# **Portland Plan**

## Compilation of Guidance and Policy Language Related to Centers and Corridors

# **Healthy Connected City Strategy Introduction:**

**Promote complete and vibrant neighborhood centers.** Our neighborhoods must provide: 1) businesses and services; 2) housing that is easily accessible by foot, wheelchair, bike and transit; 3) healthy food; and 4) parks and other gathering places so residents have options for living a healthy, active lifestyle.

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#### 2035 Objectives related to centers

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- 21. **Complete neighborhoods:** Eighty percent of Portlanders live in a complete neighborhood with safe and convenient access to the goods and services needed in daily life.
- 22. **Neighborhood economic vitality:** At least 80 percent of Portland's neighborhood market areas are succeeding in terms of the strength of the local market, local sales, business growth and stability.
- 23. **Access to healthy food:** Ninety percent of Portlanders live within a half-mile of a store or market that sells healthy, affordable food.
- 24. **Active transportation:** Portland residents have reduced the number of miles they travel by car to 11 miles per day on average and 70 percent of commuters walk, bike, take transit, carpool or telecommute to work.

# Healthy Connected City Strategy Element 2: Vibrant neighborhood centers

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Neighborhood centers are places with concentrations of businesses and services, housing, gathering places and green spaces that provide residents with options to live a healthy, active lifestyle. In neighborhood centers, getting around by walking, biking or wheelchair is safe, attractive and convenient; and access to high-quality transit and protected bikeways make it easy to get to the rest of the city and region.

When services and other destinations are clustered in compact areas, economic viability is strengthened, and walking, transit and bicycling become more practical. As a result, other elements of a complete community are supported and more Portlanders will have easier access to centers of community life and activity, and they will serve as anchors for 20-minute living. Portland's existing mixed-use centers include such places as Hollywood, Hillsdale and Lents.

The strategy will identify additional locations on Portland's 157 miles of main streets and more than 30-light rail station areas that have potential to become successful centers. The strategy will guide the growth of the city over the next 25 years to strengthen these existing and emerging centers in ways that provide equitable access to services, reflect the distinct character and history of the neighborhoods where they are located, and support community cohesiveness and resiliency.

In the past, Portland has primarily used zoning that promotes a compact mix of commercial uses and housing to cultivate places with a sufficient mix of uses and services. However, zoning alone has not been successful in producing these results evenly across the city. The Healthy Connected City strategy introduces a broader range of tools, including community partnerships and investments.

#### Neighborhood centers include:

- Neighborhood businesses and services
- Quality, affordable housing
- Healthy and affordable food
- Active transportation walking, biking and transit

What neighborhood centers will look like, how they will function, and their sense of place will vary across the city. For example, a neighborhood center in Southwest might feature compact development along a restored stream, while an urban edge of buildings might enliven an Inner Eastside main street. They will contribute to the distinct identity of different parts of Portland by serving as places for community interaction and providing new opportunities for public gatherings and public art. Development in centers will enhance built and natural local landmarks and will be as varied as Portland's neighborhoods.

What is a Complete Neighborhood: The term "complete neighborhood" refers to a neighborhood where one has safe and convenient access to the goods and services needed in daily life. This includes a variety of housing options, grocery stores and other commercial services, quality public schools, public open spaces and recreational facilities, affordable active transportation options and civic amenities. An important element of a complete neighborhood is that it is built at a walkable and bikeable human scale, and meets the needs of people of all ages and abilities.

#### What is active transportation?

Active transportation refers to transportation that involves physical activity, including walking, biking and using transit (because usually one must walk or roll to the bus or train).

Portlanders who live in neighborhoods with active transportation options, like safe pedestrian and bicycle routes and with transit that connects them to work, school, shops and services, can make walking and biking a part of their daily lives. This can make it easier to get the recommended levels of exercise and reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases like obesity, heart disease and diabetes. More people using active transportation can also reduce vehicle emissions and lead to better air quality, reducing Portlanders' exposure to pollution and helping respiratory problems like asthma. Using active transportation modes can also help reduce household costs.

