

Urban Ecosystems Policy Framework

Draft Goal:

Transform the Central City environment by incorporating and enhancing natural systems and processes that increase energy efficiency, minimize resource consumption, pollution and waste, provide wildlife habitat, clean and cool the air and water, and improve stormwater management, while actively sustaining a vibrant urban center.

Draft Strategy:

Implement strategies that integrate the natural and built elements of the urban core. At the district-wide scale:

1. **Reduce consumption and waste.** Integrate strategies to reduce energy and water consumption as well as waste and pollution into all public and private development projects during the design, construction and operation phases.
2. **Improve watershed health.** Incorporate natural resources, tree canopy, and innovative landscaping and stormwater enhancements into development and infrastructure projects.
3. **Public/private partnerships.** Create and sustain public/private partnerships that provide shared economic and environmental benefits.

Draft Objectives:

- **Green Buildings & Districts:** Transform the built environment at the building and district scale to manage resource inputs and outputs efficiently and use functions natural systems provide to improve the environment and provide multiple benefits. (For example, effective use of vegetated systems can improve stormwater management, reduce urban heat island effect, improve air and water quality, and contribute to human health and well-being.)
- **Sustainable Urban Form:** Continue to build upon the walkability of the city center by expanding multi-modal transportation connections and increasing the ability for residents and employees to access most of their daily needs without the need of an automobile once they are within the Central City.
- **Waste Stream Management:** Reduce the amount of waste generated in and transported from the Central City by developing and expanding programs to reuse, recycle, and compost waste, and where appropriate convert waste to energy.
- **Urban Forestry & Biodiversity:** Expand the urban forest and natural ecosystems in the city center by restoring riparian and upland vegetation, increasing tree canopy, and integrating green infrastructure, bird and wildlife-friendly designs, eco-roofs, and living walls into development projects while decreasing impervious areas.
- **Air Quality:** Improve air quality throughout the Central City District and inside buildings to: reduce the amount of greenhouse gases (GHG) released; increase the amount of GHG sequestered in the urban environment; and, improve human and environmental health within and exterior to the built environment.
- **Water Resources:** Reduce the use of potable water, capture and reuse rain-water and waste-water, and manage stormwater by applying methods to reduce per capita water use and improve the quality of water entering local rivers and streams. Incorporating water as a design element in buildings, streets, and urban open spaces, creates opportunities for the public to see, learn from and enjoy water in our urban landscapes.
- **Human Health:** Expand opportunities for people who live and work in the Central City to walk, bike, recreate, and live more active lifestyles. Enhance access to healthy food and improve the indoor environment of all Central City buildings. Provide visual and physical connections between more urban parts of the Central City and the Willamette River.

Equity Statement:

The CC2035 plan effort will establish conditions where all Portlanders benefit from living, working, and visiting urban core because natural functions have been incorporated into the urban form, promoting improved human health as well as habitat and environmental conditions.

Potential Actions:

- Create strategies to integrate low impact development techniques as part of new development in the Central City.
- Develop a range of specific strategies intended to implement elements of the Climate Action Plan within the Central City.
- Establish new guidelines and development standards to create “bird safe” buildings.
- Expand access to basic public services in the Central City, such as schools, community centers and gardens, parks with play grounds and active recreation facilities.
- Implement the elements of the Urban Forest Management Plan relevant to the Central City.
- Develop a “Green Factor” program to increase functional and attractive landscaping on building sites and adjacent rights of way.