



All In On Portland's Central City:

A ROADMAP TO RECLAIM,
REBUILD, AND RECONNECT

JUNE 2025

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary i

Context: Why Now? 1

Navigating the Road to Recovery 3

Why Central City is Important..... 8

The Vision 10

 The Region's Gathering Place 12

 Complete Urban Neighborhoods..... 14

 A Hub of Innovation and Opportunity 16

The Goals and Ideas 18

 Lloyd District..... 20

 Albina..... 22

 OMSI / Central Eastside 26

 Old Town and the Broadway Corridor..... 28

 Downtown..... 34

 Waterfront Park..... 40

 South Downtown and South Waterfront 42

 The Future of Central City Transportation 46

A Path Forward 48

The Roundtable 52



Cover photos courtesy of Travel Portland, OMSI, and Edlen & Co.



*Future Albina Market
rendering. Image Courtesy
of Albina Vision Trust.*



Executive Summary

Why Now?

Portland's Central City has reached an inflection point.

For decades, it was the civic and cultural heart of the region—a place where thousands came daily to work, study, shop, and gather. Yet the COVID-19 pandemic upended this model. Remote work hollowed out office towers. Public safety concerns discouraged foot traffic. Homelessness and visible disorder created powerful negative perceptions, even as progress emerged beneath the surface.

This moment is not unique to Portland. Cities across the country are facing similar challenges. But Portland's Central City is burdened by additional structural weaknesses: a complex and expensive tax system, a real estate market with record vacancies, and local governments constrained by budget shortfalls and service gaps.

Still, Central City retains unmatched value. It is a center of innovation, home to leading arts and culture institutions, the site of transformative redevelopment projects, and the nexus of the region's transportation system.

This is a rare chance to reset Portland's civic core for the next century.

THE ROLE OF THE Central City Task Force

In August 2023, Governor Tina Kotek and Standard Insurance CEO Dan McMillan convened the Central City Task Force to confront growing challenges: crime, public drug use, rising homelessness, and a collapsing commercial real estate market.

The Task Force moved beyond crisis response. It created a Value Proposition Committee that engaged 24 community leaders and held 24 listening sessions with 250 people. Their mission: to reimagine the Central City's long-term role and catalyze new investment.

A Fragile Recovery

After years of uncertainty, Portland's Central City is showing signs of momentum. In 2024, foot traffic hit a post-pandemic high. New housing projects are breaking ground, and cultural destinations like Literary Arts, Powell's Books, and the Portland Art Museum are investing in their futures. Businesses, artists, and entrepreneurs are returning to the core. The Central City's large-scale redevelopment areas have housing projects in the pipeline.

What's Holding Portland Back

Office space glut:

With a **34.7% vacancy rate** in late 2024 (more than double pre-pandemic levels), Portland's downtown has more square footage than it can absorb even with pre-pandemic demand levels. Many office buildings are outdated and functionally obsolete.

A complex, high-cost tax system:

Portland now has one of the highest combined income tax rates in the nation, and local business taxes have **risen more than 80% since 2019**. These costs discourage entrepreneurship and push investment out.

Stretched budgets:

Essential city services are under severe strain and core services like emergency response, sanitation, maintenance continue to lag residents' expectations in a city once heralded for its livability. **Emergency response times have nearly tripled since 2019¹**. Infrastructure maintenance is lagging citywide. Forty percent of transportation assets rated in poor or very poor condition.

Homelessness and Safety:

While shelter capacity is increasing, Portland's unsheltered homelessness rate remains **four times the national average**. Perceptions of safety, particularly at night, have improved but remain low.

A few bright spots cannot overcome systemic fiscal pressures or lack of coordination. The City's budget constraints limit its ability to lead a full-scale transformation, and there is no single entity tasked with maintaining urgency. If Portland's public and private leaders do not actively steward this recovery through organized, resourced effort, it may stall. These interconnected barriers can create a cycle of disinvestment. Without intervention, they will compound. A real recovery depends on breaking this cycle through policy reform, fiscal discipline, and strategic investment.

1. Portland Police Bureau, *Dispatched Calls for Service*, Tableau Public, accessed June 3, 2025, <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/portlandpolicebureau/viz/DispatchedCallsforService/DispatchedCalls>.

Why the Central City Still Matters

Some question whether Portland and the broader region can thrive with a more decentralized economy. But the Task Force found that the Central City remains irreplaceable.

Its proximity powers productivity. Its institutions drive tourism, learning, and cultural life. The region's highest concentration of arts and entertainment venues draw millions annually. Its transportation infrastructure ties the region together. More than \$50 billion in transportation investments center on this area, from bridges and rail to freeways and freight routes. And its mix of housing, education, and civic assets cannot easily be replicated elsewhere.

The next chapter is already starting to take shape. Major planned redevelopment projects like Broadway Corridor, Albina Vision Trust, OMSI District, and Lloyd Center have the potential to reshape neighborhoods and deliver thousands of housing units and jobs. But each investment depends on public confidence and leadership.

The Central City has long been a place where Portland makes its most ambitious moves. If we lose momentum, we forfeit decades of investment and opportunity. If we target our investment in the Central City, we reaffirm our commitment to an inclusive, prosperous future.



A 2025 VISION FOR Central City Renewal

In response to these challenges and opportunities, the Optimism Committee proposed a bold, three-part vision.

The goal is to remake the Central City not just as a center of commerce, but as a place where Portlanders live, gather, and build together.

This is a reimagining of Portland's city center for a new era.



THE REGION'S GATHERING PLACE

The Central City should be where the region comes to connect. With a renewed waterfront on both sides of the river, premier event spaces, and vibrant public squares, it can once again become the cultural heart of Portland.



COMPLETE URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

The Central City must offer a high quality of life for people of all ages and incomes. That means housing, schools, parks, clinics, and grocery stores all within walkable reach. Livability must be the priority.



A HUB OF INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY

With institutions like PSU, OHSU, and PNCA, and a strong base of startups and creatives, the Central City is where Portland's talent and energy can converge. But this potential must be nurtured through infrastructure, affordability, and equity.

Central City Goals for 2030

1

Foot traffic fully recovered. By 2030, foot traffic across Central City neighborhoods should approach **pre-pandemic foot traffic levels**. That means offices, restaurants, and cultural destinations see a steady, growing stream of workers, residents, and visitors. Achieving this will require business recruitment, new incentives, public space and ground-floor space activation, and a sustained focus on safety and cleanliness.

2

2 million square feet of net office absorption.

This will take bold action in the form of **targeted campaigns** to attract new businesses to the Central City, office-to-residential conversions, and reimagining mixed-use buildings.