A recent study of residents in Charlotte, NC, found that users of the city's new transit system were 81 percent less likely to become obese. "The Effect of Light Rail Transit on Body Mass Index and Physical Activity" American Journal of Preventive Medicine. Volume 39, Issue 2, Pages 105-112, August 2010.

Automobile trips that can be safely replaced by walking or bicycling offer the first target for increased physical activity in communities. Changes in the community environment to promote physical activity may offer the most practical approach to prevent obesity or reduce its comorbidities. Restoration of physical activity as part of the daily routine represents a critical goal.

- US Center for Disease Control

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# **Portland Plan Guiding Policies**

### **Neighborhood Centers**

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- H- 12 Support strong, vibrant and complete neighborhood centers through land use, community economic development, and housing, infrastructure and technology investments.
- H- 13 Prioritize the placement of community services in neighborhood centers—such as health clinics, day care centers, senior centers, libraries and educational facilities.
- H- 14 Design and program schools as community gathering places that have additional community services such as health clinics, recreational facilities, civic spaces, day care and libraries.
- H- 15 Expand access to healthy, affordable food by supporting the viability of grocery stores, local markets and community gardens in neighborhood centers.
- H- 16 Encourage development of high-quality, well designed housing in and around neighborhood centers and near transit—at a variety of sizes and cost ranges.
- H- 17 Promote and provide affordable housing options accessible to older adults and mobility-limited individuals in places where close proximity to services and transit makes it easier to live independently.
- H- 18 Link neighborhood centers to each other, employment areas, the Central City and the broader region through a multi-modal transit system. Prioritize safe and attractive frequent transit service, bikeways and accessible pedestrian connections, including sidewalks.
- H- 19 Integrate parks, plazas or other gathering places into neighborhood centers to provide places for community activity and social connections.
- H- 20 Protect and enhance defining places and features of neighborhood centers, including historic resources, with special attention to redevelopment areas.
- H-21 Design civic spaces to include public art and to highlight the culture of neighborhoods and diverse communities.
- H- 22 Promote energy and resource conservation at a district scale in neighborhood hubs through compact development, rehabilitation of existing buildings and energy efficiencies.
- H- 23 Invest in underserved areas with disadvantaged populations, incorporating tools to reduce displacement.

## **Neighborhood Economic Development and Business Districts**

- **Support the vitality of Portland's neighborhood based businesses.** Neighborhood-serving business districts are predominantly comprised of small businesses and can be a source of job growth, minority entrepreneurship and neighborhood health. While many neighborhoods are thriving, prosperity is uneven across the city.
- P- 24 Apply commercial revitalization and business development tools to drive business p. 60 growth in neighborhoods and help neighborhoods, local business and residents better connect to and compete in the regional economy.
- P- 25 Use a community-driven neighborhood economic development approach to build local capacity to achieve economic development outcomes, minimize involuntary displacement and spur commercial activity in underserved neighborhoods.
- P- 26 Support microenterprise and entrepreneurship.

- P- 27 Improve access to jobs in priority neighborhoods through frequent transit, active transportation, workforce development training and employment growth in neighborhoods.
- P- 28 Expand partnerships with community-based organizations, foundations, community development financial institutions, business improvement districts and the private sector (generally) to leverage more public investments in neighborhood economic development.

## **Housing Location and Centers/Corridors**

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- P-29 Provide for a supply of quality housing that meets expected growth, is diverse in terms of unit types and price, and is located to take advantage of the long-term affordability benefits of the Healthy Connected City strategy's network of centers and connections.
- P- 32 Provide for long-term housing affordability by considering the combined cost to residents of housing, utilities and transportation when making housing investment decisions.
- P- 37 Provide for the growing housing needs of the disabled and elderly through designing housing units to be more physically accessible and locating more of this housing near neighborhood centers and frequent transit service.
- P-38 Link housing to transportation at the local level by including housing strategies as part of planning major transit investments.
- P- 39 Continue to expand access to affordable transportation options, including sidewalks, frequent service transit, bicycle networks, car and bike sharing, and other alternatives that allow households to function without a car or with one car. Develop corridor-specific housing strategies as a component of major transit investments.

