

Central City 2035:

Urban Design Framework

Draft Goal:

Enliven the Central City as a vibrant place that enables social interaction at a variety of urban scales, encouraging new investments and stewardship by residents, workers and visitors.

Draft Strategy:

Expand and diversify the urban experiences for people in the Central City, highlighting connections to regional natural and built systems and landmarks, unique civic and cultural districts, and other public spaces framed by dynamic urban forms.

Draft Objectives:

Connect to the Regional Context

- **Willamette River:** Increase visual and physical access to the Willamette River, building upon the distinctive urban edges of the Central City, the history of the Willamette River, and diversifying the riverfront spaces, activities and experiences.
- **Significant Public Views:** Protect and enhance significant and important public views and corridors that define the setting of the Central City in the landscape of the city and region as a whole.
- **Regional Corridors & Connections:** Elevate the stature and presence of the Central City by strengthening the character of multimodal routes to and through the Central City, including:
 - Freeways, highways, boulevards, and bridges;
 - Regional pedestrian/bicycle trails, , and:
 - The rail transit system, including alignments/routes, overpasses, stations, and other significant system elements.

Enliven Central City Places and Districts

- **Existing Character:** Enhance and preserve the character of the Central City's distinct places through new development that complements existing patterns and character.
- **Evolving Urban Form:** Pursue a variety of urban patterns, scales, and intensities in areas subject to significant redevelopment, to diversify the Central City's urban experiences, opportunities for new and different development types, and a flexible urban form that celebrates the past while embracing the future.
- **Environmentally Resilient:** Integrate public and private "green" infrastructure and buildings to reduce resource depletion; waste and carbon generation; improve environmental and human health; and increase the livability and prosperity of the city center.

Diversify the Public Realm

- **Street Hierarchy:** Establish a clear and diverse system of street typologies that recognizes a hierarchal system of access to the Central City, serving a broad range of land uses and activities by enhancing wayfinding, accommodating an array of travel modes, and incorporating environmental systems.
- **Design Character & Pedestrian Experience:** Integrate the design of the public realm (streets and public spaces) with the lower floors of adjacent buildings (especially ground floor uses) to enhance pedestrian experience the character of the public realm.

- **Parks and Open Space:** Expand the range of functions, programs, and recreational opportunities offered by public parks and open spaces throughout the Central City by strategically repurposing facilities and developing new facilities in areas that are underserved or are likely to experience significant growth.
- **Integrated Public Spaces:** Where appropriate, integrate the design, character, and functions within public parks and open spaces with strategic streets and trails to increase system diversity, environmental function, safety, recreational opportunities, accessibility, and the overall vitality of the public realm.
- **Organizing Loops:** Develop and strengthen series of multimodal and organizing framework “loops” around regional trails, the streetcar lines, and freight/trucking routes that link different places and districts of the Central City to each other and the larger region.

Equity Statement:

With regard to urban design, the CC2035 plan effort seeks to develop policies that enhance the urban form and vibrancy of the Central City such that all Portlanders have the ability to prosper, enjoy, and participate in the life of the city because accessibility and the ability to engage in civic functions has been expanded and improved.

Potential Actions:

- Improve and/or amend existing design guidelines, historic design guidelines, and different review processes applicable to projects in Central City.
- Develop a new street typology system that defines street hierarchies and characters, travel modes, green infrastructure, furnishings, range of allowable uses, and desired range of adjacent ground floor uses and design characteristics.
- Develop a Central City parks and open space strategy that considers new facilities in park deficient areas and areas of anticipated growth, a range of new park programs, recreation functions, and new park typologies, and where and how some existing facilities can be repurposed or modified to provide additional functions.
- Study and recommend design strategies for infill development in and adjacent to Central City historic districts.