3

2,500 new housing units in the pipeline. That means fast-tracking conversions, prioritizing neighborhood infrastructure, and devoting energy to **reducing financing and construction costs**.

Meeting these goals will restore vitality to the Central City and build a more resilient and inclusive economic engine for the entire region.



Future Steel Bridge
Skate Park. Image
courtesy of Dao
Architecture.



The OMSI District
Streetscape.
Courtesy of
OMSI.

Big Ideas Across Six Districts

To translate vision into action, the Task Force mapped over 75 projects across six Central City districts. These initiatives range from shovel-ready infrastructure to long-term redevelopment plans. Each contributes to a more livable, vibrant urban core.

In **Albina**, restorative development is underway, reconnecting displaced communities with housing, cultural spaces, and jobs. The **Broadway Corridor** promises over 2,000 new homes and major public spaces. **Lloyd Center** is redeveloped as a mixed-use neighborhood anchored by entertainment and housing.

The **OMSI District** is evolving into a 24-acre innovation and cultural hub, while **Old Town** is advancing plans for arts spaces, retail activation, and adaptive reuse of historic buildings. In **South Downtown**, PSU's transformation and the proposed Major League Baseball stadium represent game-changing opportunities.

These projects are signals of belief in Portland's future. But they require champions, coordination, and sustained investment. The full impact will come from how they connect with one another.

The map on the following pages shows the projects across all Central City Districts as of Spring 2025.



Lloyd Center
redevelopment plans.
Courtesy of ZGF.



Broadway Corridor
rendering of NW
Johnson Street.
Image courtesy of
ZGF Architects.

Big Ideas Across Portland's Central City



The Roundtable and the Need for Civic Leadership

To guide recovery and hold stakeholders accountable, this report calls for a new civic leadership group: the Central City Roundtable. It will not replace existing organizations—it will bridge them.

The Roundtable will be independently staffed, privately funded, and focused on executing the vision outlined in this document. It will convene leaders across sectors, elevate emerging ideas, connect champions to resources, and publish progress dashboards.

This structure mirrors successful public-private collaboration models in cities like Seattle, Denver, and Miami. Portland has lacked such an entity since the dissolution of the Association for Portland Progress in 2002. Reviving that spirit without recreating bureaucracy is essential to sustained, credible recovery.

The Roundtable's success depends on focus. It must be transparent, data-driven, and grounded in measurable goals. Its mandate: ensure that the Central City's recovery is not episodic or symbolic, but comprehensive and enduring.

Roundtable Charge (2025–2030)

Steward the Vision

Host quarterly convenings, set measurable targets, and maintain urgency around gathering, innovation, and livability.

Elevate Ideas and Projects

Be a civic accelerator. Provide visibility, partnerships, and momentum for promising ideas.

Track Progress

Publish public dashboards, monitor key indicators, and hold stakeholders accountable.



PDX Live concert in Pioneer Square. Courtesy of Business Wire.



A Call to Action

The Central City's recovery is central to Portland's identity, economy, and future. Every sector—public, private, philanthropic—has a role to play. And the timeline is urgent.

This report provides the framework. It identifies priorities, projects, and policies. It offers measurable goals. It elevates the voices of leaders and residents who believe that Portland's best days can still lie ahead.

But documents don't build cities. People do. The challenge now is not to debate the vision, but to execute it. To align funding with ambition. To fast-track what works. To invest in what matters. To coordinate what is already underway.

If we succeed, Portland's Central City will not only recover, it will lead a new chapter in American urbanism. If we fail, we risk a slow erosion of one of the most ambitious civic experiments in the country.

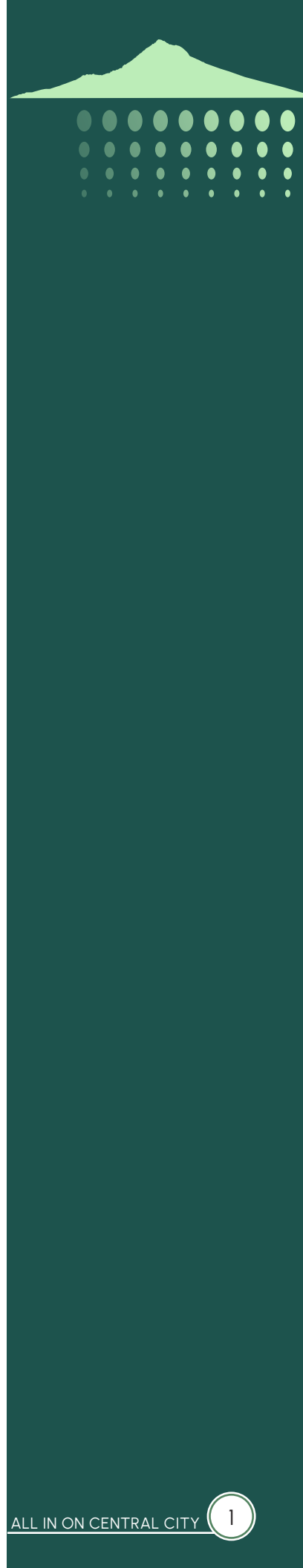


The Ankeny Alley Association has transformed SW Ankeny between SW 2nd and 3rd Avenues into an inviting, pedestrianized street with programming and events.

Source: Travel Portland



*Future Albina Market
rendering. Image Courtesy
of Albina Vision Trust.*



Why Now?

For decades, Portland's Central City was the region's beating heart—a place where office workers filled downtown cafés, thousands packed the streets for festivals, and a Saturday could take you from the Portland Art Museum to a Blazers game at the Moda Center. But when the pandemic hit, the rhythm changed.

People stayed closer to home. Neighborhood business districts grew, while downtown's foot traffic thinned. The habit of coming to the city's core for work, for play, and for gathering began to fade.

And still, nowhere else in Oregon offers what Portland's Central City does: a bookstore that fills a whole block, a walkable cultural corridor filled with galleries, museums, and venues, a hands-on science hub at OMSI, the glow of Lan Su Chinese Garden's lanterns during Lunar New Year, and major league sports.

This is a city built on bold moves to replace past urban missteps—tearing out a highway to create Waterfront Park, betting on transit when other cities doubled down on freeways, reimagining the riverfront with the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade, renovating train turnaround yards and underutilized brownfields into new mixed-income neighborhoods, and Albina Vision Trust's work to reclaim and revitalize Lower Albina.

A once-in-a-generation chance to reimagine our city's core.

Today, visionaries across the Central City are already laying the groundwork for what comes next. **This is a moment to build, not retreat. This is an opportunity for those ready to lead, invest, and turn bold ideas into reality.**

The Role of the Central City Task Force

In August 2023, Governor Tina Kotek and Standard Insurance CEO Dan McMillan convened a **46-member task force** to confront growing challenges in Portland's Central City.

