expand facilities for non-motorized recreational boating.
- Explore the potential for greater recreational access to and along the Fore River.
- Protect and promote access to the waterfront and Portland islands for commercial and marine activity, including berthing.

**Waterfront Use Hierarchy**



### 4. IMPROVE FREIGHT FACILITIES

- Coordinate with Casco Bay Island Transit District for improvements to vehicle and pedestrian circulation on Maine State Pier for improved site layout and freight handling.
- Facilitate the development of logistics and storage infrastructure that supports the economic viability of the port while prioritizing the functional needs of marine transport.



## POLICY GUIDE: WATERFRONT

### 5. VISUALIZE WATERFRONT POLICIES

- Produce illustrated design guidelines for marine and non-marine pier compatibility to serve as accessible, visual guidance for marine protective performance standards.

### 6. PLAN FOR CHANGING CLIMATE

- Develop policies to support both mitigation of and adaptation to rising sea levels, changing water chemistry, increased water temperatures, and escalation of storm frequency and intensity, particularly as they impact piers, wharves, and low-lying infrastructure.
- Study the economic risk of increased storm frequency and sea level rise for all City-owned or managed infrastructure assets.
- Help property owners assess risk to waterfront and near waterfront assets and direct risk assessments to investments in more resilient infrastructure.
- Integrate best practices for adaptive waterfront strategies, including adaptive construction techniques, stormwater infrastructure and utilities, site protection, floodproofing, and risk avoidance, into the City's technical standards and land use code.
- Consider land use tools to incentivize exemplary construction practices for climate resilience.
- Capitalize on emerging trade, fisheries and transportation patterns to the Arctic, Northern Europe, and beyond.



### WATERFRONT CHALLENGES

- Buildings, piers, and infrastructure require maintenance and investment over time, including private investment in waterfront property and businesses.
- Retaining public access in the context of a working port, through facilities like the Eastern Promenade, East End Beach, the existing trail network, the Amethyst Lot, and piers that can be accessed by foot or by water, requires active management on the part of the City.
- As the city's waterfront changes, maintaining neighborhood integrity while respecting the needs of a working port must be addressed through quality of design, traffic mitigation, street improvements, and other performance standards.
- Change to water depths due to natural and human-influenced sedimentation requires dredging and responsible disposal of dredged sediments.
- Marine industries require new development forms and transportation systems as they change, with implications for both zoning and public infrastructure.
- Stormwater impacts that degrade harbor ecology and increase sedimentation necessitate robust stormwater runoff mitigation as redevelopment and infrastructure improvements occur.
- As climate change impacts are felt in rising sea levels and increased storm frequencies, Portland's waterfront faces new challenges to its infrastructure and economy that will require new tools and responses.



## 7. DREDGE RESPONSIBILITY

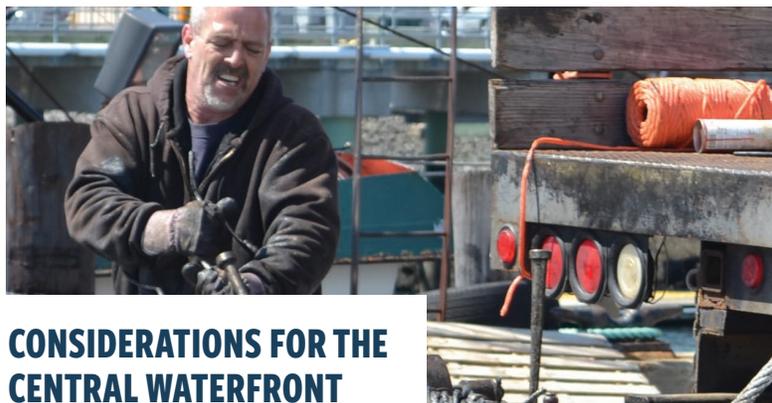
- Coordinate with the Harbor Commission, South Portland, and other appropriate stakeholders to find a financial mechanism to dredge public and private piers and to achieve a Contained Aquatic Disposal (CAD) site for the responsible disposal of sediments.

## 8. PLAN FOR CITY TERMINALS

- Develop a plan for re-use of the Portland Ocean Terminal property, including evaluation of supporting infrastructure to attract increased and diversified commercial and marine tenants.
- Implement a plan for reconfiguration of the queuing area at Ocean Gateway to allow for more diversified marine activity, such as support for re-use of the Portland Ocean Terminal.
- Explore the feasibility of a new pier between Ocean Gateway and Maine State Pier to support increased commercial use of the waterfront and support for the marine passenger industry.
- Plan for growth of cruise ship visits while continuing to evaluate impacts on other marine industries and the downtown.

## 9. BALANCE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

- Address transportation and congestion issues on Commercial Street to balance the mobility needs of marine industrial uses with bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements.
- Maintain Commercial Street, as the sole point of access for most of Portland's water-dependent uses, for truck access, loading, and staging.
- Continue to support local ferry service.



## CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE CENTRAL WATERFRONT

The Central Waterfront is located along the south side of Commercial Street from Maine Wharf to the east to Deake's Wharf to the west, and is characterized by privately-held commercial piers running roughly perpendicular to Commercial Street into Portland Harbor and the Fore River. It represents the single largest resource of commercial vessel berthing in Portland Harbor and is an irreplaceable resource of state-wide significance. In addition to private commercial marine holdings, the zone is home to the Portland Fish Pier, the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, berthing for the United States Coast Guard, residential condominiums, retail and restaurant uses, two private marinas, and offices serving marine and non-marine interests. The goal for the Central Waterfront is to achieve a balance where non-marine economic development benefits the piers, Commercial Street, waterfront uses, and the City by sustaining marine infrastructure, protecting opportunity for commercial marine activity, and promoting appropriate access by the public to views and activities in Portland Harbor.

Since the 1990s, the groundfishing industry has undergone significant contraction — an over 50% loss of ground fishing vessels and a more than two thirds reduction in landings at the Portland Fish Exchange. The Central Waterfront has seen substantial privately funded economic development, but waterfront infrastructure repairs and maintenance remain costly and necessary. The area has also experienced decreasing water depth at the piers due to natural deposition of sediments exacerbated by stormwater overflows into the harbor. Maintenance dredging will be needed to ensure quality commercial berthing opportunities for public and private piers. It is unlikely that berthing revenues alone will support these costs.



- Evaluate and balance the potentially competing needs of cruise ship visits with international ferry service.

## **10. SUPPORT TRADITIONAL AND EMERGING MARINE INDUSTRIES**

- Collaborate with private pier and waterfront property owners to implement waterfront policies that promote and protect the marine economy.
- Continue to support the Portland Fish Pier and Fish Exchange as regional anchors of the seafood economy.
- Promote development of cold storage warehousing to support a competitive Port of Portland by improving capacity to serve the cargo needs of the seafood, agriculture, food manufacturing, and beverage industries of northern New England.

# A Vibrant City

## **GREATER PORTLAND REPRESENTS**

approximately half the State of Maine's economic output, and at the heart of the region Portland provides a welcoming environment for current and future employers and entrepreneurs both large and small. The city's historic industries, such as manufacturing, fishing, shipping, and tourism, are still relevant and evolving, even as Portland's 21st century economy is increasingly diverse. Portland simultaneously hosts a financial and services center, a growing biotech presence, a thriving local food cluster, a port of international trade, a regional healthcare hub, and a flourishing center of arts and culture.

The city's exceptional urban form is integral to the health of its economy; its compact, walkable downtown and neighborhood centers, strong transit connections, and spectacular setting on Casco Bay all contribute to Portland's distinct advantages. The combination of a vibrant city with an exquisite coast and proximity to lakes, rivers, and mountains remains central to attracting tourists, full-time residents, and the businesses that serve them.

The geography of the Portland's commercial activity is dynamic, and multi-nodal. In addition to the Old Port and the Arts District, which continue

to be magnets for business and tourism, new clusters of economic activity have emerged outside of downtown in recent years. East Bayside is a locus of local food and artisan entrepreneurial activity; Thompson's Point is repurposing existing historic industrial structures into innovative additions to Portland's arts and food scene; new businesses and housing are appearing on inner Washington Avenue; the International Marine Terminal is expanding; and the Eastern Waterfront is poised to achieve the vision set out for it over a decade ago. Recent planning initiatives, such as rezoning portions of Forest Avenue, streetscape investments in Woodfords Corner, and the enactment of the India Street form-based code and historic district have created policy frameworks to help direct change in these areas.

The impact of Portland's economy is felt beyond its physical limits: it has a food culture that serves as a catalyst for renewed agricultural growth in rural Maine; it is home to one of the state's three key ports and its largest airport; and its creative class has begun to spill beyond its borders, helping to revitalize other cities and towns across the state. Portland is increasingly a center for global industry and an international travel destination.



POLICY GUIDE: **ECONOMY**

The city’s international shipping capacity is growing to respond to the needs of a 21st century marketplace. The number of regional businesses with international influence is expanding and more employers are making Portland their global and U.S. headquarters for industries such as healthcare, technology, electronic payments, and insurance.

Portland’s entrepreneurial environment has received national and global recognition. Our food and maker economies continue to thrive as we explore ways to grow our value-added industries such as brewing and distilling, seafood processing, farm-to-table restaurants, and other food producers who build on the high-quality raw materials of local agricultural and natural resources. Remote workers also represent a growing sector of the city’s economy, drawn here for Portland’s distinct quality of place, and enabled by sound transit and communications systems. Creative and collaborative workspaces are flourishing in the city, providing opportunities to meet the changing needs of the 21st century workforce.

There are many challenges for Portland’s economy, including a scarcity of office, industrial, and commercial space to meet current demand; an aging workforce; the need to cultivate and attract a workforce with the skills needed in today’s economy; low population growth; low household income relative to the region and the country; rising housing costs; and insufficient housing supply. It is critical to address these challenges if Portland is to thrive in the years ahead.

Portland is poised for growth in population, jobs, and greater diversity in the coming decade. However, sustaining a robust economy calls for Portland to welcome innovation and respond to shifting economic trends. Perhaps the most critical element for the city’s economic future is tapping the nascent energy of current and future entrepreneurs and the many individuals, of all skill levels, who contribute to the businesses and organizations that will drive Portland’s economic future.



## RECENT & ONGOING INITIATIVES

In 2011, the City developed the *Economic Development Vision + Plan*, as part of a collaboration with the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, Creative Portland, the Portland Development Corporation, the Greater Portland Convention + Visitors Bureau, and Portland Downtown. This plan established three core economic development focus areas for the City — growing the economy, enriching the creative economy, and supporting business — and laid the foundation for the City-led economic development initiatives and programs of the following years.

The City's economic development work in the wake of the 2011 plan has centered on these focus areas. At a broad level, the City has engaged in a public process to assess the potential for improvements to basic services central to the health of the economy (such as broadband internet), and invested in efforts to streamline its development

regulatory process. Simultaneously, the City has embarked on a rebranding effort designed in part to highlight the elements of Portland that make it unique and attractive to business, and invested in marketing Portland's economic development programs through the City's website and print media. All the while, the City has continued to participate in the Greater Portland Economic Development Corporation, which involves municipalities throughout the region as well as local educational institutions in recruiting out-of-state businesses, marketing, and stimulating economic growth. And, beginning in 2016, the City engaged in an initiative led by the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce to generate an annual economic scorecard to measure Portland's economic performance.



POLICY GUIDE:  
**ECONOMY**

The City continues to focus on business-based strategies which include site location assistance; direct commercial lending; job creation; facade improvement grant programs; technical assistance through partnerships with the Small Business Development Center, SCORE, and Coastal Enterprises, Inc.; and the provision of financial incentives. The City also has made place-based efforts, establishing area-wide Tax Increment Finance (TIF) districts to support transit and public infrastructure as a means of promoting economic development, and actively marketing City-owned real estate at the Portland Technology Park, Bayside, and Riverside Street to attract private investment.

This work is supplemented and enriched by the activities and partnerships of local organizations such as Creative Portland, Portland Downtown, and Greater Portland Council of Governments, which have supported the City's efforts to identify and capitalize on areas of potential growth. As a product of these collaborations, Portland was recently designated by the federal government as a Sustainable Food Production Cluster, one of 12 nationwide. The designation will enhance and support the already substantial manufacturing of dairy, seafood, aquaculture, and value-added products that are an increasingly important part of the local economy.



## STATE GOALS

Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.

## LOCAL GOALS

### WE WILL:

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Create economic prosperity by growing Portland's tax and employment base.

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Value innovation and creativity as cornerstones of the local economy and as central to Portland's uniqueness and diversity.

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Reinforce the waterfront as a key component of Portland's economic health, balancing traditional and emerging industries with tourism and recreation.

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Support sustainable growth in our educational, medical, and cultural institutions.

