



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Deering Highlands Neighborhood Association
 East Bayside Neighborhood Organization
 East Deering Neighborhood Association
 India Street Neighborhood Association
 Munjoy Hill Neighborhood Organization
 Parkside Neighborhood Association
 Peaks Island Council
 Stroudwater Village Association
 West End Neighborhood Association
 Western Promenade Neighborhood Association

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Greater Portland Council of Governments

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PORTLAND'S PLAN

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STATE GOALS

To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers, and coastal areas.

To protect the State's other critical natural resources, including without limitation: wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas.

To safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources.

LOCAL GOALS

WE WILL:

Identify and protect Portland's critical natural resources.

Restore impaired waterbodies through local efforts and in collaboration with regional partners.

Support agricultural, forest, and scenic resources appropriate to our urban context.

Develop climate resilience through specific carbon reduction goals, comprehensive climate adaptation strategies, and protections for the city's most vulnerable infrastructure.

Make energy efficiency and renewable energy measures a city-wide priority.

Adopt sustainable land use and transportation policies that support connectivity, walkable neighborhoods, and multi-modal transportation.

Minimize the generation and environmental impacts of solid waste.



FUTURE STRATEGIES

1. ADOPT MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

- Track performance on key environmental indicators.
- Generate reports to keep staff, City leadership, and the public apprised of performance.
- Explore national best practices in developing metrics.

2. IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

- Collaborate with local nonprofits, research organizations, private property owners, and surrounding communities to achieve cleaner waters.
- Minimize impacts to the city's waterways by reducing combined sewer overflows and implementing stormwater best management practices.
- Coordinate water and sewer infrastructure improvements with anticipated new growth areas.
- Incorporate additional Low Impact Development (LID) standards into City codes.
- Implement watershed management plans for prioritized impaired waterways.
- Support reduction in impervious surfaces and implementation of green infrastructure in local codes, through incentives, and in infrastructure investments where appropriate.
- Support best practices for Integrated Pest Management.

3. PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES

- Remain current with Maine DEP Shoreland Zoning direction for natural resource protection.
- Implement land use tools for increased protection of impaired streams.

- Recognize the particular needs of sensitive island ecologies by: supporting land use policies that protect groundwater supplies; preserving valuable environmental resources such as shoreline and water resources; promoting alternative and sustainable energy resources for island communities; and implementing sustainable and low-impact measures for both maintenance and development on the islands, including stormwater management, infrastructure improvements, and management of invasive species.

4. SUPPORT AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES

- Explore opportunities to develop and expand local food systems, including community gardens and urban farms.
- Increase the total number of community garden plots to provide equitable access and to meet demand.
- Support programs that increase healthy food access for all, including students in the Portland Public Schools and other City-run institutions.
- Support a healthy, resilient, and sustainable food system by collaborating with local and regional stakeholders.
- Support and recognize Portland's role as a thriving food economy in City codes and policies.
- Increase the urban tree canopy by 15% above current canopy coverage to benefit air quality, local climate, CO2 absorption, and aesthetics.
- Model environmentally-sound landscape management practices, such as planting for pollinators, planting native species, and limiting the use of pesticides and fertilizers.

PORTLAND'S PLAN 2030



PORTLAND'S PLAN 2030 2017

PORTLAND'S PLAN 2030



A Livable City

WHILE PORTLAND HAS WELCOMED much needed new housing construction in recent years, both the lack of sufficient housing supply and the affordability of that housing for a healthy socioeconomic cross-section of the population remain urgent challenges. This phenomenon is not unique to Portland; cities across the nation have recently experienced renewed investment and shifting demographics as the preference for living in close proximity to urban centers, transportation hubs, and walkable neighborhoods continues to grow. Stories of displacement and household instability have become more common as residents struggle to find decent, safe, and affordable housing.

The City of Portland is actively engaged in efforts to encourage housing preservation and creation for all income levels and household sizes city-wide, both through policy initiatives and through public/nonprofit partnerships with agencies such as Portland Housing Authority, Community Housing of Maine, Avesta Housing, Preble Street, Shalom House, and the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition.

The City has a suite of existing tools and policies that remain important in supporting a more

equitable and diverse housing supply. To supplement ongoing efforts in this area, the City Council's Housing Committee recommends new housing policies; promotes balanced development; and makes recommendations regarding available development tools such as Tax Increment Finance (TIF) zones, the Affordable Housing Revolving Loan Fund, Community Development Block Grants, HOME Program, and zoning and policy changes. The committee engaged in a robust public process throughout the spring and summer of 2016 not only to identify housing issues, but to develop creative solutions. The committee identified two main, interrelated themes: housing insecurity and lack of sufficient and suitable housing supply.

Today, Portland's population is well below its mid-20th century peak, but after decades of decline Portland is growing, presenting the city with new opportunities and new challenges. The City will continue to examine and approve substantive policy changes to accommodate those seeking the benefits of city life, and recognize that the city's vitality rests on the availability of diverse, secure housing options for existing residents, new arrivals, and all stages of life.



RECENT & ONGOING INITIATIVES

The City of Portland works to ensure that decent and safe housing is available to residents. On a daily and ongoing basis, the City operates a range of essential housing programs that are central to the health and welfare of City residents. These programs vary from rental assistance and home rehab programs to affordable housing development subsidies and the operation of two homeless shelters, all designed to ensure that all residents of the City of Portland have access to a diverse range of safe and adequate housing.

This fundamentally important work is completed against the backdrop of the City's housing planning efforts. In 2002, Portland adopted *Housing: Sustaining Portland's Future*, a seminal housing plan which established policy goals to ensure an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs, preferences, and financial capabilities of all Portland households. It remains a valuable policy document, and since its adoption, Portland has actively undertaken additional initiatives to address the city's changing housing needs, examining housing conditions through efforts like the 2015 *Portland 2030 Workforce*

Housing Demand Study, assembled through a partnership with the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG).

This planning work has led to policy, like that considered in the 2015 Encourage and Ensure housing policy package and the 2016 Council Housing Committee deliberations, focused broadly on increasing the overall supply and diversity of the housing stock. Over the past several years, the City has amended its zoning ordinance to allow greater residential density in various zones, expand the applicability of an existing 25% density bonus, increase allowable heights in some parts of downtown, reduce parking requirements to eliminate barriers to development, and incentivize residential and mixed-use development on India Street through a form-based code. Other recent changes to the ordinance have spoken directly to affordability: mandating the inclusion of affordable workforce housing within all residential development projects of 10 or more units, reducing fees for affordable housing development, and facilitating the creation of accessory dwelling units for income-qualified households.