

Neighborhood Centers PEG

Preliminary Concept for a Typology of Centers

Existing Policy Context

Existing Comprehensive Plan policies call for a similar intensity of development across a broad range of places and street corridors (minimum of 15 units per acre within a quarter mile of transit streets, main streets, town centers and transit centers). A priority was placed on increasing housing densities near transit (especially light rail station areas, but also bus lines), with less of an emphasis on locating housing near commercial or community services. Since adoption of the 1980 Comprehensive Plan, policy approaches have evolved through community planning efforts (such as the Hollywood & Sandy and St. Johns/Lombard plans) that have prioritized growth in and around town centers, but this prioritization is not clearly reflected in the citywide Comprehensive Plan. More recently, the Portland Plan has called for expanding local access to services and fostering a system of neighborhood centers with concentrations of services and housing.

Potential Policy Direction

Develop a typology of centers that is more responsive to variation in the functions, activities and scale of different types of centers and their differing roles in accommodating housing and employment growth. This approach would:

- Include a greater focus on prioritizing locating housing near services (expanding beyond the current prioritization of transit access).
- Provide policy guidance to accommodate a variety of types of centers, with a gradient of development intensity with varying densities of housing, employment and services.
- Be more strategic in prioritizing areas for growth and services, strategically designating centers across the city to maximize local, equitable access to services. This system would be based on existing designated mixed-use centers, as well as a subset of Portland's 157 miles of main streets and corridors and more than 30 light-rail stations. A more targeted approach would help foster concentrations of services and destinations, making access by pedestrians, transit and bicycles more practical and reducing the amount of driving needed (compared to when services are scattered or not available locally).