The urgency was clear: more frequent crime, open drug use, rising homelessness, and a collapsing commercial real estate market were eroding the city's reputation and economic vitality.

But the task force didn't just focus on today's crises. The chairs pushed for a long-term vision—one that redefines the Central City's role in the region. That's why they created the Value Proposition Committee, a group dedicated to tackling key issues: affordable housing; making Central City welcoming for kids and families; encouraging startup growth; supporting arts, culture, and sports; and reimagining our public spaces.

The 24-member committee, representing nonprofits, businesses, and public agencies, met three times in fall 2023. They held 24 listening sessions across Central City neighborhoods and focused on key topics related to the Central City, gathering real-world insights on how to fuel revitalization and focusing on every neighborhood in the Central City.



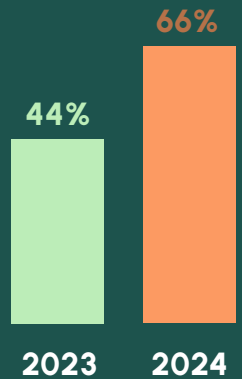
Navigating the Road to Recovery

The Central City Task Force's initial efforts have stabilized conditions, but the work is far from over. While crime rates and public safety concerns have improved, deeper structural challenges—historically high office vacancies, a complex tax system, fiscal strain at the city and county levels, and gaps in core services—must be addressed to ensure a lasting recovery.²

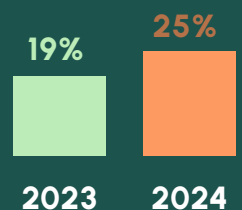
The Challenge of Excess Office Space

Progress in 2024 laid the groundwork for a recovery, but it will be a long and complex process. Downtown Portland's commercial office vacancy rate hit 34.7% by the end of 2024. Even if office absorption returned to healthy prepandemic levels, it would take well into the 2040s to fill the current surplus of space.

Portland is not alone in facing an office market in upheaval. Major cities across the country, including San Francisco, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., have experienced prolonged high vacancy rates as remote and hybrid work models reduce demand for traditional office space.³ Nationally, Class B and C office properties are struggling the most, with some landlords converting outdated buildings into residential or mixed-use developments to prevent long-term stagnation.⁴



Voters who feel safe downtown in **daylight** hours⁵



Voters who feel safe downtown in **nighttime** hours⁵



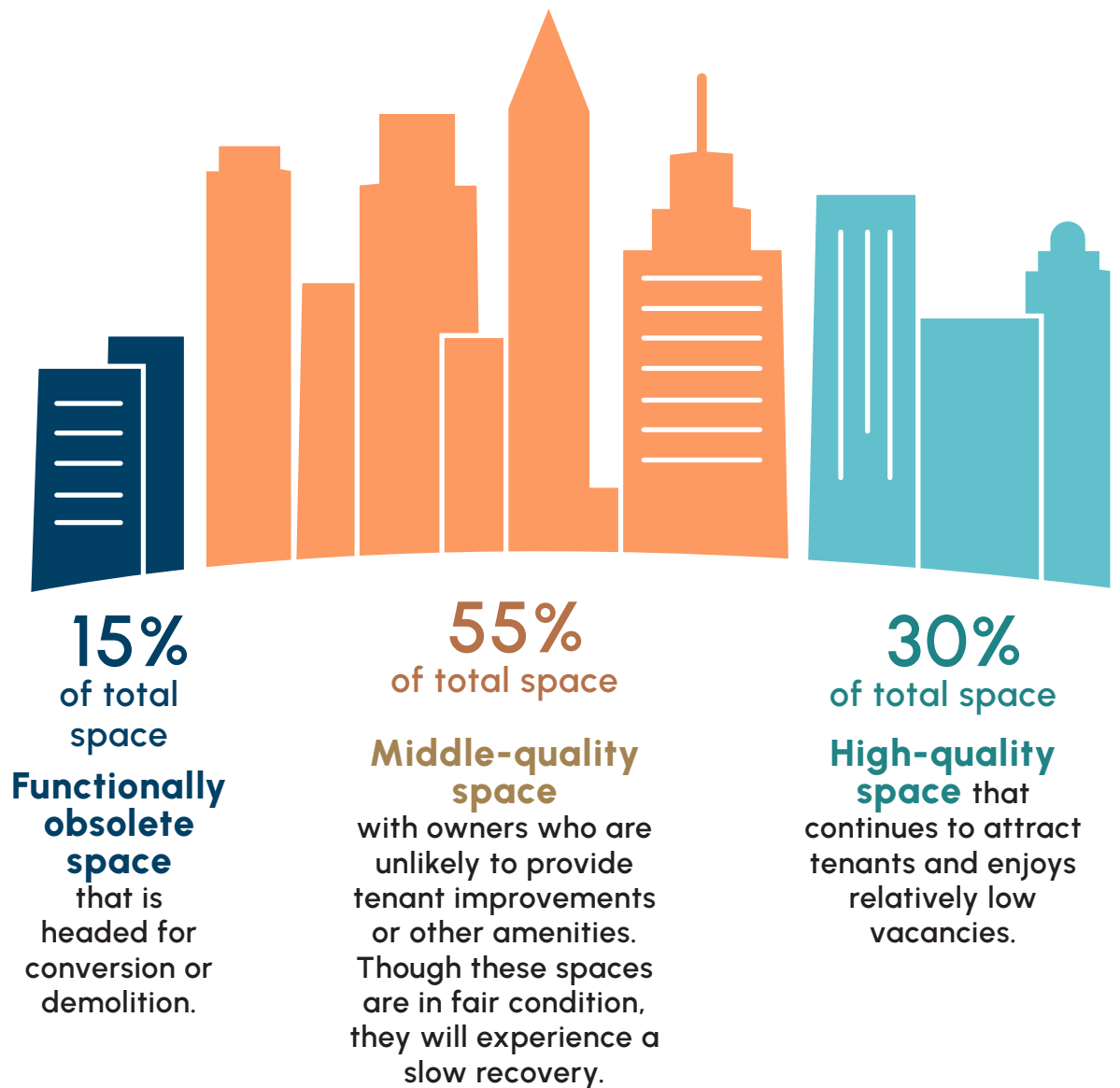
Downtown foot traffic ended 2024 at a **postpandemic high**⁶

2. Wilhoite, Charles et. al. (January 2025) Nineteen Facts About Economic, Fiscal, and Service Conditions in Portland, Oregon. Portland Central City Task Force. Portland, OR. <https://oregonbusinessplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/TAG-Fiscal-Facts-Report.pdf>

3. Stef, Corina (January 2025) Office Vacancy Rates Rose Nationwide in 2024. [Commercialledge.com](https://www.commercialledge.com)

4. Zonta, Michela et. al., (July 2024) Converting Vacant Office Space into Housing. Center for American Progress. Washington, DC.