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Invest in, attract, and retain human capital to support a growing economy.

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Respect that our unique quality of place is key to our current and future economic success.

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Value and nurture Portland-based businesses.



## FUTURE STRATEGIES

### 1. ADOPT MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

- Track economic indicators and periodically issue performance reports to keep the staff, City leadership, and the public apprised of performance.
- Consider regional and national best practices in developing metrics.

### 2. SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

- Pursue policies that create, nurture, and retain local businesses.
- Support job creation and business growth through public initiatives and private, institutional, and regional partnerships.
- Strengthen City programs and services that support business development.
- Develop programs that support industries with high-growth/high-value potential such as life sciences, food production, information technology, and marine-related industries.

### 3. INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE

- Make physical improvements and expansions to below- and above-grade infrastructure, including utilities, stormwater, transit, parking, and streets, to maintain and accommodate new growth.
- Coordinate interdepartmental planning and investment strategies, which may involve strategic public investment, private investment, or public/private partnerships.
- Examine ways that the sharing economy can be leveraged to serve Portland residents effectively and innovatively.

- Encourage investment in mobile technology infrastructure for all residents.

### 4. INVEST IN PEOPLE

- Prepare our current and future residents to compete in an increasingly knowledge-based economy.
- Invest in educational institutions and training as a means of attracting, developing, and retaining an educated workforce.
- Establish a new City office to address issues of economic opportunity and workforce integration.
- Identify and invest in current and future entrepreneurs to anchor startups.

### 5. TARGET AREAS FOR JOB GROWTH

- Ensure that new employment can be accommodated in priority growth areas across the city.
- Evaluate zoning and the condition of existing infrastructure in priority areas — downtown, identified neighborhood nodes, and along transit corridors — to ensure that employment and housing growth can be supported.
- Expand possibilities for live/work spaces — residential living space with integrated creative work space.
- Modify ordinances and make strategic investments to better promote business development and job creation in priority areas.



## 6. PLAN FOR INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH

- Promote the orderly expansion of institutional uses, such as educational, cultural, and hospital campuses, which are central to workforce development, employment, and the health of the local and regional economies.
- Ensure that the growth of Portland’s educational, medical, and cultural institutions is integrated into Portland’s urban fabric through the use of high-quality design, management of impacts, community partnerships, and innovative planning.
- Sustain and strengthen relationships between local organizations and our anchor institutions to capitalize on their unique value to the well-being and future success of Portland and the region.

## 7. ENCOURAGE INNOVATION AND ENRICH THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

- Capitalize on the potential of temporary measures, activities, and uses to support and test new projects in the city, and explore models for incorporating changes in policy in an incremental and scalable way.
- Continue marketing and branding programs and refine recruitment strategies.
- Support policies that foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and the creative economy.
- Capitalize on emerging open data trends to encourage transparency, test ideas, and develop solutions for urban issues.



## BUY LOCAL

Portland Buy Local is a campaign of the Portland Independent Business & Community Alliance with over 450 members. Their mission is to support locally-owned, independent businesses in Portland; maintain the city’s unique community character; provide continuing opportunities for entrepreneurs; build economic strength; and prevent the displacement of community-based businesses by national and global chains.

Portland Buy Local was born out of research that consistently demonstrates the positive impacts of locally-owned businesses, which tend to keep a greater share of money circulating in the local economy than their large national counterparts and are relatively resilient in the midst of macroeconomic fluctuations. For example, recent research by the Maine Center for Economic Policy found that, in general, money spent at local businesses generates as much as a 76% greater return to the local economy than money spent at national chains. Research has identified other benefits of buying local as well — creating local jobs, reducing environmental impacts, promoting entrepreneurship, and fostering community among them.



## 8. EMPHASIZE ARTS AND CULTURE

- Leverage arts and culture as a central element of Portland's distinct quality of place.
- Support our cultural institutions and spaces for the arts.
- Support access to arts and culture for all residents.

## 9. INVEST IN TRANSPORTATION

- Recognize the role of the transportation system in the current and future economic health of the city.
- Maintain and invest in our multi-modal transportation system — the International Jetport, Ocean Gateway, passenger rail service, the International Marine Terminal, METRO, Casco Bay Island Transit District (CBITD), the Portland Transportation Center, and our bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure — as a foundation for local, regional, and international economic growth and as a bridge to future economic opportunities.
- Enhance connectivity between transportation modes by expanding intermodal passenger service at the Portland Transportation Center and between transportation hubs such as the Jetport, Casco Bay Island Ferry Service, Portland Transportation Center, and downtown.

## 10. SUPPORT THE WATERFRONT

- Recognize the waterfront as a major economic driver through policies and infrastructure that support a resilient and modern working port.
- Leverage the economic potential of Portland's marine sector as an innovator in climate change adaptation.

## 11. IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY

- Invest in broadband to support a 21st century workforce, including telecommuters and entrepreneurs, and to improve connectivity for the entire community.



### WHAT IS THE CREATIVE ECONOMY?

Defined loosely, the creative economy is economic activity generated from creative pursuits, whether in association with the arts, culture, technology, or other creative sectors. The creative economy has been widely credited with leading economic growth in the last decade, and communities across the country continue to explore ways to foster it. The expansion of the creative economy has clear planning implications: it has already reshaped the way people work and where people work, allowing for major shifts in patterns of land use and transportation.

One manifestation of the strength of the creative economy in Portland is Maine Startup & Create Week, launched in 2013, which brings people from around the country to Portland every June to learn, connect, and celebrate innovation and high-impact entrepreneurship. Hosted at Maine College of Art, thousands of attendees have come from more than 30 states to learn, collaborate, and hear speakers from founders of companies as diverse as Portland startups, Amazon, WEX, Google, and IDEXX.

# A Livable City

**WHILE PORTLAND HAS WELCOMED** much needed new housing construction in recent years, both the lack of sufficient housing supply and the affordability of that housing for a healthy socio-economic cross-section of the population remain urgent challenges. This phenomenon is not unique to Portland; cities across the nation have recently experienced renewed investment and shifting demographics as the preference for living in close proximity to urban centers, transportation hubs, and walkable neighborhoods continues to grow. Stories of displacement and household instability have become more common as residents struggle to find decent, safe, and affordable housing.

The City of Portland is actively engaged in efforts to encourage housing preservation and creation for all income levels and household sizes city-wide, both through policy initiatives and through public/nonprofit partnerships with agencies such as Portland Housing Authority, Community Housing of Maine, Avesta Housing, Preble Street, Shalom House, and the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition.

The City has a suite of existing tools and policies that remain important in supporting a more

equitable and diverse housing supply. To supplement ongoing efforts in this area, the City Council's Housing Committee recommends new housing policies; promotes balanced development; and makes recommendations regarding available development tools such as Tax Increment Finance (TIF) zones, the Affordable Housing Revolving Loan Fund, Community Development Block Grants, HOME Program, and zoning and policy changes. The committee engaged in a robust public process throughout the spring and summer of 2016 not only to identify housing issues, but to develop creative solutions. The committee identified two main, interrelated themes: housing insecurity and lack of sufficient and suitable housing supply.

Today, Portland's population is well below its mid-20th century peak, but after decades of decline Portland is growing, presenting the city with new opportunities and new challenges.

The City will continue to examine and approve substantive policy changes to accommodate those seeking the benefits of city life, and recognize that the city's vitality rests on the availability of diverse, secure housing options for existing residents, new arrivals, and all stages of life.



## RECENT & ONGOING INITIATIVES

The City of Portland works to ensure that decent and safe housing is available to residents. On a daily and ongoing basis, the City operates a range of essential housing programs that are central to the health and welfare of City residents. These programs vary from rental assistance and home rehab programs to affordable housing development subsidies and the operation of two homeless shelters, all designed to ensure that all residents of the City of Portland have access to a diverse range of safe and adequate housing.

This fundamentally important work is completed against the backdrop of the City's housing planning efforts. In 2002, Portland adopted *Housing: Sustaining Portland's Future*, a seminal housing plan which established policy goals to ensure an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs, preferences, and financial capabilities of all Portland households. It remains a valuable policy document, and since its adoption, Portland has actively undertaken additional initiatives to address the city's changing housing needs, examining housing conditions through efforts like the 2015 *Portland 2030 Workforce*

*Housing Demand Study*, assembled through a partnership with the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG).

This planning work has led to policy, like that considered in the 2015 Encourage and Ensure housing policy package and the 2016 Council Housing Committee deliberations, focused broadly on increasing the overall supply and diversity of the housing stock. Over the past several years, the City has amended its zoning ordinance to allow greater residential density in various zones, expand the applicability of an existing 25% density bonus, increase allowable heights in some parts of downtown, reduce parking requirements to eliminate barriers to development, and incentivize residential and mixed-use development on India Street through a form-based code. Other recent changes to the ordinance have spoken directly to affordability: mandating the inclusion of affordable workforce housing within all residential development projects of 10 or more units, reducing fees for affordable housing development, and facilitating the creation of accessory dwelling units for income-qualified households.



## POLICY GUIDE: HOUSING

These changes supplement existing policies meant to preserve Portland's housing stock, such as the City's Housing Replacement Ordinance, the Condominium Conversion Ordinance, and an ongoing effort to encourage income-restricted affordable housing development.

In addition to setting policy related to housing, the City of Portland has made a concerted effort to develop and implement tools (many of them financial) to foster the creation of housing. For example, the City receives an annual allocation of funds from the federal HOME in part to help support the development and preservation of affordable housing. Since 2000, \$7.1 million in HOME funds have contributed to the development of approximately 813 units of housing. Similarly, since 2000, the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program has helped fund the development of approximately 103 units of housing and the City has used approximately \$1.4 million in Housing Development Fund resources to help subsidize the creation of approximately 224 housing units. In recent years, the City has also worked to develop alternative mechanisms for financing affordable housing development. The recently-established Affordable Housing Revolving Loan Fund, which works in conjunction with Affordable Housing Tax Increment Financing projects, is designed to capture a portion of the increased property values to be used in support of future affordable housing goals. The City has also released an RFP to incentivize the development of supportive housing for populations at risk of homelessness and has made City-owned land, like that at the Nathan Clifford School, available for housing development.



### DENSITY BY DESIGN

Density is a numerical measure of the number of people or buildings per acre of land. Because it is so often used to illustrate levels of crowding, density has often acquired a negative connotation. However, this connotation fails to take into account the positive contribution that well-designed, dense developments can make to quality of life. High density areas can provide numerous advantages over low density alternatives — they can be more environmentally friendly, they can promote transit use, and they can benefit the health of a community by providing customers for local businesses and opportunities for social interaction.

Portland has a number of neighborhoods that offer traditional urban densities — Munjoy Hill, the West End, Parkside, Deering Center, for example — and these neighborhoods are largely successful. Residents can access stores, schools, dining, and entertainment within walking distance of their homes. By foot or bike, they can easily reach transit, trails, and recreational opportunities. These characteristics are largely possible because of their density. Well-designed density is integral to healthy, walkable city neighborhoods.



## STATE GOALS

To encourage and promote affordable decent, housing opportunities for all Maine citizens

## LOCAL GOALS

### WE WILL:

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Increase, preserve, and modify the overall supply of housing city-wide to meet the needs, preferences and financial capabilities of all Portland residents.

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Encourage additional contextually appropriate housing density in and proximate to neighborhood centers, concentrations of services, and transit nodes and corridors as a means of supporting complete neighborhoods.

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Pursue policies to enable people who work in Portland to have the option to live in Portland.

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Collaborate with surrounding communities on regional housing solutions.

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Encourage quality, sustainable design in new housing development.



## FUTURE STRATEGIES

### 1. BUILD ON EXISTING PROGRAMS

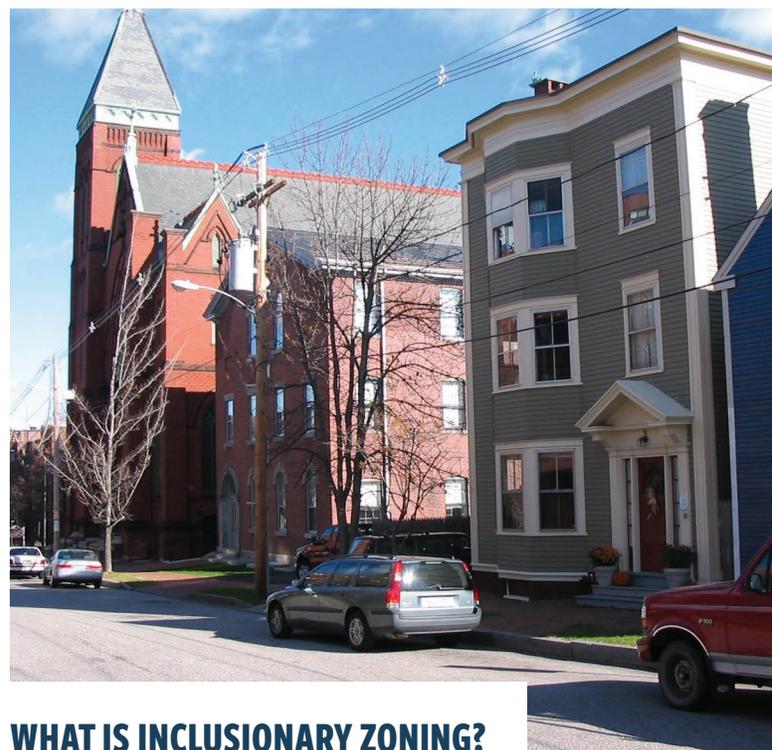
- Reinforce existing housing tools, policies, and programs while continuing to explore emerging best practices.
- Continue to implement best practices in workforce and affordable housing development such as the Housing Trust Fund, inclusionary zoning, and other tools.

