Types of Centers

The draft Comprehensive Plan proposes a typology of centers, whose roles range from local to regional. The draft policies prioritize growth and higher-density housing in centers that have high-capacity transit access, are close to substantial amounts of jobs, and are large enough to support a broad range of commercial and community services. The typology is based on a mix of existing and aspirational characteristics.

Central City

The Central City serves as the region’s premier center, anchoring an interconnected system of centers. The Central City’s concentrations of jobs, services, and civic and cultural institutions support the commercial and cultural life of the city and region. It has the highest levels of transit access in the city and an important role in accommodating regional growth.

Gateway Regional Center

Gateway serves as eastern Portland’s largest center. Policies support enhancing Gateway’s role as a key center serving the area and region as a hub of employment and commercial and community services. Gateway also serves as a transportation hub and has an important role in accommodating growth, with relatively high-density housing and mid- to high-rise buildings.

Town Centers

Town Centers serve a broad area of the city with some regional function. They have a substantial employment component, a range of commercial and community services, and have regional transit connections. Town centers have an important role in accommodating growth, with capacity for about 7,000 households (enough to support neighborhood business district services) within a half-mile of their core. Places with characteristics of town centers include the Hollywood and Northwest districts.

Neighborhood Centers

Neighborhood Centers are smaller centers that serve adjacent neighborhoods. They have a range of commercial and community services. Primarily served by frequent bus service, Neighborhood Centers have a moderate role in accommodating growth, providing capacity for about 3,500 households within a half-mile of their core. Places with some characteristics of neighborhood centers include Multnomah Village and the Woodstock and Roseway main street areas.

Smaller neighborhood business districts and corner markets complement this system, filling in service gaps between centers.