Commercial real estate brokers categorize the Central City office spaces into **three broad groups**:



Portland's Fiscal Foundations are Under Strain

Portland's recovery hinges not only on private investment and civic will, but on the public sector's capacity to deliver. Disjointed tax policy and growing service demands have created a fragile fiscal base.

Structural Tax Challenges are Slowing Growth⁵

Since 2009, Portland has enacted more than 20 major tax measures affecting residents and businesses, making it one of the highest-taxed cities in the country. The city now has the second-highest top marginal income tax rate in the U.S., and local business taxes have surged by 82% since 2019. These rising costs coincide with sluggish job growth and out-migration trends as higher-income households leave Multnomah County at increasing rates.

Notably, while tax revenue has outpaced inflation, most of the growth has been in special-purpose funds rather than general funds, which support essential services like policing, transportation, and emergency response. This imbalance has created a paradox: increasing revenues but persistent service gaps.



5. Wilhoite, Nineteen Facts.

Budget Shortfalls and Revenue Misalignment⁶

Portland and Multnomah County both face structural budget deficits driven by rising personnel costs and slowing tax revenue growth.

Property tax collections—a key funding source—have been impacted by the decline in downtown office commercial property values, which will slow revenue growth in the coming years.

Further complicating the financial picture, several major tax-funded initiatives—including Preschool for All, Supportive Housing Services, and the Portland Clean Energy Fund—have accumulated more than \$1.2 billion in unspent balances. While voter-approved, the slow deployment of these funds raises concerns about the city's, Metro's, and county's ability to translate tax revenue into tangible improvements.

Broken Services: Safety, Response, and Infrastructure⁷

Despite recent public safety gains, core city services remain strained. Police response times for high-priority calls have nearly tripled since 2019, with emergency response now averaging nearly 24 minutes. The district attorney's office is overwhelmed, with open cases per prosecutor at an all-time high.

Portland's infrastructure is also under increasing stress. The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) is facing a projected 36% decline in transportation funding (adjusted for inflation) by 2030, while 40% of PBOT's assets—including roads, bridges, and sidewalks—are already in poor or very poor condition.

Meanwhile, homelessness remains a persistent crisis. Portland's unsheltered homelessness rate is comparable to that of Los Angeles and San Francisco, and the overall rate is four times the national average. While emergency shelter capacity has increased, sustained investment in both housing and supportive services will be necessary for meaningful progress.

6. Wilhoite, Nineteen Facts

7. Wilhoite, Nineteen Facts

A Path Forward: Balancing Growth and Stability

The stabilization efforts of 2024 have provided a foundation for recovery, but long-term success depends on a recalibrated approach. Portland must address its tax competitiveness, resolve fiscal imbalances, and close service gaps to restore confidence in its urban core.

Given remote work's lasting impact, Portland's Central City in 2035 will look dramatically different than it did in 2015. Areas that have maintained a strong mix of housing and employment have fared better post-pandemic. Expanding residential development, particularly in districts like Downtown, Old Town, and the Lloyd District, will be essential to creating a more balanced urban economy.

Dozens of big ideas outlined in this report aim to boost activity by fostering spaces to live, gather, and innovate. Some initiatives can be implemented quickly, while others will take years to materialize. Interdependent strategies will be key.

But the most promising news for Portland is that there is no shortage of **compelling ideas.**



Salmon Springs Fountain is a destination in the summer.



PBOT's Street Seats Program has activated public spaces across the city, allowing for visitors to restaurants to enjoy the outdoors.



The North Park Blocks are host to the Da Tung and Xi'an Bao Bao sculpture.

Why Central City is Important

In the 2010s, Portland's Central City thrived as a hub for professional and creative industries—tech, design, architecture, law, and finance—drawing a highly educated workforce into its office towers and shared workspaces.

This marked a shift from the city's more traditional downtown employment mix, which had included a higher share of government, retail, and industrial jobs in earlier decades. The demand for office space surged, and Portland became a model for walkable, transit-oriented urban growth. But the pandemic disrupted these patterns. Remote work hollowed out the daytime workforce, and Central City's reliance on professional office jobs—once a strength—became a vulnerability.

This disruption has sparked a debate:

Is reinvesting in the Central City necessary, or can Portland thrive with a more decentralized economic and physical structure?

Those arguing for a decentralized structure point to metro areas like Los Angeles and Dallas-Fort Worth, which have sustained growth without a dominant downtown.

The Task Force's Value Proposition Committee considered the questions and concluded that Portland's economic, cultural, and infrastructural investments are too significant to abandon. Over the course of its three meetings and through reviewing the results from the 24 listening sessions, **the committee identified four key reasons why a sustained effort to restore the Central City's vitality is not only warranted but essential:**

CITIES STILL DEPEND ON PROXIMITY.

Density fuels productivity. Innovation happens when firms and workers cluster together, fostering idea exchange, industry specialization, and informal collaboration—none of which can be fully replicated in a virtual environment. While hybrid work is here to stay, companies seeking a competitive advantage still prioritize locations where employees can connect. A diminished Central City would weaken Portland's ability to attract and retain talent in knowledge-based industries.

PORTLAND'S AMENITY-RICH CENTER IS AN ECONOMIC ASSET.

Portland's economy has long been tied to its cultural, recreational, and environmental strengths, and the Central City concentrates many of these assets. The Willamette River is a core advantage, with decades of investment in access and water quality improvements. The region's arts institutions, professional sports venues, and entertainment districts form an economic cluster that is difficult—if not impossible—to replicate elsewhere.

TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS ANCHOR THE REGION TO THE CENTRAL CITY.

More than \$50 billion in transit and roadway investments have built a system where light rail, streetcar, and bus networks all converge downtown. Two major interstates intersect in the Central Eastside, supporting freight and commerce. Union Station remains a critical hub for Amtrak and potential high-speed rail expansion.

PLANNED LARGE-SCALE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND NEW PROJECTS SHOW CENTRAL CITY IS POISED FOR A NEW CHAPTER.

Large-scale redevelopment projects such as the Broadway Corridor, Albina Vision Trust, Lloyd Mall, Zidell Yards, and the OMSI District provide opportunities for new economic activity, innovation hubs, and housing affordable to people with a range of incomes. At the block and district level, smaller projects can serve as catalysts for broader revitalization. However, this potential will only be realized if public perception of safety and livability improves.