### 2. ADOPT MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

- Track performance on key housing objectives.
- Generate reports to keep staff, City leadership, and the public apprised of performance.
- Consider national best practices in developing metrics.

### 3. REMOVE HOUSING BARRIERS

- Evaluate whether current zoning allows for new development consistent with historic patterns of form, density, and/or use, as well as whether it allows for priority growth areas.
- Assess the impact of current parking requirements on housing development, and evaluate the suitability of fee-in-lieu programs for some neighborhoods.
- Identify priority growth areas.
- Coordinate linkages between accessible transportation and housing affordability.
- Allow for a range of housing models in City codes, whether small units, co-housing, or others that may suit changing needs and demographics.



## WHAT IS INCLUSIONARY ZONING?

Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) requires that residential development projects of a certain size provide a portion of their units as affordable to income-qualified households. Portland's IZ ordinance requires that all new projects of 10 or more units reserve 10% of the units as "workforce" housing for households earning at or below 100% - 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Developers are given the flexibility to provide units on-site, in another building nearby, or pay a substantial fee in lieu of each required unit. Any funds received through the fee-in-lieu option are deposited in the City's Housing Trust Fund to be used to maintain or create additional affordable units throughout the city.



#### 4. PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

- Encourage energy efficiency in new construction and rehabilitation of Portland’s housing stock.
- Encourage housing that is resilient in the face of climate change, severe weather events, and storm surges, especially in vulnerable low-lying areas.
- Encourage rehabilitation of existing historic buildings and materials.

#### 5. LEVERAGE UNDERUSED PROPERTIES

- Consider the sale of City-owned land that may be appropriate for housing development.
- Consider incentivizing affordability restrictions as part of City-owned property transactions, as well as the potential to return improved properties to the City’s tax rolls.

#### 6. EXPLORE NEW TOOLS

- Explore tools that support innovative frameworks for housing creation, stability, and affordability, such as but not limited to community land trusts and a Transfer of Development Rights program.
- Develop additional resources for neighborhood associations and citizen planners, such as neighborhood planning toolkits and processes to enhance communication between neighborhood groups and City staff, to enrich community input.

#### 7. PLAN FOR SHELTER

- Ensure that the land use code aligns with City Council policy direction on homeless shelter placement and contemporary facility requirements.



#### POPULATION GOAL IN CONTEXT

Portland’s population hit a high of 77,634 in the mid-20th century, significantly more than its current total of 66,681 (U.S. Census Resident Population Estimate for 2015). Portland’s Plan supports the principle that all who work in Portland should have the option of living in Portland. The next decade can accommodate a sustainable growth target of 75% of the current workforce. With a total daytime population of approximately 96,000, this plan sets a 10 year population goal of 75% of this total, or approximately 72,000 people by 2027. The number of new households this implies could vary, but based on a current household size of 2.08, this would result in a total of 2,557 new housing units in the next 10 years. This growth will not occur at a constant annual rate. More growth may occur in some years and less growth other years, based on factors such as the economy, the housing market, and interest rates.



## 8. SUPPORT AGE-FRIENDLY HOUSING OPTIONS

- Support programs and tools that facilitate aging safely in place.
- Create, promote, and facilitate safe, affordable, and practical housing solutions that will meet the evolving needs of Portland residents as they age.

## 9. ADAPT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Assess the capacity of existing affordable housing developments, many of which were built over four decades ago, to adapt to current best practices by improving energy efficiency and physical and social connections to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Pursue new opportunities for increased energy efficiency, increased densities, mixed incomes, and greater connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods.

## 10. SUPPORT ISLAND COMMUNITIES

- Support land use tools that encourage year-round residences in existing and new housing on Portland's islands, while maintaining their unique character and environment.

# An Active City

**PORTLAND'S OPEN SPACES** vary in size, purpose, and setting and include parks, playgrounds, active playing fields, community gardens, plazas and squares, trails, natural areas, golf courses, cemeteries, and public school grounds. These spaces are the cumulative result of centuries of planning that dates back to the city's first permanent settlement and represent the forethought of residents, mayors, engineers, and world-renowned landscape architects. Today, the City hosts 63 parks encompassing 721 acres of land, 65 miles of trails, playgrounds and playing fields, a swimming pool, and a golf course, for a unique and multi-functional combination of urban and wild. Our open spaces include areas as diverse as the Eastern Promenade, Peppermint Park, Baxter Woods, and Dougherty Field. The functions they serve are equally diverse, providing public access to Casco Bay and the city's waterways, forests, and play spaces, as well as supporting transportation, food production, public health, cultural events, plant and animal habitat, and valuable stormwater infrastructure.

Today, Portland has an open space or trail within a half mile of every residence, a remarkable achievement for any city. Challenges remain, not in total quantity of open space, but in funding and maintenance, in developing linkages between open spaces, and in programming to meet shifting demands, whether for increased recreational access to Casco Bay, improved distribution of community gardens, or proximity to neighborhood playgrounds. Continuing to preserve and develop open spaces, and improve connections between them, is integral to the health and well-being of Portland's residents, visitors, and ecology. The City's public spaces are central to its ability to foster neighborhood vitality, sense of community, recreational opportunities, environmental health, arts and cultural programming, economic development, and local mobility. A walkable, bikeable, and accessible network of open spaces is an invaluable and necessary element of an equitable, healthy, and vibrant future.



## RECENT & ONGOING INITIATIVES

The City of Portland manages a parks and open space system that includes over 60 parks and playgrounds, miles of multi-use trails, 10 community gardens, two stadiums, cemeteries, and dozens of athletic fields and courts, all spread across 721 acres of land. The City also stewards an urban forest of 20,000 inventoried trees, maintains flowerbeds, meadows, and natural open spaces throughout Portland, and provides a variety of recreation programming.

Over the last decade, Portland has made efforts to address the needs of its parks and park users, focusing broadly on open space amenities and programming. Some of these efforts have been coordinated with community partners and citizen advocacy groups such as Breakwater School, Friends of Congress Square Park, Friends of Deering Oaks, Friends of the Eastern Promenade, Friends of Evergreen Cemetery, Friends of Heseltine Park, Friends of Lincoln Park, and Friends of Riverton Trolley Park. These park advocates are a powerful asset to the City and help to raise awareness of individual park needs,

fundraise for park amenities, and coordinate park programming, among other functions.

In 2006, the City updated its foundational open space and recreation plan, *Green Spaces, Blue Edges*, which still offers invaluable history on the evolution of Portland's open space system and natural environment. A decade later, Portland completed a long-range planning initiative to inform a new era of park and open space programming and maintenance. The City, working with Portland Trails, engaged the public in a series of community conversations as a means of identifying Portland's recreation and open space needs and opportunities. Partnering with the Trust for Public Land, this work was leveraged into the 2016 *Portland Open Space Vision and Implementation Plan*. The tools developed and transferred to the City as a part of this effort, including maps and data, the rapid park assessment tool, and the articulation of system-wide monitoring parameters, are designed to assist in realizing the plan's vision and goals.



## POLICY GUIDE: RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

And in the wake of the plan, the City has invested in a series of planning efforts focused on enhancing and developing individual recreation and open space assets — the Lyman Moore Middle School athletic fields, Lincoln Park, the Hall School playground, Fort Gorges, Congress Square Park, and the Amethyst Lot among them.

Even while this planning work has occurred, the City has made lasting investments in its recreation and open space infrastructure. The City has conducted major renovations at Capisic Pond, Deering Oaks Pond, and in Baxter Woods to address drainage infrastructure and water quality. The City has developed a new playground at Ocean Avenue Elementary School, a skate park at Dougherty Field, and the existing field and track were replaced at Fitzpatrick Stadium. In addition, the City has made major investments in Fort Allen Park, the Eastern Promenade community garden, the Western Promenade walkways, and Evergreen Cemetery. All of this work, in its totality, has served to clarify the City’s vision, provide a guide for future decision-making, and improve Portland’s immensely valuable park and open space assets.



### WHAT IS CREATIVE PLACEMAKING?

Creative placemaking is a cooperative, community-based process using arts and cultural expression to make or rejuvenate public spaces, thus deepening a sense of place and inspiring community pride. The Trust for Public Land identifies five principal components of creative placemaking:

**Arts and Culture:** Artists and local cultural organizations strengthen community identity and reinforce neighborhood pride. When incorporated into parks and open spaces, vibrant, authentic art engages and inspires the community.

**Community Engagement:** Creative placemaking begins with intensive participatory design. Neighbors and stakeholders learn from each other and collaborate to identify opportunities, address challenges, and create open space plans that resonate with and serve the needs of the community.

**Partnerships:** A network of thoughtful partners ensures that new and rejuvenated open spaces are woven carefully into their neighborhoods. Partners include local governments, educational institutions, arts groups, community organizations, and not-for-profit social service providers.

**Stewardship:** Parks and open spaces are living things that flourish when neighbors invest time and attention in ongoing operations.

**Equity:** Resources are best focused where new or improved open spaces are most needed to improve health, connect children with nature, support recreation, and help nurture neighborhood identity and stability.



## STATE GOALS

To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters.

## LOCAL GOALS

### WE WILL:

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Sustain and build our system of parks, trails, and open spaces to enhance our quality of life, protect our environment, and promote the economic well-being of our remarkable city by the sea.

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Provide high-quality, well-designed, well-maintained, safe, and integrated parks, trails, public open spaces, and recreational opportunities accessible to all residents.

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Strengthen connections between open spaces.

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Ensure sound capital planning, adequate funding, and staffing for recreation and open space.

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Promote engaged citizen stewardship.

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Preserve the intrinsic values of the park and open space system, including historic resources, vistas, healthy ecosystem functions, and biological diversity.

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Meaningfully program our public spaces.



## FUTURE STRATEGIES

### 1. ADOPT MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

- Employ measurable objectives that collectively provide a desired level of service for Portland's open space system.
- Develop specific metrics for levels of maintenance, accessibility, funding health, programming, ecological health, connectivity, safety, and citizen stewardship through the use of rapid park quality assessments and maintenance plans.
- Consistently monitor the quality and condition of park and open space facilities.

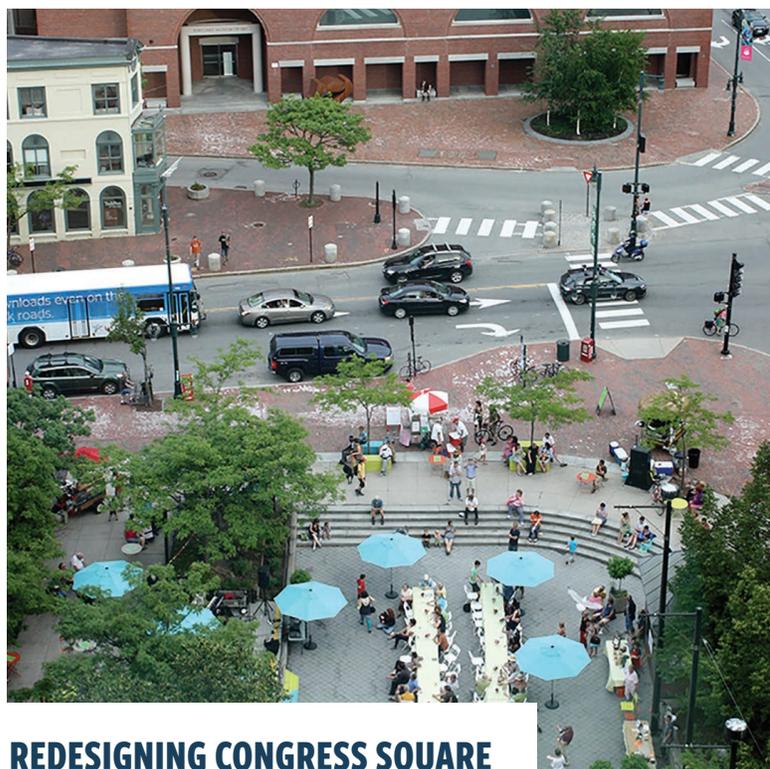
### 2. MAINTAIN EXISTING FACILITIES

- Add amenities, such as cigarette receptacles, trash cans, bike racks, dog waste bags, and water fountains, where appropriate.
- Maintain trails, sports fields, courts, playgrounds, and other amenities such as seating and landscaping, in good condition.