#### **Guidance on Civic Corridors**

From Healthy Connected City Strategy Element 3: Connections for people, places, water and wildlife

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**Civic corridors** are major streets and transit corridors that link neighborhood centers to each other and to the central city. They have been transformed into enjoyable places to live, work and gather through bike and pedestrian facilities, large canopy trees, stormwater facilities and placemaking amenities.

- H 24 Develop the network of habitat connections, neighborhood greenways and plan for civic corridors as a spine of Portland's civic, transportation and green infrastructure systems to enhance safety, livability and watershed health and catalyze private investment and support livability.
- H 25 Design neighborhood greenways and civic corridors to integrate safe and accessible facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, sustainable stormwater facilities, tree planting and community amenities.
- **H 28** Transform prominent transit streets, streetcar and light rail corridors into distinctive civic places of community pride that serve Portland's future multi-modal mobility needs and are models of ecological design.

**H - 30** Preserve older and historic buildings, public places and parks along corridors, where appropriate, to enhance the pedestrian realm and create a unique sense of place and neighborhood identity.

# THE HEALTHY CONNECTED CITY NETWORK

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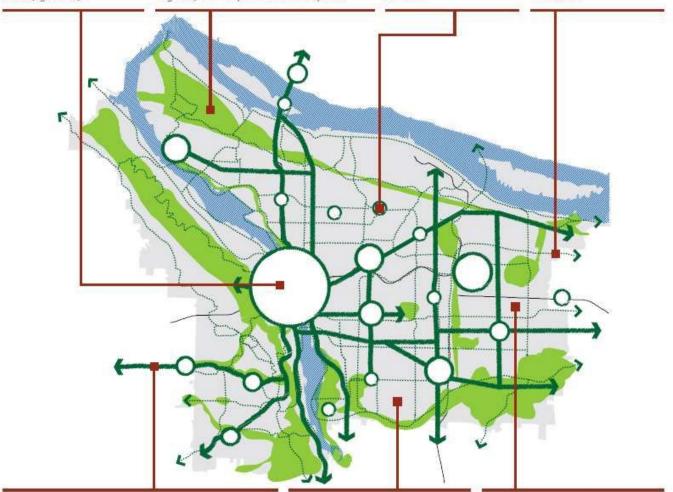
This diagram illustrates the concept of the Healthy Connected City network of neighborhood Hubs and City Connections

Central City is the region's center of jobs, high-density housing, transit and other services. It also comprises a large portion of the Willamette River waterfront in the city. It benefits the entire city and has a key role as part of an interconnected system of neighborhood hubs and city greenways.

Habitat connections are corridors and neighborhood tree canopy that weave nature into the city and connect to large natural areas, like Forest Park. The habitat connections include anchor habitats and the connections between them. They provide corridors for residents and migrating wildlife. Anchor habitats are places with large, contiguous natural areas that serve as a safe and healthy home for resident and migratory animal species and native plants.

Neighborhood centers are places with concentrations of neighborhood businesses, community services and housing and public gathering places, providing area residents with local access to services.

Neighborhood greenways are pedestrian- and bikefriendly green streets and trails that link neighborhood centers, parks, schools, natural areas and other key community destinations, making it easier to get around by walking, biking or wheelchair.



Civic corridors are major streets and transit corridors that link neighborhood centers to each other and the Central City. In some cases, a civic corridor may not be a single street, but multiple parallel streets that serve complementary functions. Civic corridors are enjoyable places to live, work and gather with bike and pedestrian facilities, large canopy trees, stormwater facilities and place-making amenities.

Schools and parks are important community destinations that can be safely and conveniently reached from neighborhood greenways.

Existing residential areas are connected to neighborhood centers, the city center, employment areas, parks and natural areas and other destinations through networks of neighborhood greenways and civic corridors.