The case for reinvesting in Portland's Central City is not about nostalgia; it is about ensuring the region's long-term economic resilience. Much of the infrastructure is already in place, more major investments are on the way, the institutions exist, and the workforce is here. The question is whether public and private leaders will take the steps necessary to stabilize, adapt, and capitalize on Portland's inherent strengths. The costs of inaction are economic stagnation, declining asset values, and missed opportunities. These costs are too high to ignore.

The Vision

THE REGION'S GATHERING PLACE

The Committee fashioned a **three-part vision** that would position the Central City as the region's gathering place, its hub of innovation and opportunity, and its home to tens of thousands of Portlanders who value its amenities. The Central City would be where diversity meets innovation and all are welcomed in a top notch urban setting.

COMPLETE URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

For several decades, Portland's downtown was shaped by a development model that prioritized office buildings as the engine of economic activity. This vision filled the core with lawyers, software engineers, designers, architects, planners, and government employees, while retail workers, hospitality staff, and service industry professionals supported the restaurants, hotels, and cultural institutions that thrived on a steady influx of office workers. Parks and plazas became lunchtime gathering spaces, and mature transit and bike infrastructure reduced reliance on parking, reinforcing a dense, accessible downtown. It was a compelling urban design approach—one that worked well right up until the pandemic upended traditional work patterns and thinned the daytime workforce.

A HUB OF INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY

The advent of remote and hybrid work demanded a new vision for the Central City. Professional workers could be part of it, but makers, service workers, entrepreneurs, artists, and educators should all find a foothold in its future. In August 2023, the task force charged its Value Proposition Committee with developing a new vision for the Central City.

The Committee found inspiration from theorists of shifting urban dynamics. Ed Glaeser and Carlo Ratti offered the idea of the Playground City and argued that if work were less of a reason to come to the center, cities would have to create new reasons for people to go there.⁸ Cities would de-emphasize the vocational focus and prioritize recreation, culture, and social interaction. Their idea harkened back to Jane Jacob's vision of a "sidewalk ballet" where life, leisure, and work seamlessly intertwine.⁹ Urbanist Richard Florida picked up on similar themes and described the need to invest in and around social spaces—restaurants, cafes, bars, parks, and green spaces.¹⁰

8. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/05/10/opinion/nyc-office-vacancy-playground-city.html>

9. <https://www.plough.com/en/topics/culture/literature/sidewalk-ballet>

10. https://creativeclass.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Why-Downtown-Wont-Die.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Central City 2035: Six Big Ideas That Still Matter

The [Central City 2035 Plan](#) and *All in on Central City* are separated by nearly a decade but grounded in the same ambition: to keep Portland's urban core functioning as the region's civic, cultural, and economic center. CC2035 established a long-term framework for land use, infrastructure, and growth rooted in the following six big ideas:

Celebrate Portland's Civic and Cultural Life: Festivals, museums, music, food, and sports animate the Central City. They function as core infrastructure for public life and regional connection.

Foster Creativity, Innovation, and Productivity: The corridor linking PSU, OHSU, and the Central Eastside serves as a hub for research, education, and job creation.

Enhance the Willamette for People and Wildlife: The river anchors both ecology and civic identity. The plan invests in clean water, restored habitat, and public access.

Design Streets to Be Great Places: The Central City's grid supports walkable, people-first streets. Design emphasizes movement, commerce, and everyday activity.

Build the Green Loop: A six-mile active transportation circuit connects neighborhoods, parks, and campuses, expanding public space across the core.

Increase the Resilience of the Central City: Seismic upgrades, clean energy systems, and affordable housing strengthen the city's ability to absorb and adapt to disruption.

All in on Central City emerges from the civic sector and speaks to a different moment—one shaped by the pandemic, remote work, and fiscal stress. It lifts forward the priorities that remain most relevant and focuses on accelerating tangible progress. This strategy doesn't replace the city's adopted plan. **It points to where momentum is needed now.**



Lloyd Farmers Market.
Courtesy of Travel Portland.



Downtown bikes and scooters.
Courtesy of Travel Portland.



Portland Saturday Market fountain.
Courtesy of Travel Portland.



THE REGION'S GATHERING PLACE

The vision: Central City is the region's premiere gathering place. Its people and places attract and welcome visitors from across the city, region, state, and the world. They come to attend events like Saturday Market and the Blues Festival, indulge in first-rate food, play in the parks, celebrate culture, and cheer on their team. It's a gateway for visitors to Forest Park, the Willamette Valley, mountains, waterfalls, and the Pacific Ocean.

Big Messages

- ♦ **We need to own the narrative and tell a stronger story.** Portland has long let its reputation speak for itself. But now, public perception still lags behind reality. Coordinated efforts, which have already begun to highlight improvements in safety and livability, and business vibrancy, can help shift the conversation.
- ♦ **The Willamette River should be the centerpiece of Portland's Central City,** with riverfront parks that serve both residents and visitors downtown, and in South Waterfront, the OMSI District, and Albina, and providing several new access points to the water. We should live up to our name, Bridge City, and think about how to strengthen the ties between the river and Central City neighborhoods.
- ♦ **Portland's music venues, performance spaces, and public gathering places should feel connected and accessible** to people of all ages and backgrounds, with strategic investments that strengthen their role as the city's cultural anchors.
- ♦ **Portland should feel vibrant every day and night, not just during big events.** Investing in daily public space activations, murals, public art, a stronger nightlife, and an unforgettable visitor experience will keep people coming back.



Eastbank
Esplanade at
OMSI. Courtesy
of OMSI.



Waterfront Blues
Festival. Courtesy
of Nash Co
Photography.



PDX Live concert
in Pioneer Square.
Courtesy of
Business Wire.



COMPLETE URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

The vision: Central City is home to tens of thousands of Portlanders who value its urban amenities and new supply of affordable housing. The Central City is home to newborns and elders, to students and professionals, and to young families. Everything they need is a short walk or ride away—school, the library, the grocery store, the doctor's office, the playground, and the pool.

Big Messages

- ◆ **For years, Portland's Central City has struggled to attract families.** But new ideas are emerging that could make it a place where kids can thrive alongside neighbors of all ages. Bringing kids into downtown means more family friendly homes, outdoor playgrounds, school options, a children's museum, and kid friendly stores and activations.
- ◆ **Portland's Central City must evolve into a set of complete, livable neighborhoods with distinct identities.** These are authentic, interesting places where people don't just work or visit but choose to live because they can get needed and desired services, amenities, and entertainment.
- ◆ **Office-to-residential conversions, adaptive reuse, and mixed-use development** will be critical to filling vacant spaces and creating a more balanced urban core. We should embrace creative reuse, supporting small businesses, arts organizations, and community-driven spaces to fill the gaps.
- ◆ **Housing alone isn't enough.** A thriving neighborhood needs essential amenities—grocery stores, parks, schools, and healthcare—to support a growing population. At the same time, transportation infrastructure must keep pace, ensuring residents can move easily throughout the city and beyond.



