

five elements

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Descriptions of life in Portland's future

We used the community's values and vision to develop a picture of how various elements of our city could look in 2030. Each element includes: a description of topics covered in that section, main ideas emerging from the community's values, a story about what Portland might look and feel like in 2030 and some directive statements on how the main ideas could be more specifically applied. The quotes are drawn from community responses to the visionPDX questionnaire.

Built Portland covers the physical and structural parts of our city, such as buildings, houses, parks, open spaces, transportation and roads. Built Portland considers what we want our communities to look and feel like, how we get around and what role our downtown serves in the region.

The following statements reflect our values and how they apply to Built Portland.

In 2030:

Our city is compact, green, dynamic and accessible to all Portlanders.

We innovate in the areas of transportation, public art, architecture and design while maintaining a healthy infrastructure.

Decisions about how and what to build are thoughtfully made and incorporate diverse viewpoints and priorities.

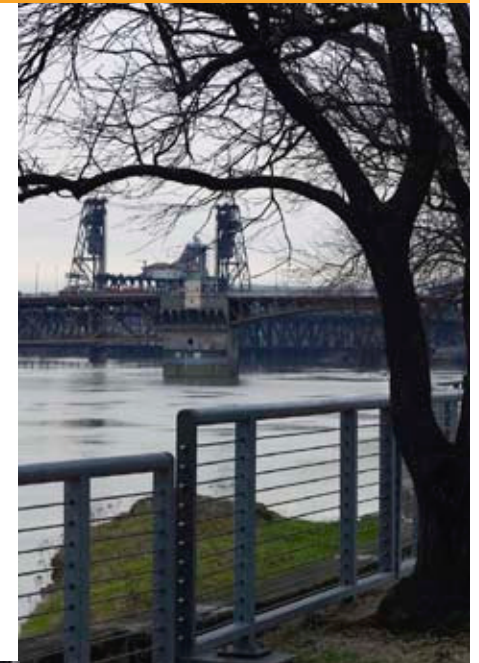
Our distinctive neighborhoods are built around hubs and exist in relationship with a thriving downtown, which is the center of the metro region.

Our built environment is a mix of the reassuringly old and strikingly new.

We value our public, open and natural spaces as well as our safe, comfortable streets.

People in all parts of Portland get around easily on foot, bikes, wheels and public transportation.

We have access to and can afford to live in a variety of housing choices geared to our diverse populations.



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Imagine the possibilities for the Built Portland of 2030. Here's just one possible story. What will the story look like for your neighborhood, your community?

Emily's Day

Emily, a 24-year-old Portland State graduate student, leaves her home in Outer East Portland a little after 8:00 AM. She bought her condo, situated along the new MAX line, because it offered a fast and easy way to get downtown, but also had entertainment, stores and restaurants within walking and biking distance. She takes the train downtown with her bike, and after class, heads over to Forest Park for some hiking with her friend before visiting her grandmother, Carol, in the King neighborhood.

Though getting older, Carol will be able to remain in her home for years to come because it was designed to allow people of all abilities to use it, with few stairs, easy-to-turn knobs, wide doorways and more. Many public buildings have been similarly redesigned to be more accessible to people with disabilities and to elders.

Unlike Emily, Carol tends to drive most places – she's unable to bike and prefers the independence of the car to the bus. Even though the city of Portland now has several hundred thousand more people than it did decades ago, the roads are still well-maintained, and Carol has little problem getting around the city in her carbon-neutral car.

Today, though, Carol and Emily walk to a local community center for a gardening workshop. Emily just reserved a spot at one of Portland's many community gardens, and Carol, with her big backyard garden, is helping her granddaughter learn the ropes.

After the workshop, Emily joins a friend for a late supper near home at one of Portland's many delicious restaurants, where they run into some folks they know from the neighborhood. Emily is reminded of how small Portland still feels, despite all the recent growth, and is happy that the city has been able to maintain that community feeling.

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Considering our values and the trends our community faces, we provide some direction for Built Portland in the statements below.

Visualizing Built Portland

- Public transportation systems create a system-wide web, connecting neighborhoods to one another as well as providing easy access to and from the central city.
- Portland provides incentives to protect historically viable architecture while encouraging creative design for new structures.
- Communities and transportation systems are designed to promote ease of access to work, services and play while ensuring carbon neutrality.
- All new development meets green building standards, while many existing buildings have been renovated for efficiency.
- Portland promotes dense development in neighborhood centers and along retail corridors and has encouraged well-designed infill development.
- Portland encourages high population density while incorporating parks, environmentally protected areas, street trees, community gardens, green spaces, waterways and pathways.
- Portlanders also have easy access to forests, natural areas and farms immediately beyond the urban area.
- Portland continues to be the model American city for multiple modes of transportation, including pedestrian and bike paths, light rail, buses, trams, trolleys and car sharing. We maintain the road system for all users.
- Portlanders thrive in neighborhoods that provide goods and services within walking distance from residences and workplaces.
- Portland recognizes the value of diverse, mixed-income neighborhoods. Families with children can still live throughout Portland, regardless of their income.
- The transportation system is built to handle industrial and commercial activities and to provide an effective freight system.
- East Portland is an integrated part of Portland, while maintaining its distinctiveness.

“Keeping urban neighborhoods safe and convenient is extremely important to the vitality of Portland.”

“I appreciate the emphasis on mass transit. I can get most places easily, efficiently, and quickly by bus, MAX [or] trolley.”