### 3. APPROACH FUNDING STRATEGICALLY

- Consider State, federal, and nonprofit grant sources; public/private partnerships; and fundraising of private dollars to supplement the local budgeting process.
- Establish a clear protocol for involving commissions and the general public in the annual funding decision-making process so that the process is optimally transparent, collaborative, predictable, and incorporates the concerns and expertise of all stakeholders.

- Explore the potential for development-related impact fees that can be applied to funding open space planning, maintenance, programming, and acquisition.



### REDESIGNING CONGRESS SQUARE

Congress Square is a central public open space located in a mixed-use neighborhood of retail establishments, arts and educational organizations, and affordable and market-rate housing. As the city grows, Portland residents are craving social connection and demanding public gathering spaces that are inspiring and interactive. The Congress Square Redesign and Public Art Commission is a design project, three years in the making, to fulfill that need in the heart of the City's Arts District. Creative placemaking is at the core of Congress Square's transformation from a neglected, inaccessible, car-dominated space into a vibrant gathering and arts place. Building on a two-year partnership with Friends of Congress Square Park, the Portland Public Art Committee is seizing on the unique opportunity to develop a collaborative, integrated urban design and public art proposal for Congress Square to better serve neighborhood residents, visitors, and arts organizations to meet the community vision of the square as a high-quality, distinctive urban space that is accessible and inviting to all.



- Adopt project selection criteria for prioritizing open space and recreation projects for capital and operating funding that foster objective and strategic decision-making.

#### **4. ENSURE EQUITY**

- Pursue opportunities, in collaboration with partners, to create new open spaces in areas that are currently underserved.
- Pursue opportunities for new and enhanced walking and biking trails as a means of filling existing gaps and investigate paper streets, vacant land, medians, and other often overlooked areas for the potential for park linkages, trails, and other improvements to the urban landscape.
- Distribute community gardens, playgrounds, fields, public art, historic resources, and other program elements where the demand and need are greatest, and periodically assess demands and needs.
- Promote citizen stewardship in open space maintenance and programming.

#### **5. DEVELOP UNIQUENESS**

- Incorporate creative design, public art, and placemaking wherever possible to enhance aesthetic value.
- Engage the community in bringing arts and culture to the open space network.

#### **6. IMPROVE SAFETY, VISIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY**

- Employ consistent signage to reflect distinct identities of elements of the open space system, as well as aid in wayfinding, while respecting

historic district and neighborhood branding initiatives.

- Expand safe, well lit walking and cycling routes to open spaces, including crosswalks, sidewalks, and bike lanes.
- Improve ADA accessibility in and to public open spaces.



### **COMMUNITY GARDENS**

The City of Portland currently hosts 10 community gardens in neighborhoods across the city. Managed in collaboration with Cultivating Community, an organization that advocates for a sustainable local food system through education on urban food production, nutrition, and refugee and immigrant farmer-training, these gardens provide valuable community space with clear public health, education, social, and environmental benefits. For example, Boyd Street Community Garden, created in 2009, was built in partnership between the City of Portland, Kennedy Parks Tenants' Council, and Cultivating Community. Previously a contaminated site that required City soil remediation efforts, the garden now has an orchard of 25 fruit trees, raspberry and blackberry bushes, honey bees, and a separate youth garden run by high school students to grow food for Cultivating Community's Elder Share CSA Program.



## 7. INCORPORATE MULTIPLE FUNCTIONS

- Improve the utility of existing spaces by developing and programming parks and open spaces for diverse, simultaneous, and complementary uses.

## 8. INCREASE ECOLOGICAL HEALTH

- Develop and implement forest management plans for wooded parcels, and improve the health and quantity of trees and natural areas in parks where forest management plans are not appropriate.
- Model ecologically sound landscape management practices in open spaces, such as planting native species, planning for potential wildlife corridors, planning for pollinators, and limiting the use of pesticides and fertilizers.

## 9. INTEGRATE RESILIENCY

- Pursue opportunities for optimizing green infrastructure and enhancing the existing stormwater management and flood storage functions of the City's open spaces where appropriate and practicable.

## 10. CONNECT TO THE WATERFRONT

- Encourage physical and visual access to Portland's waterfront — Casco Bay, Back Cove, and the Stroudwater, Presumpscot, and Fore Rivers — as a "blueway" network and an extension of public space for local and regional recreation and transportation needs.



## TOWARD AN INTEGRATED TRAIL NETWORK

The City of Portland, in partnership with Portland Trails, hosts a world-class network of trails, accessible within a half mile of every household, which offers Portland residents and visitors opportunities to bike to work, walk to school, and access parks, businesses, and arts and entertainment. Just as importantly, the city's trails allow residents to take a hike, run, bike, experience wildlife, and enjoy the bay, our rivers, and our woodlands.

In recent years, the City has prioritized the completion of key linkages in the trail system which would allow for more widespread use. For example, the City is currently working on the connection between the Martin's Point Bridge and the Back Cove Trail, the extension of the Bayside Trail through Parkside and Libbytown, and the completion of the West Commercial Street Trail. With the completion of these connections, the City will have finished a Peninsula Loop, and will offer residents a safer opportunity to circle the entire peninsula by bicycle.



## 11. SUPPORT COLLABORATIONS

- Continue partnerships with local and regional land trusts and conservation organizations, such as Portland Trails, Maine Audubon, and other nonprofit organizations in open space creation, stewardship, and programming.
- Capitalize on the potential of temporary measures, activities, and uses to support and develop active public spaces through participatory design that incorporates robust stakeholder input.

## 12. CONNECT THE CHAIN

- Prioritize open space acquisition and programming toward creating linkages where there are gaps in the network, particularly between Stroudwater and the Fore River; Evergreen Cemetery and the Presumpscot River; Portland Transportation Center and Bayside; Martin's Point and the Back Cove; and the Western Waterfront and the Fore River.



## PUBLIC ART

Public art has the goal of promoting the educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the City of Portland. The public art program seeks to enhance and enrich the lives of the city residents, visitors, and employees by incorporating the visual arts into public spaces. Not only does public art play a role in providing high-quality, well-designed public spaces, it also has the potential to increase access to works of art for all, celebrate the multicultural and diverse character of Portland's communities, and contribute to the city's civic pride and sense of identity. The program is administered by the Public Art Committee which is tasked with maintaining the public art collection and acquiring and siting new artworks throughout the city. Portland financially supports public art through the Capital Improvement Program which gives a half of a percent of the annual budget for acquisitions and maintenance of the City's public art collection.

# A Full Service City

**THE CITY OF PORTLAND** provides a full range of public services consistent with other cities its size: fire and police coverage; solid waste management; public schools; public libraries; public water (through the Portland Water District); public health and elder services; public sewer; parks and recreational facilities and programs; street maintenance, sweeping, and plowing; and traffic operations. In addition, the City provides other services and facilities that make it unique — a municipal airport, a nursing and rehabilitation facility, a fish pier, marine passenger terminals, and two homeless shelters. Through various departments, the City manages public buildings, spaces, and infrastructure to support these services.

Through private partners, the City also offers telecommunications services and energy infrastructure and supports other public needs. These facilities and services are vital to the health of the Portland's population and to the ability of the city to grow in the future.

Funding improvements to facilities and services always presents challenges, yet resident satisfaction

with these services is generally high. However, quality, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability are ongoing concerns, as evidenced in recent initiatives to improve the City's solid waste management services, address existing deficiencies in public school buildings and sidewalks, and make needed investments in major stormwater separation projects.

Portland recognizes the importance of the community services it offers, from stormwater education for the public and community policing, to addiction recovery advocacy and youth outreach. Public facilities and services touch each corner of the city and are integral to its physical, fiscal, social, and environmental health. In order to support a high-quality of life for current and future generations of Portland residents, the City must continue to invest in these fundamental facilities and services that lay the groundwork for Portland's overall well-being, security, economic development, and future growth.



Over 90% of respondents reported overall satisfaction with current City services.



## RECENT & ONGOING INITIATIVES

Over the past decade, the City has taken a proactive approach to long-range planning for facilities and services. In 2012, the City developed a *Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* in Portland, which identified a series of programmatic and bricks-and-mortar action items intended to address issues of homelessness. In 2013, the City took a comprehensive look at its aging schools, resulting in a series of recommendations for renovation and reconstruction of elementary schools known as the *Buildings for Our Future* report. In 2016, the City completed a *Sustainable Airport Master Plan* for the Portland International Jetport, which recommends improvements needed to enhance the airport's safety, efficiency, and sustainability. The City is currently undertaking an effort to assess the

capacity of existing fire stations, with an eye toward potential capital needs in these facilities, as well. These planning efforts have resulted in significant improvements to the City's facilities and services. The City opened the doors of a new Ocean Avenue Elementary School in 2011, and a new Hall Elementary School is currently under construction. In recent years the City has invested funds into a terminal expansion, runway improvements, and parking garage at the Jetport. The Department of Public Works has moved to a new base of operations on Canco Road, the Burbank Branch Library received a major renovation, and the City has facilitated the development of three new supportive housing facilities.



## STATE GOALS

To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

## LOCAL GOALS

### WE WILL:

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Use planning and fiscal management to sustainably maintain a high level of service for existing infrastructure and programs.

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Coordinate infrastructure planning and investments with areas of greatest anticipated growth.

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Maintain and support a quality educational system that is responsive to the educational needs of our community.

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Strive to be an environmental leader in municipal sustainability programs and investments.

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Provide public safety, emergency response, and emergency management facilities and services that can effectively meet the needs of all residents.



## **FUTURE STRATEGIES**

### **1. DEVELOP MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES**

- Track performance on key indicators.
- Generate reports to keep staff, City leadership, and the public apprised of performance.
- Explore national best practices in developing metrics.

### **2. PROVIDE SERVICES TO ALL RESIDENTS**

- Ensure transparency and access to City services and facilities for all residents.
- Operate City facilities and services in an efficient and effective manner that is responsive to all segments of the community.
- Explore efficient ways of delivering services to the homeless by investigating a wide variety of service models, evaluating the local potential of these models, and developing plans for implementation.
- Provide services that integrate new residents into civic and community life.
- Strengthen protocols for translation and interpretation services.

### **3. PROVIDE EXCELLENT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- Make strategic investments in school facilities to modernize and update buildings and grounds, ensure student safety, and preserve and enhance neighborhood connections.
- Ensure that future land use policy is compatible with school plans by identifying growth areas, evaluating school capacity, and developing plans to address future service gaps.



## **COMMUNITY POLICING**

Since the mid-1990s, the City of Portland Police Department has placed community policing at the heart of its law enforcement strategy. Community policing, which is now widely adopted across the country, emphasizes close relationships between law enforcement and neighborhoods as a means of proactively identifying and resolving issues of public safety. Recent research on community policing suggests that the approach is associated with positive outcomes in terms of perceptions of disorder, police legitimacy, and resident satisfaction.

In addition, the Portland Police have taken a progressive approach to issues of mental health, instituting a behavioral health response program in collaboration with community partners that employs mental health professionals to provide direct service in the field, trains all officers in crisis intervention, and facilitates access to a network of community mental health service providers for purposes of support. The program has earned the department national recognition and is a critical component of the effectiveness of the force.



- Leverage State, local, and private funding to allow a comprehensive approach to sustain excellence in the school system.
- Continue to provide continuing education and job training for adults and new residents.

#### **4. ENSURE ADEQUATE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

- Update the City's *Emergency Action Plan* to ensure adequate integration of emergency responders.
- Leverage community partnerships to plan and implement steps to improve emergency preparedness.
- Evaluate Fire Department facilities and vehicles, looking at the adequacy of buildings and equipment for 21st century life safety needs, as well as the location of facilities in relation to changing growth patterns.

#### **5. MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY POLICING**

- Continue to combine cutting edge law enforcement technologies with compassionate police engagement.
- Work with community partners to maintain and strengthen police/community relationships.
- Continue to develop partnerships to explore all available avenues to address the region's substance abuse and addiction issues.

#### **6. DEVELOP ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANS**

- Develop long-range asset management plans for public facilities in order to ensure that our limited public funds are maintained and invested in strategically.
- Engage in needs assessment and cost-benefit analysis for proposed public facilities.