EcoVibe shop.
Courtesy of
Travel Portland.



PSU's PNW Play
Zone at SW
Market St and the
Park Blocks, an
immersive play
environment for
people of all ages.
Courtesy of PSU.



New learning
space at the
Emerson School.
Courtesy of The
Emerson School.



A HUB OF INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY

The vision: Central City is where diversity fuels innovation and opportunity. It is a hub for urban education, with institutions like **Portland State University, Oregon Health & Science University, and the Pacific Northwest College of Art** are preparing students for careers in fast-changing industries and anchoring a local talent pipeline. These institutions also drive applied research, entrepreneurship, and partnerships that support the region's growth sectors.

As highlighted in **Advance Portland**, fostering a vibrant Central City is crucial for the region's inclusive economic growth. This includes increasing mixed-income housing, supporting small businesses, and activating public spaces to enhance the area's vitality. To remain competitive, Portland must ensure that its Central City is a place where everyone—regardless of background—can build, belong, and succeed.

Big Messages

- ♦ **Portland's universities are powerful engines for innovation and economic mobility.** We should grow their role in shaping the Central City through research partnerships, job training, and entrepreneurship.
- ♦ **Portland has long been a hub for creatives, entrepreneurs, and independent businesses.** Now, the city should look for ways to make sure both new and legacy businesses can thrive and scale in the Central City with technical assistance and affordable spaces.
- ♦ **To remain competitive, Portland must double down on its startup ecosystem,** strengthening pathways for entrepreneurs, investing in innovation clusters, and positioning the Central City as a hub for traded-sector businesses.

- ◆ **Central City is home to top-tier educational institutions and workforce training programs.** We should actively connect them to one another, to workforce training programs outside the Central City, and to the industries that will define Portland's future.
- ◆ **Portland can be a global leader in climate adaptation,** with the Central City serving as a test bed for cutting-edge sustainability initiatives, energy-efficient buildings, and climate-forward urban planning.



*Grand Fir
Brewing Chef
Doug Adams.
Courtesy of
Travel Portland.*



*PAE Living
Building, designed
to last 500 years.
Courtesy of
Edlen & Co.*



*Portland State
University Urban
Plaza*

The Goals (by 2030)

To achieve this vision, Portland's Central City needs a set of measurable and ambitious, but achievable, targets for the next five years (by 2030) that align business leaders, policymakers, and civic groups around a shared vision. Without them, progress will be uneven and recovery will lag. Here are three goals that should shape the next five years:

FOOT TRAFFIC FULLY RECOVERED

By 2030, foot traffic across Central City neighborhoods should approach **pre-pandemic foot traffic levels**. That means offices, restaurants, and cultural destinations see a steady, growing stream of workers, residents, and visitors. Achieving this will require business recruitment, new incentives, public space and ground-floor space activation, and a sustained focus on safety and cleanliness.

2 MILLION SQUARE FEET OF NET OFFICE ABSORPTION

This will take bold action in the form of **targeted campaigns** to attract new businesses to the Central City, office-to-residential conversions, and reimagining mixed-use buildings.

2,500 NEW HOUSING UNITS IN THE PIPELINE

That means fast-tracking conversions, prioritizing neighborhood infrastructure, and devoting energy to **reducing financing and construction costs**.

These goals provide a clear scoreboard for Central City's recovery. They are achievable with sustained leadership, private investment, and public-sector coordination.

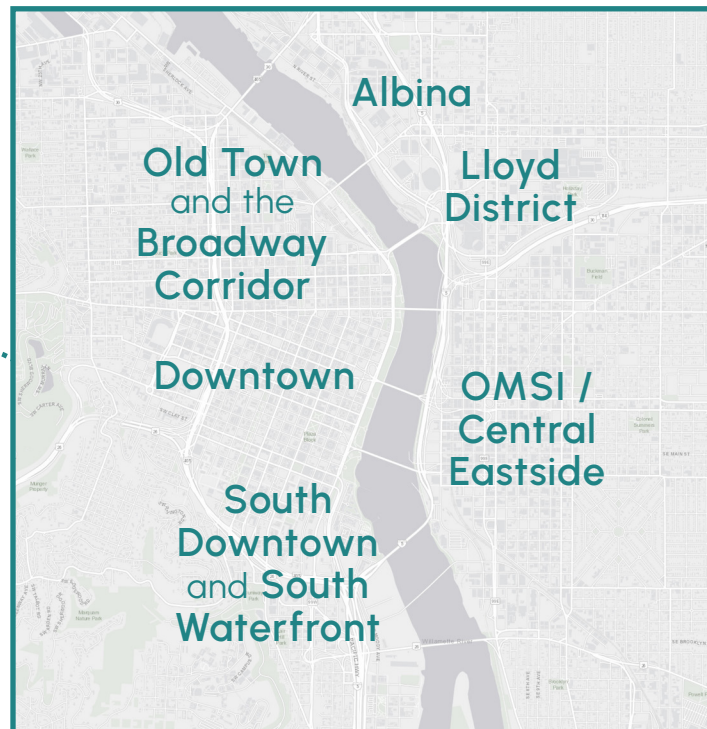


The Ideas



The remainder of this document is structured around **six distinct districts**, each shaped by recent completions, near-term opportunities (targeted for completion by the end of 2026), and long-term projects requiring champions, investment, and strategic planning.

The roadmap includes:



PROJECTS THROUGH 2026

Many of these projects have secured funding and are well on their way toward completion, while other still have a funding gap.