#### **7. ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS**

- Align the City's land use code with City Council policy direction on shelter placement, shelter models, and facility requirements.
- Continue to embrace innovation and best practices towards eliminating homelessness.

#### **8. PLAN FOR FISCAL STABILITY**

- Keep tax rate increases manageable, and provide predictability and stability in tax rate increases while supporting City services and a stable labor force.
- Make fiscal stability a factor in land use planning by considering both public investments and potential gains in the City's tax base when planning for a sustainable future for the city, while recognizing that not all land use decisions will be driven by the fiscal impacts of the development produced.
- Ensure that the assessed values of property generally reflect their market value.



### 9. EXPLORE IMPACT FEES

- Investigate the potential of a more robust framework for assessing development-related impacts to generate additional funding, while also adding clarity and predictability to existing procedures.

### 10. PURSUE PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- Pursue public/private partnerships to fund needed projects and services.
- Frame City funding for major projects as seed money for potential projects, rather than the sole funding source.
- Look to examples of successful public/private trade-offs in other communities where public funding for capital projects is constrained.



### CITY BUDGET

The City has a robust and inclusive budgeting process that incorporates residents’ interests and allows the City’s elected officials to make informed decisions. The City has adopted policies that govern the way in which its two primary tools — the annual budget and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) — and the financial transactions associated with them are employed. These fiscal policies and budgeting processes have provided a successful framework for funding City services, as demonstrated by the recent upgrading of the City’s Standard & Poor bond rating.

Like all municipalities, each year the City Council adopts an annual budget, including a multi-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The City’s budget must be self-contained, in that everything in it must be paid for. The City relies on a number of outside funding sources in its budget:

- State aid for education and general operations.
- Federal grants such as the Community Development Block Grant and HOME programs, which can be particularly helpful for planning objectives.
- Private donations, such as a recent major contribution to the library system for improvements to the Peaks Island branch.
- Grants from foundations to run pilot projects, operate special programs, or for other specific purposes.

As part of the budgeting process, the City identifies items that have outside funding and then determines a property tax rate that pays for the balance. That rate is determined by the assessed value of each property in the city and the overall amount that needs to be raised. Portland’s Plan is a policy guide, with goals that are, in total, beyond the scope of the budget process alone; fulfillment of this plan will be a community effort, achieved through cooperation with individuals, groups, and organizations, in addition to municipal action.



### 11. ADJUST CIP CALENDAR

- Modify the City’s budgeting process to allow City staff, the public, and the City Council to focus on the annual budget each spring and then the CIP in the fall.

### 12. CAPITALIZE ON EXISTING ASSETS

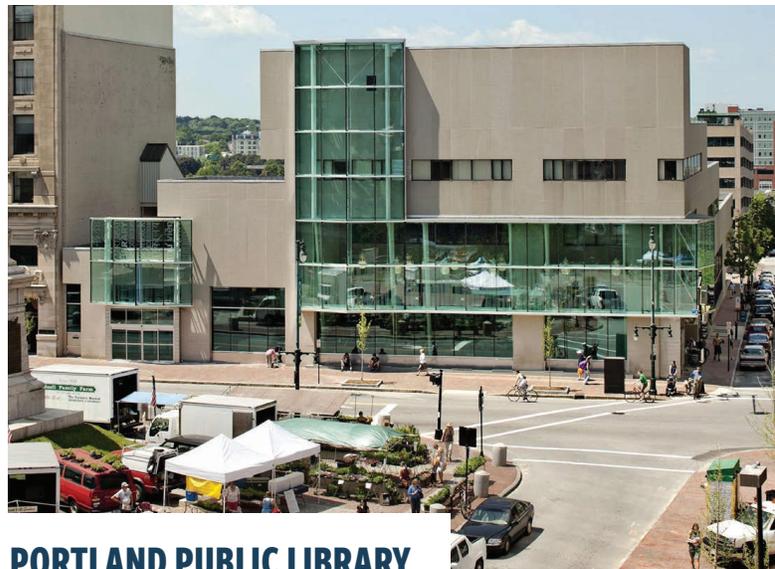
- Explore ways to capitalize on existing, underused assets as a means of subsidizing programs and facilities with broad public support.
- Pursue disposition of properties that are no longer in active use, such as former schools, and invest the resulting resources to meet public goals.
- Prioritize returning income from land disposition to the City’s capital or long-term needs.

### 13. MAINTAIN REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Continue to work in partnership with regional and State agencies, neighboring communities, nonprofit organizations, and private property owners in support of efficient, sustainable City services.

### 14. ENHANCE RESILIENCY

- Consider climate change and associated patterns of sea level rise, storm frequencies, and storm surges, which will impact Portland infrastructure in previously unanticipated ways when planning for investments.
- Establish carbon reduction goals for City operations and evaluate energy efficiency of City buildings to prioritize energy saving investments.
- Develop increased programmatic and budgetary resiliency to ensure continuity in provision of vital services.



### PORTLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Since the mid-1800s, the Portland Public Library has served as one of the city’s major cultural centers. Today, the library hosts 675,000 visitors annually and is the most visited cultural institution in the state. The library supports its mission, to build a city of readers, by offering a large print collection, as well as music and film resources, free internet access, lectures, classes, community discussions, and programming for all ages.



## 15. MODERNIZE WASTE COLLECTION

- Explore ways to modernize the collection process, alternatives to the current public operation, and strategies to support the city's growth.
- Implement strategies outlined by the *Solid Waste Task Force* in 2011, including the adoption of the Maine State Waste Management Hierarchy, the promotion of durable, recyclable products and materials, and the creation of opportunities to turn discarded resources into new products and new jobs.

## 16. INCREASE COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERS

- Seek to identify regional solutions for issues such as housing, homelessness, transportation, and water quality.
- Seek to strengthen community partnerships and increase diversity of partnerships to ensure robust input from residents on City services.

# An Accessible City

**HOW PEOPLE AND GOODS** arrive in and move through Portland is essential to the city's economy, sustainability, and quality of life. The city benefits from a dense development pattern which, when coupled with changing demographics and evolving market trends toward more urban living, allows for a high level of reliance on active transportation — bicycling, walking, and transit use — to meet growing transportation demand. Portland is well-positioned to support a robust bicycle, pedestrian, and transit network that effectively links jobs, housing, and services. As a regional center for commerce, culture, and tourism the city is served by auto, air, rail, bus, and ferry, and functions as a freight hub served by marine, truck, rail and air cargo.

Portland employs a holistic framework for the planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and funding of the City's transportation system.

The City is invested in addressing “fix it first” fundamentals such as the backlog of street pavement preservation, traffic signal replacement and reduction, and sidewalk rehabilitation needs. However, the transportation strategy for Portland also seeks to leverage opportunities and diverse funding sources to implement transformational projects and programs. By managing growth in automobile traffic demand, Portland will enable more transportation choices such as public transit, bicycling, and walking. Our transportation investments and policy choices strive to preserve vehicular capacity and regional mobility while enhancing the diverse functions of our streets for all users and multiple modes.

## **Accessibility v. Mobility: What is the difference?**

Mobility — the movement of goods and people

Accessibility — the ability to reach desired goods, services, and destinations



## RECENT & ONGOING INITIATIVES

In order to support a robust multi-modal transportation system, the City of Portland continuously engages in policy and planning level transportation work, but also devotes significant resources to capital and maintenance projects related to transportation infrastructure. This is most often in partnership with the region's major transportation partners: PACTS, METRO, the Casco Bay Island Transit District, and MDOT. The last decade has seen well over a dozen studies, plans, and initiatives designed to address transportation service and infrastructure needs, as well as significant change at the policy level.

Over the past 10 years, the City's long-range transportation planning has focused largely on developing a more integrated and multi-modal transportation network through public transit enhancements, sidewalk and streetscape improvements, and bikeway network planning, as well as work to the underlying street network. For example, in 2009 the City approved the *Peninsula Transit Study*, with the expressed goals of reducing the number of single occupancy vehicle trips to and from the Portland peninsula and improving the city's livability. This plan laid the foundation for further studies, including but not limited to: the *Spring Street/Free Street Area Master Plan*,

the *State and High Streets Two-Way Conversion Study*, the *Franklin Street Feasibility Study*, the *Libbytown Traffic Circulation & Streetscape Study*, and most recently, the *Bayside Transportation Master Plan*, all of which have moved the City toward this goal by encouraging more inviting, connected, and human-scaled streets; integrating transit, bicycle, and pedestrian networks; and reconnecting the street grid.

The City's transportation planning has expanded beyond the peninsula as well. In 2012, the City adopted *Transforming Forest Avenue*, a plan designed to modernize this important transportation and retail-commercial corridor via place-based, multi-modal investments. In 2016, the City developed a plan to more effectively link its major transportation centers and downtown with express bus service through the *Hub Link Transit Study*. And throughout, the City has been actively engaged in multi-modal infrastructure planning through efforts like the *West Commercial Street Multi-Modal Corridor Study* and the bicycle network studies, which, when implemented, will help to connect all city neighborhoods with pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Meanwhile, the City has adopted and modified policy in an effort to build a more holistic framework for the planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and funding of Portland's transportation system. In 2012, the City adopted a Complete Streets Policy, and more recently, the City has begun to pilot multi-modal level of service as a measure of performance in its long-range planning efforts. In the past decade, the City has modified the land use code to provide more flexibility in parking standards; reduce parking requirements in some zones to facilitate high-density residential development; require transportation demand management plans for commercial and institutional development projects that meet certain size thresholds; and better integrate land use and transportation to ensure that density is aligned with transit and bicycle infrastructure. The City has also begun to diversify its sources of transportation financing, particularly for transit, instituting two Transit Oriented Development Tax Increment Financing districts: the Downtown Transit TIF and the Thompson's Point Transit TIF.

Complementing this planning and policy environment, the City has made significant investments in infrastructure over the course of the past decade. These investments have come in the form of repaving, traffic signal coordination, and pavement marking projects. With METRO, the City has constructed bus shelters, improved real-time traveler information, and expanded service hours and service areas. The City has developed additional bicycle parking, bike lanes, shared use pathways, and neighborhood byways throughout city neighborhoods. For pedestrians, the City has invested in new and rehabilitated sidewalks,

accessibility upgrades, and crosswalk improvements. Other investments in our port and Jetport have continued to position these key economic drivers of Portland and the region for future growth.



## INNOVATION FOR ENHANCED TRANSIT

Portland has long used Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to help spur economic development. Once associated with individual development projects, TIFs are now being applied on a district-wide basis and targeted directly toward transit investments. Using two Transit TIFs — the Thompson's Point TIF and the Downtown TIF — the City retains a portion of increased property tax revenue within the districts to fund capital and operating expenses for transit service and active transportation investments within those districts. In this way, TIFs provide the funding and policy to implement transit service specifically designed to capitalize on the land use policies and regulations already in place.



## STATE GOALS

To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

## LOCAL GOALS

### WE WILL:

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Promote multi-modal accessibility, enabling residents and visitors of all ages and abilities to participate fully in the social and economic life of the community.

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Support livability by improving the quality of life in neighborhoods and improving the public health of residents.

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Support sustainability by reducing energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and stormwater impacts.

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Support economic vitality by ensuring the efficient movement of goods, services, and people.



## **FUTURE STRATEGIES**

### **1. FIX IT FIRST**

- Maintain existing infrastructure as the City's priority transportation objective, capitalizing on opportunities to incorporate modernization of existing infrastructure in the course of maintenance when possible.
- Keep the city's streets in a state of good repair, upgrade and coordinate traffic signal systems, maintain effective pavement markings, rehabilitate the sidewalk network, and replace the public transit fleet in a timely fashion.

### **2. ADOPT MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES**

- Monitor indicators such as mode share, multi-modal levels of service, and levels of active transportation, particularly on key transportation corridors.
- Explore adoption of multi-modal level of service as a performance standard for new development review.
- Benchmark existing conditions and set targets for specific future years.

### **3. INVEST IN SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY**

- Make improvements to the transportation system to improve equity, sustainability, and accessibility for all ages and abilities.
- Address existing High Crash Locations, improve ADA accessibility, and ensure pedestrian access to transit stops along safe routes to school routes.

### **4. DIVERSIFY FUNDING SOURCES**

- Explore new funding sources as a way to lessen the burden of transportation projects on the traditional funding mechanisms, such as the local annual operating budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
- Partner with funding agencies such as PACTS and the MaineDOT to leverage additional outside funding.
- Consider creative funding mechanisms, such as Transit TIF districts, the Sustainable Transportation Fund, and public/private partnerships.