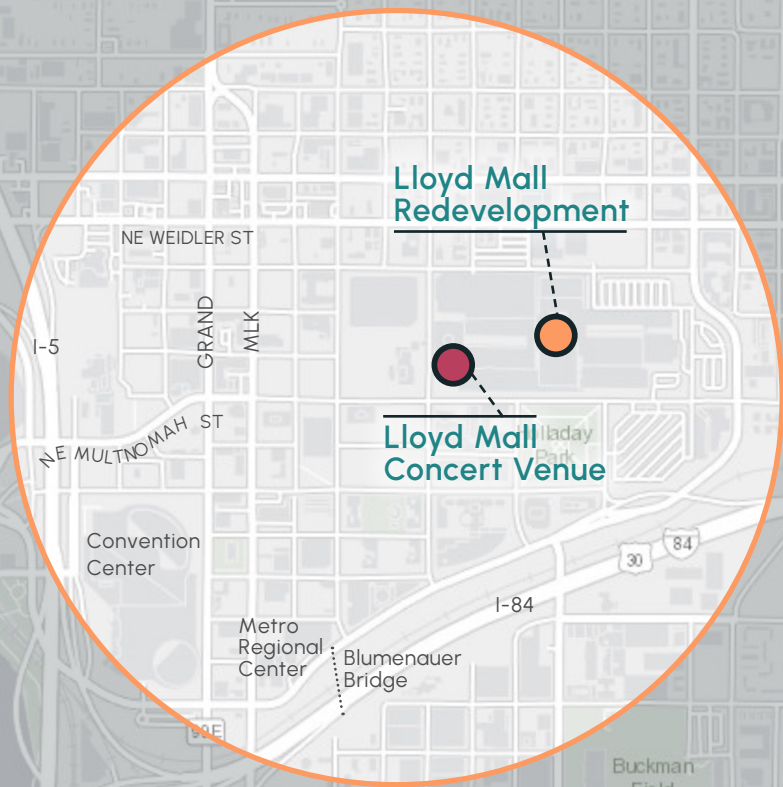
PROJECTS 2027 AND BEYOND

These generally comprise larger-scale transformations, including expanded mixed-use developments, mobility improvements, and long-term projects that require further investment and community engagement.

PROJECT KEY

- Idea:** Early-stage proposals under initial consideration.
- Concept:** Emerging ideas with a rough outline of scope and intent.
- Planning:** Actively being scoped, budgeted, or scheduled for development.
- Under Development:** Currently being designed, built, or implemented.
- Complete:** Fully finished and operational.

- Concept
- Under Development



The **Lloyd District** has served as a commercial hub but lacks residential density and a cohesive urban identity.

The Central City 2035 plan envisions its transformation into a vibrant, mixed-use “live-work-play” neighborhood. The [Lloyd Center Redevelopment Master Plan](#) aims to reverse the inward-facing, autocentric layout by reintroducing portions of the street grid, reconnecting the site to surrounding neighborhoods, and fostering a more sustainable mix of uses, including housing, retail, entertainment, and workspaces.

The redevelopment will create dynamic open spaces, support pedestrian and bike-friendly infrastructure, and strengthen connections between the Irvington neighborhood, Holladay Park, and the Central Eastside along 12th Avenue. The developer has submitted a design advice request to Portland’s design commission, initiating the planning and approval process with the city.

Lloyd District

Projects THROUGH 2026

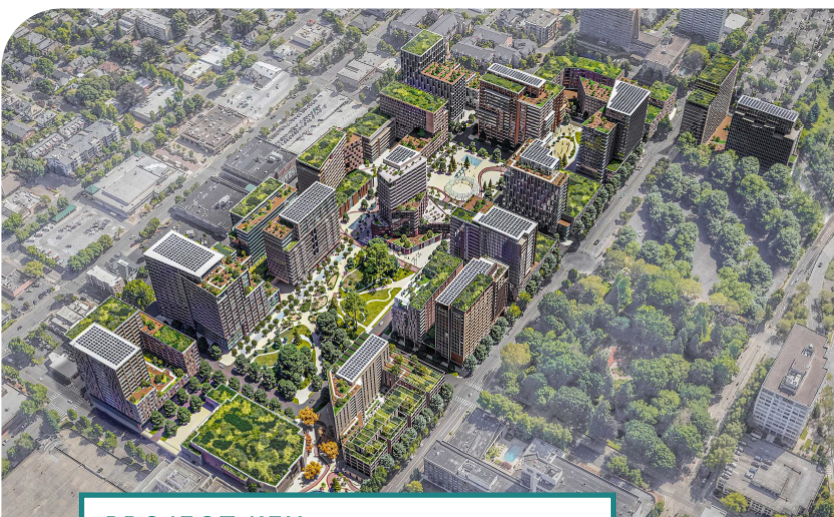
Despite long-term redevelopment plans, the Lloyd Center will remain open, with 90% of existing tenants renewing their leases. One-year lease agreements are being offered to maintain commercial activity during the transition.

AEG and Monqui are collaborating to develop a **new concert venue at Lloyd Center**, designed by Works Progress Architecture. Spanning 68,000 square feet, the venue will offer flexible seating arrangements and state-of-the-art acoustics, accommodating up to 4,250 guests. This project aims to enhance Portland's live music scene by providing a modern, high-capacity space for performances and events.

Projects 2027 AND BEYOND

The first phase of the Lloyd Center redevelopment will focus on **building up to 5,000 units of new housing** where there are now underutilized parking structures and lots to address Portland's housing demand. While parts of the mall will remain operational in the near term, much of the existing structure will be gradually demolished and replaced with a more pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development. The full build-out of the master plan could accommodate a large share of the needed housing units in the Central City over the next 20 years.