### **5. MODERNIZE STREET DESIGN**

- Make strategic investments in streets and street design to create Complete Streets and provide mobility, safety, and accessibility to all users.
- Invest in traffic signal modernization, street design safety modifications, and reconfigurations of existing streets to reinforce safer urban traffic speeds.
- Implement wayfinding, placemaking, and street lighting programs to unify the city's streetscape.
- Support the vision of large, transformative projects, such as the redesign of Franklin Street, the transformation of Forest Avenue, and others, as well as future studies through strategic, cost effective, and incremental actions.
- Minimize impacts of highway infrastructure — such as ramps and overpasses — on city streets and neighborhoods.

## 6. MANAGE PARKING STRATEGICALLY

- Identify, plan, and zone for parking needs, particularly downtown, on the waterfront, and in conjunction with large institutions.
- Develop robust, integrated parking management strategies to reduce parking demand.

## 7. ENHANCE THE PEDESTRIAN REALM

- Invest in a walkable city through sidewalk maintenance, accessibility improvements, trail and path connections, snow clearance, lighting, landscaping, traffic calming, enhanced street crossings, strong urban design, artistic elements, and wayfinding.

## 8. EXPAND BICYCLE FACILITIES

- Complete and maintain the City's system of shared use pathways, neighborhood byways, and protected/enhanced bike lanes in a legible and continuous network, and develop the complementary infrastructure, such as bicycle parking and wayfinding, to support it.
- Explore potential locations for separated bike infrastructure.
- Support the development of a bikeshare program.



## WHAT ARE COMPLETE STREETS?

In late 2012, the City of Portland passed a Complete Streets Policy, representing a new and progressive approach to transportation planning in the city. The Complete Streets Policy, like the movement that generated it, is founded on the principle that streets should work for all users and all modes, from the baby in the stroller to the bicycle commuter to the grandfather on the bus. As the policy states, “The goal is to create a connected network of facilities accommodating each mode of travel that is consistent with and supportive of the local community, recognizing that all streets are different and that the needs of various users will need to be balanced in a flexible manner.” In adopting the policy, the City has recognized that Complete Streets contribute to many of the City's most basic objectives — to create a comprehensive, equitable, and fully accessible transportation network; enhance public safety and public health; complement land use patterns and economic development; and achieve energy and environmental sustainability.

## 9. MANAGE TRANSPORTATION DEMAND

- Explore the technical and financial feasibility of a Transportation Management Association (TMA) as a means of improving access to, and mobility around, downtown and the waterfront.
- Expand Transportation Demand Management (TDM) initiatives for large development sites and institutions, building upon the recent implementation of TDM plans for individual employers and sites.

## 10. INVEST IN PUBLIC TRANSIT

- Support initiatives to strategically increase the frequency and span of service, on-time reliability, and geographic scope of transit service.
- Deploy information technology and quality of service improvements, such as traffic signal priority, real-time transit information, fare integration, and Bus Rapid Transit service.
- Develop transit centers, enhance bus stops, and improve transit stop and transit corridor operations and accessibility.
- Create incentives to spur transit-oriented, mixed-use development along corridors and in areas that can support high-quality transit service.
- Plan for multi-modal trip connections through bike storage, timetable coordination, or other measures that facilitate ease of transitions between modes of travel.
- Make bus and other transit options legible and easy to use for tourists and new riders through flexible payment options, marketing, improved technology, and readily accessible route schedule and payment information.

- Recognize seasonal impacts on transit accessibility, particularly snow and ice near and approaching bus stops.
- Support transit serving the regional labor market area.



## TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC HEALTH

The connections between transportation systems and public health are widely documented, perhaps most plainly in the safety of users of the system itself. But our transportation system also affects our health in more indirect ways. For instance, studies have found that residents of walkable neighborhoods — neighborhoods with sidewalks, crosswalks, and design and land use characteristics that make them conducive to walking — engage in approximately 35 to 45 more minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week than their counterparts in less walkable neighborhoods. Further, these residents are significantly less likely to suffer from obesity.

Just as importantly, our transportation behaviors have profound effects on our air quality, and thus the incidence of pollution-related disease. Research has shown that just a 5% increase in walkability correlated with fewer vehicle miles traveled per capita and, as a result, correspondingly lower rates of air pollutants. Likewise, local and regional transit services contribute measurably to reduced auto emissions, energy consumption, and roadway consumption.



**POLICY GUIDE:  
TRANSPORTATION**

**11. LEVERAGE OUR WATERFRONT**

- Support the waterfront as a signature transportation resource.
- Make investments and adopt policies to promote the International Marine Terminal, the Ocean Gateway cruise ship terminal, the Portland Ocean Terminal, the Casco Bay Island Ferry Terminal, and other parts of the waterfront that serve Portland and connect it to the world.

**12. BROADEN CONNECTIONS**

- Support the success of the Portland International Jetport as a key transportation connection to worldwide economic and tourist centers.
- Work with the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority and other regional partners to ensure the success of the Downeaster's trunk route from Portland to Boston, while allowing for strategic expansion of the route.
- Support the Portland Transportation Center, especially commuter and visitor connections to other Maine cities and Boston.
- Support regional and international freight and ferry service.
- Enhance regional trail connections.

**13. SUPPORT AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES**

- Consider specific measures to promote awareness and usability of our transportation system for the elderly.
- Ensure that seniors are aware of transit options, reduced fares, and specialized transit services.
- Maintain a City-wide ADA compatibility assessment.
- Consider senior transportation needs in areas of concentrated senior housing, including, but not limited to, new developments.
- Expand volunteer networks such as the Volunteer Snow Shoveling for Seniors Program, and prioritize snow and ice clearance from public sidewalks in areas with concentrations of seniors.

**14. ENHANCE ISLAND CONNECTIONS**

- Ensure sufficient ferry and freight service to support island communities and economies.

# Future Land Use



## STATE GOAL

To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services, and preventing development sprawl.

### PORTLAND AND THE BROADER REGION

are poised for growth. After years of population decline, the city has seen modest population gain over the past several decades, reflecting a nationwide movement back toward urban living. New residents — young and old and from all over the world — attracted by the city's highly regarded quality of life and services are choosing to call Portland home. Over the past four years, the City has approved over 1,800 new housing units, with more currently under review. The city's food economy is burgeoning, the port has seen recent investments designed to better position the city for international trade, the creative economy is flourishing, and local institutions are expanding, all harbingers of what promises to be a robust decade ahead.

Decisions about how, to what extent, and where we grow will influence how well the city captures the opportunities before it. These decisions have implications for all aspects of the city, and consequences for the health of the region and the state. Strategically planned growth will help Portland to expand economic opportunity, increase our environmental health, and strengthen neighborhoods.

The Future Land Use framework builds on our most successful existing patterns and guides future changes. It supports diverse housing, concentration of jobs, pedestrian and transit accessibility, and the provision of infrastructure and services to support a growing city. It is not intended to substitute for detailed regulatory prescriptions, but rather identify broad land use concepts and priority focus areas for the coming decade.





## FUTURE LAND USE

Portland's plan for Future Land Use places emphasis on areas most important to its growth over the next ten years. It includes three maps: a map depicting current dominant land use patterns, a map showing a connected network of trails and open spaces, and a map of corridors and nodes that are poised to accommodate additional growth. These maps are best understood in the context of the plan's principles for future growth.

### PRINCIPLES OF FUTURE LAND USE

#### One Portland

Portland's Plan is a vision for One Portland, where the form and characteristics of neighborhoods vary, but the city functions as a cohesive whole. No one area of the city carries all the expectations for accommodating development and all areas can expect appropriate City services and amenities.

#### Complete Neighborhoods

Portland's Plan recognizes that strong, complete neighborhoods are fundamental to the city's overall health. Portland's intent for its predominantly residential neighborhoods is one where all residents regardless of age, ability, or income have access to the basic necessities of daily life - high quality and affordable housing, schools and other civic functions, food, open space, other amenities and services - within a walkable, bikeable distance. The city already has examples of these neighborhoods, each with its own social networks, physical form and scale, and distinct sense of identity.

Neighborhoods such as Munjoy Hill and Deering Center, with their schools, expansive open spaces, small groceries, and restaurants, provide precedents



for complete neighborhoods that can inform the evolution of other areas in the city. The strength and diversity of these neighborhoods is fundamental to the growth of a diverse city where residents can choose housing types, businesses, schools, and recreational opportunities. While the city's neighborhoods should collectively support residents with a complete range of services and all are expected to accommodate a share of Portland's growth and development, policies should encourage the distinct qualities of each. This does not imply freezing neighborhoods as they are, but allowing change that is compatible with current development patterns.

#### Reinforce the Center

Though Portland's commercial and entrepreneurial activity takes place throughout the city, downtown Portland remains at the center of the region's arts



## FUTURE LAND USE

and cultural, economic, and civic health, and Portland's Plan embraces the principle that downtown should continue to be a predominant locus of activity for the broader region.

### **Support Our Waterfront**

The city's waterfront is central to its past, present, and future. Portland was built as a port town, and its future is inextricably linked with this identity. Supporting an active port that is responsive to the economic and environmental demands of the 21st century while enhancing public access to the water remain priorities for Portland's future.

### **Connect the Chain**

Portland's Plan recognizes that physically integrated transportation systems, utilities, and open spaces provide the structure for the city's growth, and that a well-connected system is more efficient and more resilient. An integrated transportation system allows residents to access jobs, food, healthcare, and recreation from their homes while planning for an unbroken network of open space connects neighborhoods and improves access to the outdoors.

### **LAND USE CONTEXT**

The city's historic land use patterns are still very much in evidence today, traversing a spectrum from a relatively high-density historic center to the rural character of Portland's islands. Its historic core is its mixed-use downtown and its active waterfront, where the city began and where employment, government, services, and goods converge to this day. Downtown is surrounded by higher density, inner ring neighborhoods — India Street, the West

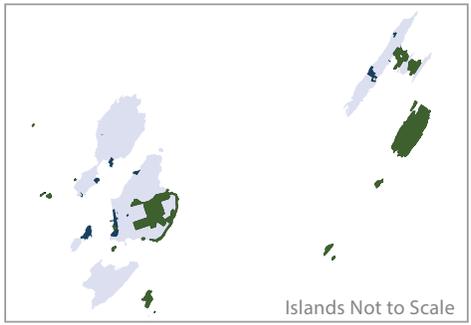
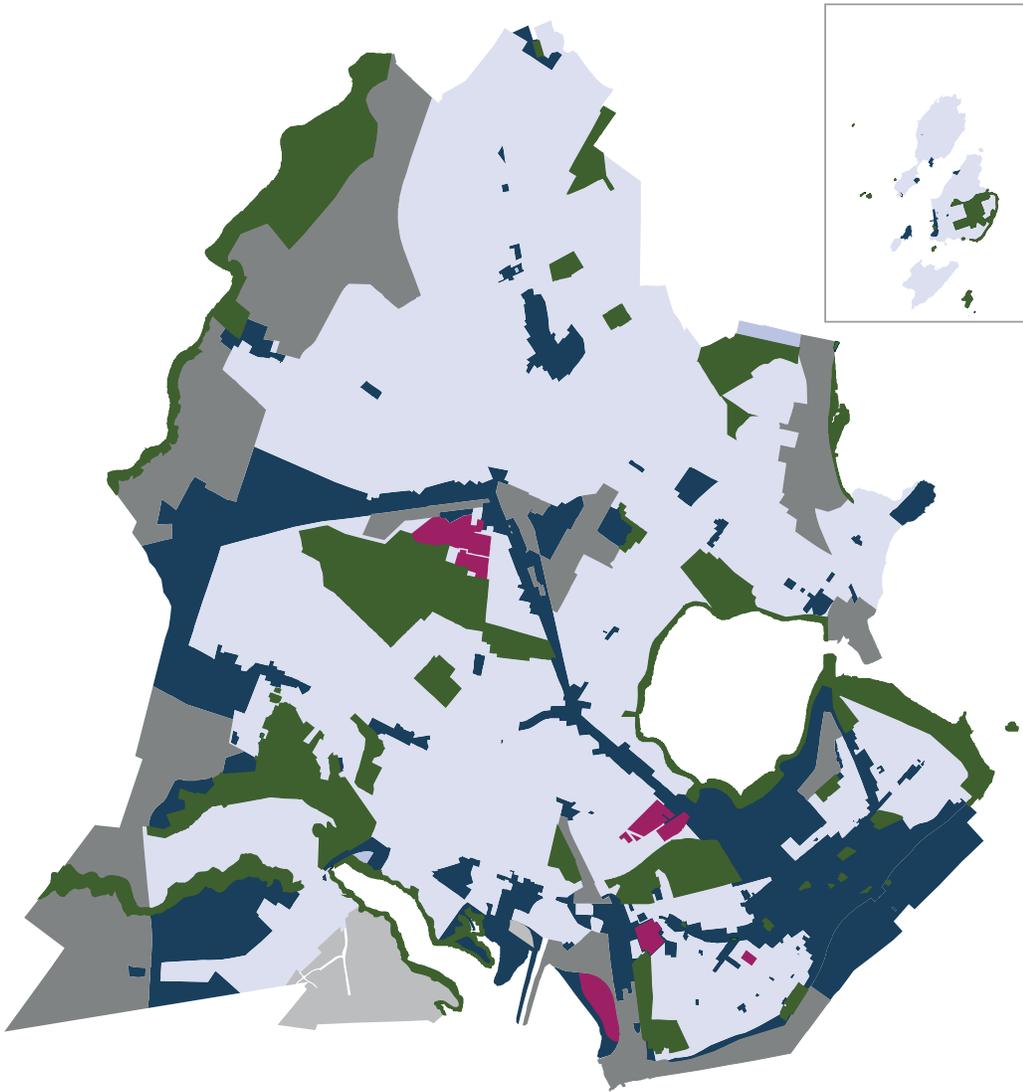
End, Deering Center — each with its own residential base and neighborhood-scale goods and services. These neighborhoods, with their traditional, walkable patterns of development, strong nodal centers, and high degrees of accessibility, have seen new development in recent years. Beyond the inner ring, the city transitions to relatively lower density residential patterns characteristic of the later part of the 20th century. These outer residential neighborhoods have seen population growth in the past decade, but recent development has been relatively minor. Portland has also seen mixed-use growth on corridors and in neighborhoods outside of its historic core: Washington Avenue is seeing new housing and commercial tenants, East Bayside has burgeoned with a new wave of light industry and entrepreneurs, and Thompson's Point is reinventing itself as a lively mixed-use area.

Portland's Plan anticipates that predominantly residential, industrial, institutional, mixed-use, and open space areas will remain largely consistent with existing patterns. The plan also anticipates that the regulations governing development will not be static, but will adjust and adapt to changing needs and policy direction. Zoning boundaries and specific use, dimensional, and performance standards will be modified over time as ordinances are revised and updated. Future land use modifications will be informed by a combination of the vision, goals, and strategies of this plan, best planning practices, and neighborhood and city-wide engagement.



**FUTURE  
LAND USE**

**Land Use Context**



Islands Not to Scale

Shaded areas are characterized as predominantly:

- Open Space
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Transportation
- Residential
- Mixed-Use/Commercial/Office



## FUTURE LAND USE

### OPEN SPACE CONNECTIONS

Portland's open spaces are integral to its character, serving diverse ecological, public health, and transportation purposes. They simultaneously provide opportunities for water access, recreation, cultural and community connections, and food production. Portland's Plan highlights the need for high-quality connections between existing open spaces and open spaces that are responsive to the programmatic needs of the community. The plan supports the protection and improvement of environmentally sensitive areas, such as shoreland and floodplain zones. Key gaps in the open space network are identified for study and potential connections in the coming years.

### PRIORITY NODES & CORRIDORS

Future land use focuses on those areas to be prioritized for change or evaluation over the coming decade. It does not, however, precisely delimit parcels of land or exhaustively catalog areas that may undergo change in the coming years. Development may still occur elsewhere in the city, including incremental change and infill in residential neighborhoods, redevelopment of obsolete commercial areas, thoughtful expansion or investment in institutional and industrial sites, and modernization of existing affordable housing sites. Priority nodes and corridors indicate areas that would be appropriate for new development to provide needed housing, businesses, and services proximate to transit, or areas that otherwise warrant some examination of potential for positive change in form and/or function.



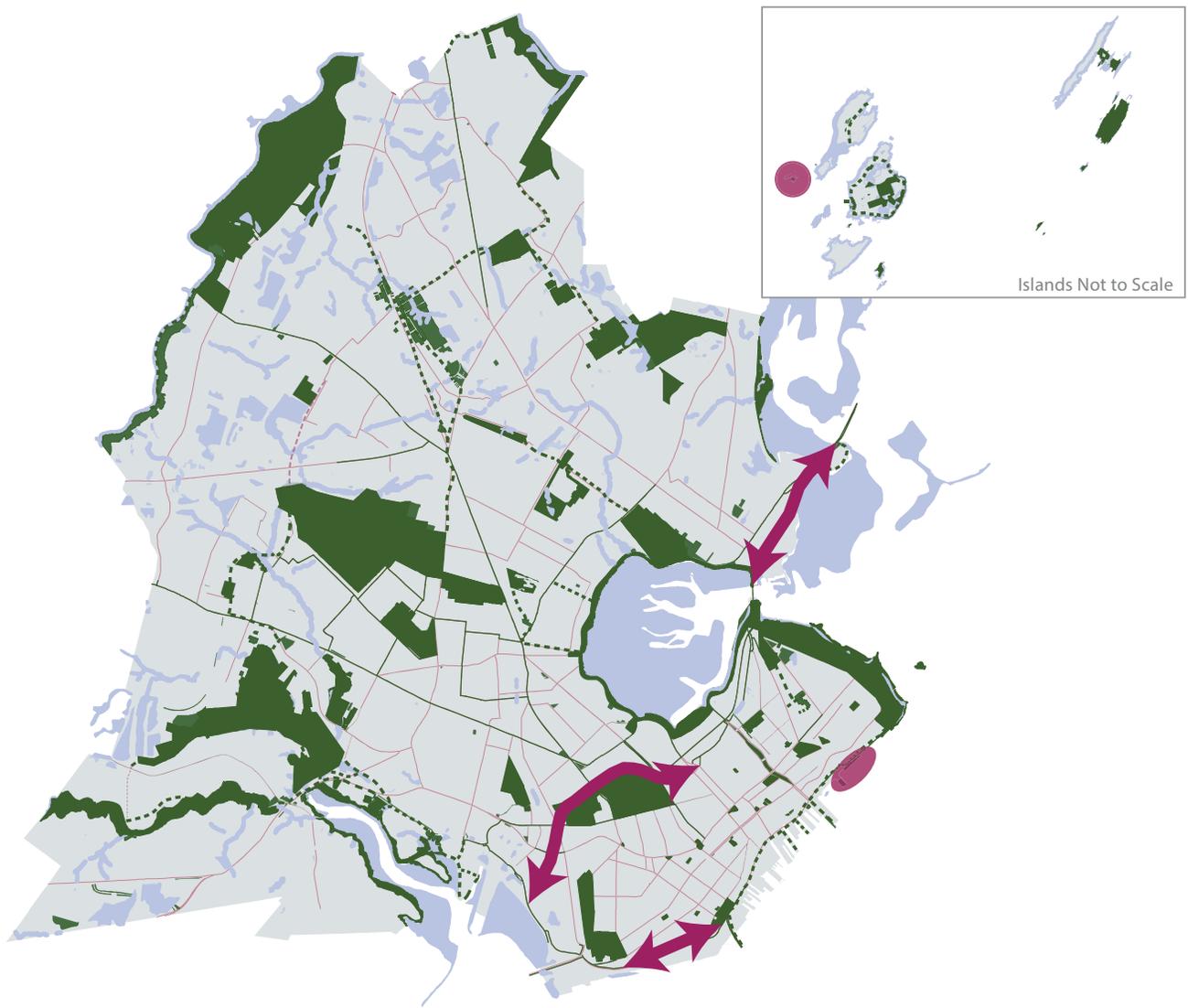
### URBAN DESIGN

Portland's physical character is defined by a distinctive relationship between its topography, building character and fabric, and the natural landscape. The authentic, scenic, and historic nature of the built and natural environment provides the context for the city's current success and attractiveness. The city building taking place in this current period of change will be the legacy of this generation to the future Portland. The critical question is not "if" but "how" we should grow to maintain that authentic character while allowing our city to flourish. It is incumbent on city builders to provide excellence in architectural quality and urban design commensurate with the image of Portland in history and today. Thoughtful and high quality-design is achieved through attention to quality of space and placemaking, the relationship of buildings to the streets and built context, durability and integrity of materials, and a pleasing and timeless quality of architecture; these must be held to the highest possible standards. Practicing and incentivizing contextual principles of urban design are central to the health and well-being of the City of Portland.



**FUTURE  
LAND USE**

**Open Space Connections**



Existing (to be conserved)

- Public Open Space
- Waterways/Wetlands/Shoreland
- - - Bicycle/Trail Network

Proposed Improvements/Connections

- Public Open Space
- Bicycle/Trail Network
- Shared Pathway Project



## FUTURE LAND USE

Priority growth areas include the following elements:

### 1. Priority nodes

Nodes are areas with concentrated mixed-use activity, which can occur at varying scales and serve varying catchment areas; Portland's downtown supports a large successful node, for example, but nodes can also be found at smaller convergences and intersections throughout the city. As mapped, nodes are not meant to sharply delineate boundaries, but to indicate general areas in need of further planning or investment. The nodes identified by the map may indicate an area has seen disinvestment, grown in sprawling patterns, or simply have the potential to undergo positive change to better serve neighborhood needs. These nodes are placed into three broad categories that correspond with their respective stage of planning or investigation at the present time.

- **Evaluate:** Areas as diverse as East Bayside and Allen's Corner, where the City recognizes the need to review existing conditions and develop a strategy for future change. These nodes should be assessed for their ability to address neighborhood needs and serve as centers for complete neighborhoods.
- **Transform:** Areas such as Morrill's Corner, which have been previously recognized as areas of significant potential transformation, but which need comprehensive revisioning.
- **Enhance:** Areas such as Woodford's Corner, or the Eastern, Central, and Western Waterfronts, which have been studied and are awaiting or in the midst of plan implementation.

### 2. Priority corridors

The Priority Nodes & Corridors Map identifies key corridors — those that connect major nodes and neighborhoods and therefore serve as major commuter routes — as areas for additional planning and investment. Priority corridors are major arterials that often see heavy vehicular traffic, but also have the capacity to improve mobility by capitalizing on their potential for increased walking, bicycling, and transit use. Priority corridors can also serve as areas of additional mixed-use, higher density growth to take advantage of the transit benefits and services that well-designed, diverse corridors can offer.





## FUTURE LAND USE

### 3. Waterfront

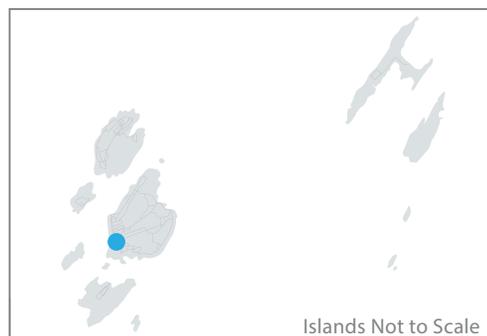
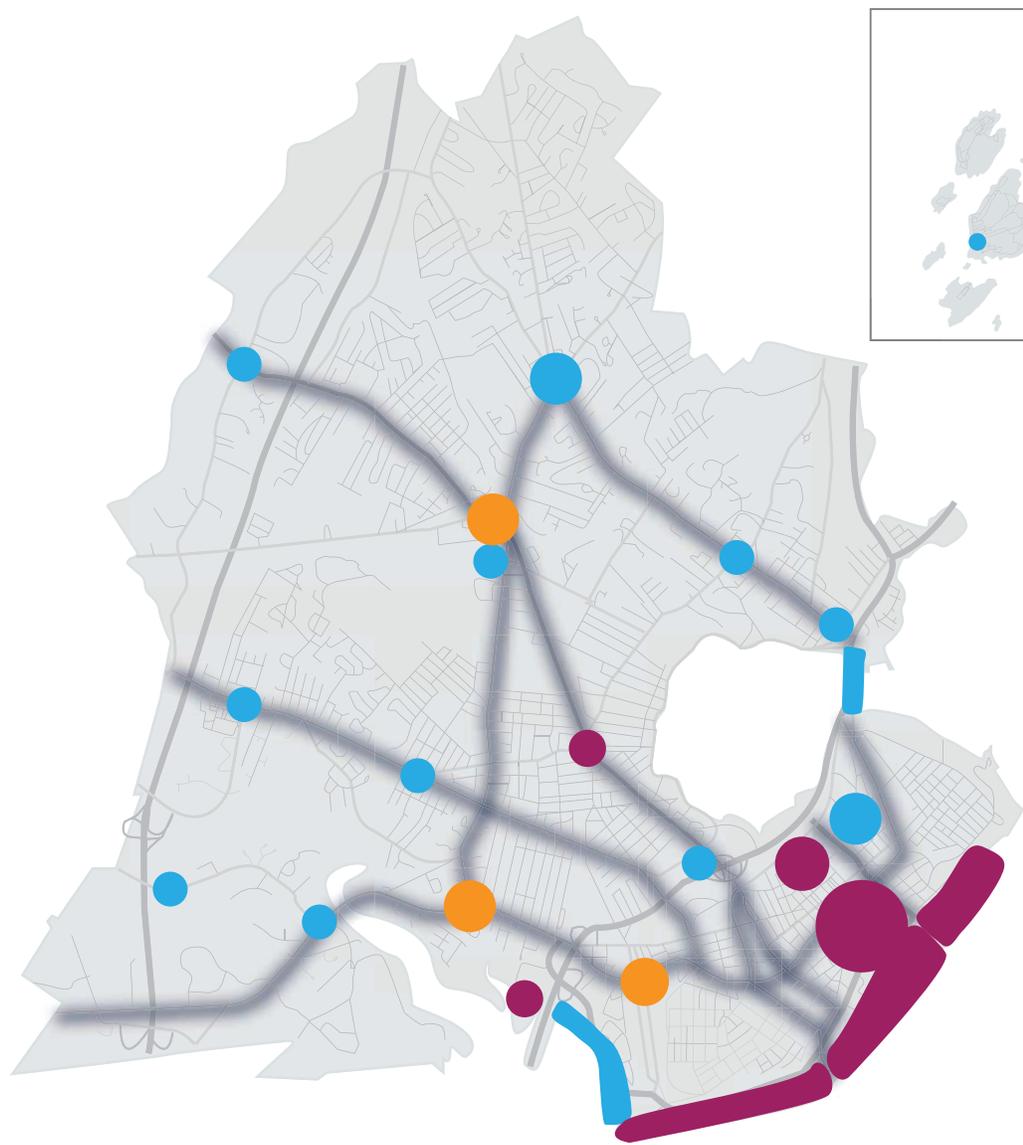
Portland's Plan recognizes the crucial and singular role of the waterfront in Portland's past, present, and future. The plan anticipates that change will occur in our waterfront over the next decade, consistent with existing waterfront land use policies that seek to preserve marine-dependent uses, provide investment opportunities, and offer public and recreational access to the water where possible. The waterfront is classified much like the nodes:

- **Evaluate:** Areas of the waterfront that should be assessed for their potential to serve future growth or for potential improvements.
- **Enhance:** Areas of the waterfront that have seen extensive planning and require investment or further implementation to realize change.



**FUTURE  
LAND USE**

### Priority Nodes & Corridors



Islands Not to Scale

#### Legend

-  Evaluate
-  Transform
-  Enhance
-  Priority Corridors

# Regional Coordination



**THE CITY OF PORTLAND IS THE HUB OF ITS METROPOLITAN AREA**, as well as an economic, transit, and cultural center for the state and for southern New England. Many of the goals and strategies in this plan have implications beyond Portland's borders and necessitate a regional lens and a cooperative approach. The regional implications of comprehensive planning and policies are reinforced throughout this document, as is the importance of collaborations with regional partners. Much of the data and analysis that form the basis for the plan place Portland in its regional context, establishing Portland in relation to wider demographic, economic, and housing trends. Existing partnerships with area nonprofits, surrounding communities, and other government agencies are acknowledged throughout the plan. Portland's Plan identifies partners and supports the continuation of partnerships as a vital component of implementation. The following highlights some key collaborative partnerships, as well as ways in which regional coordination efforts are incorporated into this plan.

## PARTNERSHIPS

The need for coordination of our transportation systems is of critical importance to the success of the region. Portland is a member of the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) and the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) and regularly participates in planning efforts, regional studies, and collaborative initiatives with these organizations. One example is the *Portland-South Portland Multi-Modal High Priority Corridors and Centers Plan*. The study is intended to plan for the creation of a high-quality

multi-modal transportation corridor to directly support job growth and economic development within Portland and South Portland. The project is designed to improve safety, accessibility, and mobility for all users and modes, through support of land use and urban design improvements from Morrill's Corner to the area near Bug Light Park.

The City of Portland is integral to regional transit initiatives. Efforts between METRO and South Portland's City Bus to better integrate services, for instance, and METRO's plans to enhance and expand service to Falmouth, Yarmouth, Freeport, Biddeford, Gorham, Saco, and Old Orchard Beach, and to create direct connections between higher education institutions in the region, highlight the role of Portland as a regional transportation hub. The City of Portland is working closely with METRO and other stakeholders to improve connections around Portland's major transit hubs (which bring many nonlocal travelers to the city), including enhanced connections between primary train, air, ferry, and bus hubs.

Water quality is another area that requires active and frequent collaboration. Portland, as a port city, governs its harbor collaboratively — the Board of Harbor Commissioners is governed by Portland and South Portland for the necessary shared management of trade, navigation, harbor dredging, and water quality. The City also participates in the Interlocal Stormwater Working Group, a coalition of 14 municipalities in the region that work together to implement their respective Clean Water Act permits. This group works to increase public



## REGIONAL COORDINATION

education and public participation, eliminate illicit discharges, and promote other methods of pollution prevention. The Department of Public Works regularly convenes nonmunicipal regional stakeholders to address shared water-quality issues as well. Other issues related to public education and pollution prevention, such as pesticide and fertilizer reduction, plastic bag fees, and stormwater impact reductions, benefit from the collaboration and input of regional organizations such as Casco Bay Estuary Project, Friends of Casco Bay, and area land trusts.

### SUMMARY OF REGIONAL COORDINATION GOALS AND STRATEGIES

#### 1. Environment

- Restore impaired waterbodies through local efforts and in collaboration with regional partners.
- Support a healthy, resilient, and sustainable food system by collaborating with local and regional stakeholders.
- Coordinate future land use policy changes with long-range regional transportation planning, including planning for transit, pedestrian, and bicycle improvements, to reduce local and regional vehicle miles traveled.
- Collaborate with local nonprofits, research organizations, property owners, and surrounding communities to achieve cleaner waters.
- Collaborate with surrounding municipalities to strengthen comprehensive climate change adaptation and mitigation planning.

#### 2. Historic Resources

- Collaborate with nonprofits, private organizations, neighborhood associations, businesses, property owners, and affinity groups to pursue and

expand support for preservation initiatives, including the implementation of adopted master plans for historic structures, parks, and cemeteries.

#### 3. Waterfront

- Develop effective public and private partnerships to promote the Port of Portland as an economic engine for the State of Maine.
- Continue to support the Portland Fish Pier and Fish Exchange as regional anchors of the seafood economy.
- Promote development of cold storage warehousing to support a competitive Port of Portland by improving capacity to serve the cargo needs of the seafood, agriculture, food manufacturing, and beverage industries for northern New England.
- Capitalize on emerging trade, fisheries and transportation patterns to the Arctic, northern Europe, and beyond.

#### 4. Economy

- Promote the orderly expansion of institutional uses, such as educational, cultural, and hospital campuses, which are central to workforce development, employment, and the health of the local and regional economies.
- Recognize the role of the transportation system in the current and future economic health of the city.
- Maintain and invest in our multi-modal transportation system— the International Jetport, Ocean Gateway, passenger rail service, the International Marine Terminal, METRO, and the Portland Transportation Center— as a foundation for local, regional, and international economic growth and as a bridge to future economic opportunities.



## REGIONAL COORDINATION

- Enhance connectivity between transportation modes by expanding intermodal passenger service at the Portland Transportation Center, and between transportation hubs such as the Jetport, Casco Bay Island Ferry Service, Portland Transportation Center, and downtown.

### 5. Housing

- Collaborate with surrounding communities on regional housing solutions.

### 6. Recreation & Open Space

- Encourage physical and visual access to Portland's waterfront — Casco Bay, Back Cove, and the Stroudwater, Presumpscot, and Fore Rivers— as a “blueway” network and an extension of public space for local and regional recreation and transportation needs.
- Continue partnerships with local and regional land trusts and conservation organizations, such as Portland Trails, Maine Audubon, and other nonprofit organizations, in open space creation, stewardship, and programming.

### 7. Facilities & Services

- Continue to work in partnership with regional and State agencies, neighboring communities, non-profit organizations, and private property owners in support of efficient, sustainable City services.
- Seek to identify regional solutions for issues such as housing, homelessness, transportation, and water quality.

### 8. Transportation

- Support the success of the Portland International Jetport as a key transportation connection to worldwide economic and tourist centers.
- Work with the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority and other regional partners to ensure the success of the Downeaster's trunk route from Portland to Boston, while allowing for strategic expansion of the route.
- Support the Portland Transportation Center, especially commuter and visitor connections to other Maine cities and Boston.
- Support regional and international freight and ferry service.

# Implementation



**THERE ARE A VARIETY OF STRATEGIES IN THIS PLAN**, ranging from the broad and ongoing to the specific and finite. How the City moves forward with implementation of these strategies will depend on a number of factors, including staff capacity, Council priorities, and the specific challenges and opportunities that face Portland in the next 10 years.

The appendices include a matrix listing each strategy in this plan, an estimated timeframe for implementation, and the group or person who is primarily responsible. While the matrix comprises an informed guess as to the time of plan approval, implementation timelines will inevitably vary from the matrix over the years. Often opportunities arise, resources change, and external factors emerge. However, it serves as a guide to current thinking on implementation.

Some key short-term implementation steps are as follows:

## CODES

- **Create a New Unified Development Code:** Pilot projects have been completed to explore ways to modernize and update Portland's land use code. The Planning & Urban Development Department will take what has been learned in these pilots and initiate the creation of a new Unified Development Code that incorporates zoning, the Historic Preservation Ordinance, housing policies, and other aspects of the development review process into a more readable and useful document. A new Unified Development Code offers the opportunity to emphasize urban form and performance standards over regulations dominated by categories of land use. A modern code will support the growth framework of nodes and

corridors, the concepts of complete neighborhoods, and greater connectivity.

- **Explore Impact Fees:** The City will conduct an impact fee study, to begin in FY2018.
- **Develop Incentive Programs for Historic Preservation:** A proposed Unified Development Code effort will include exploration of incentive programs for historic preservation.
- **Explore Transfer of Development Rights (TDR):** A proposed Unified Development Code effort will include exploration of a TDR program.

## SUSTAINABILITY

- **Support Sustainable Energy Development and Consumption:** The City is actively pursuing a solar farm on the Ocean Avenue landfill site.
- **Support Sustainable Land Use and Transportation Policies:** Efforts to update the City's land use code will advance sustainable, integrated land use and transportation strategies.
- **Develop Climate Resilience:** The *Bayside Adapts* study now under way will inform the City's approach to climate resilience.

## PEOPLE

- **Invest in People:** The proposed Office of Economic Opportunity will make investing in people a priority.
- **Emphasize Arts and Culture:** The City's ongoing support of Creative Portland and the Public Art Program show its commitment to arts and culture.



- **Plan for Shelters:** The Health & Human Services Department is actively pursuing plans for a better shelter system in Portland.
- **Support Island Communities:** Ongoing investments in the islands, such as the Peaks Island Library improvements under way, will continue support for these communities.
- **Build on Existing Housing Programs:** The City Council has passed many new housing programs in the past few years, including creation of the Housing Safety Office, adoption of an inclusionary zoning ordinance, and new tenant protections. In addition, the Housing Trust and the City's federally funded housing programs have been in place for many years. Additional efforts, such as the Housing Committee's work on short term rentals, continue to build on these programs.
- **Support an Accessible City for All Ages and Abilities:** The City is beginning an assessment of all City facilities to determine what improvements need to be made to better comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Fix It First/Maintaining Existing Recreational Facilities:** The City will continue to focus on maintenance and upkeep on existing facilities, while also looking at cost-effective opportunities for improvements and connections.
- **Invest in Public Transit:** The City has been actively working with METRO to enhance public transit in the region by expanding the service to new client bases to utilize the service, including the public schools and the University of Southern Maine.
- **Invest in the Waterfront:** The City is currently evaluating whether zoning changes are required to meet the established policy goals for the Western Waterfront, and concurrently making strategic investments in the Eastern Waterfront. Both initiatives are outgrowths of long established planning efforts, designed to spur investment and support a viable balance of marine-dependent and compatible nonmarine uses.

## OPEN GOVERNMENT

- **Adopt Measurable Objectives:** Throughout the plan there is a focus on data collection and analysis in decision making and more consistent use of SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) principles in City government. Portland's Plan calls for the adoption of measurable objectives in all areas of City governance, to chart performance, establish consistent data sources, and to create information with and for public engagement. Adoption of measurable objectives is one component of successful feedback loops in implementation of the plan, where decisions are made, measured for success, and adjusted when necessary. In a significant step toward this objective, the City is beginning implementation



of a new public administration software platform, with staff training, which will improve its ability to gather and analyze data.

- **Ensure Transparency:** The plan calls for accessible City services and facilities for all residents, as well as for ongoing and varied community engagement that seeks to include as diverse a cross section of the community as possible.

As with the full slate of recommended strategies, these steps will have to respond to available data, resources, and changes in external conditions. However, they are indicative of an immediate intent to move Portland’s Plan from concept to reality.

# PORTLAND'S PLAN 2030