*Lloyd Center redevelopment plans.
Courtesy of ZGF.*

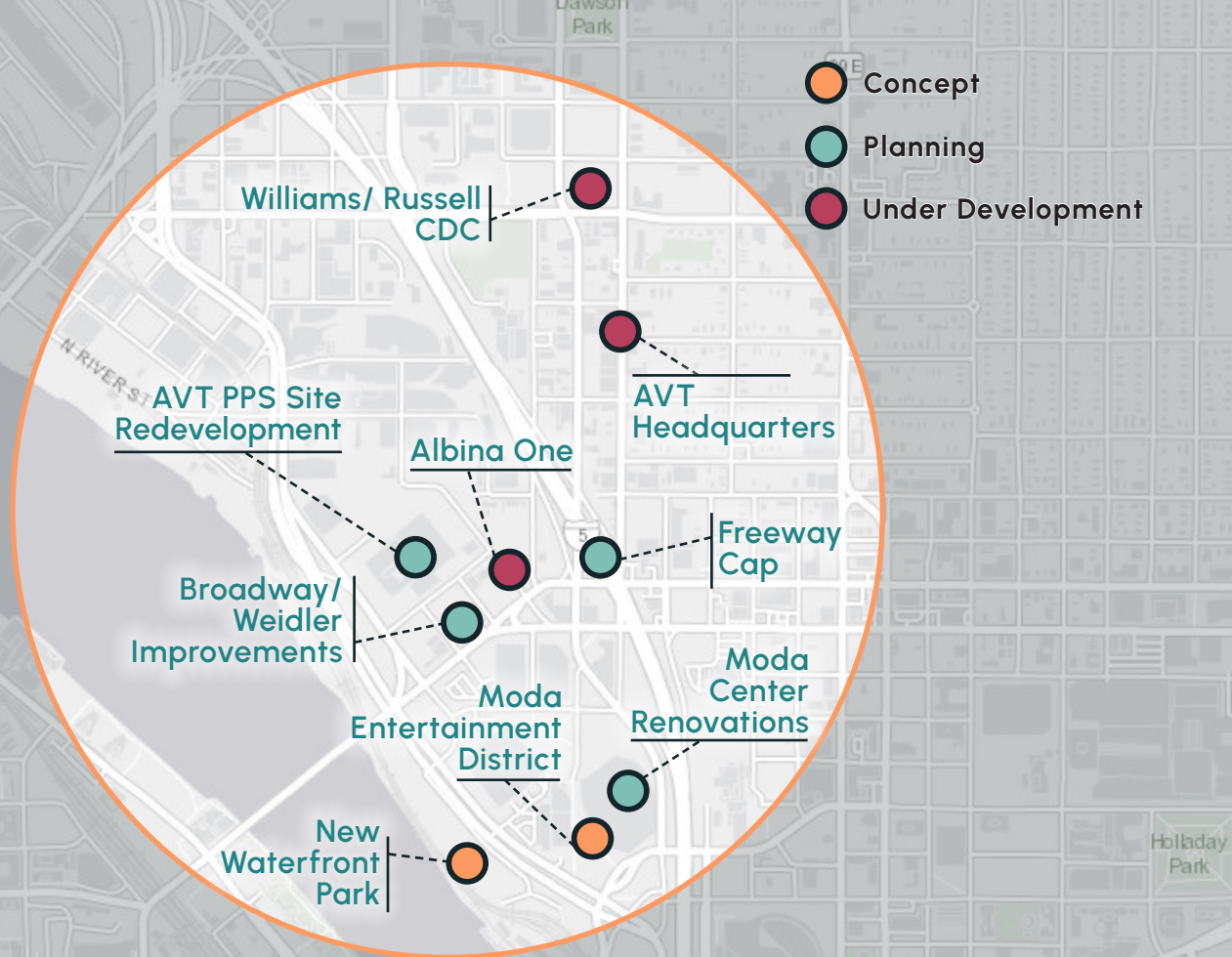


PROJECT KEY

The region's shared gathering place

Complete urban neighborhoods

Hub of innovation and opportunity



The Albina District was once the heart of Portland's Black community, a thriving neighborhood filled with Black-owned homes, businesses, churches, and cultural institutions.

However, mid-20th-century urban renewal projects, including the construction of Interstate 5 and the Memorial Coliseum, demolished hundreds of homes and businesses, displacing thousands of residents and fracturing the community.

Today, **Albina Vision Trust** (AVT) is rebuilding a zip-code-sized swathe of the Central City with the explicit goal of not only rerooting marginalized and historically displaced Portlanders in the district but transforming Lower Albina into a destination. AVT's precedent-setting work has been recognized as the largest restorative redevelopment in the United States of America by project area (94 acres) and by funding (over \$800M in direct investment to the district in the last 3 years alone).

AVT and its partners are spearheading large-scale planning efforts; securing unprecedented federal and statewide funding for catalytic transportation infrastructure projects; delivering well over 1,200 units of housing over the next 10 years; reconnecting the central eastside to the Willamette waterfront; and paving the way for innovative conversations on district-wide clean energy infrastructure that would position AVT's redevelopment of Lower Albina as one of the largest climate-positive developments in the country. Maintaining and strengthening partnerships with city partners, local business districts, and residents in multiple neighborhoods will support wealth-building, inclusive economic development, vibrant regional entertainment venues, and multimodal regional and local transportation in the area.

Projects THROUGH 2026

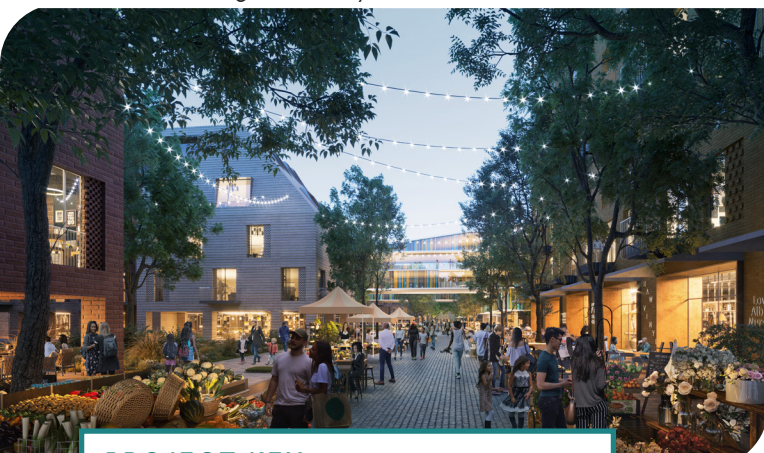
Albina One is AVT's first housing development. It is a 94-unit affordable housing project under construction, and it aims to honor Albina's heritage and counter the intentional displacement of Black people from Albina over many decades. The first 94 families to return to the district in over 40 years will be moving home in July 2025.

AVT recently opened its 4,400-square-foot AVT Headquarters, which houses staff offices and a gallery for local Black artists, serving as a community hub in Portland's historic Albina neighborhood.

AVT has also entered into a purchase and sale agreement on the adjacent **Paramount Apartments**—66 units of naturally occurring affordable housing that currently constitute the entire existing housing supply for the 94-acre district. AVT will formally assume ownership of the building and convert it into regulated affordable housing in July 2025.

PBOT is working on **improvements to Broadway/Weidler** that will make improvements from the Broadway bridgehead up to NE 7th Ave. This \$38.5M project is funded by the federal Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhood grant program. The Reconnecting Albina Planning Project, a partnership between PBOT, Prosper, BPS, and AVT, will complement and expand upon these transportation improvements by knitting together several planning efforts in the area to support the vision for an interconnected, affordable and thriving residential mixed-use neighborhood, centering restorative development for Portland's Black and historic Albina communities.

*Future Albina Market rendering.
Image Courtesy of Albina Vision Trust.*



*Rendering of future Albina Arts Hub & freeway cap.
Image Courtesy of Albina Vision Trust.*



PROJECT KEY

The region's shared gathering place

Complete urban neighborhoods

Hub of innovation and opportunity

AVT and the Portland Trail Blazers have established the **Albina Rose Alliance** to accelerate the generational redevelopment of Lower Albina and restore the area as the economic, residential, and cultural heart of Portland's Central City. Rooted in shared values, this collaboration includes "a joint development strategy for Lower Albina, including the Rose Quarter; a joint storytelling and communications strategy; a joint legislative strategy to amplify impact; and the joint celebration of community through events and gatherings."¹¹

The **Williams/Russell CDC** is under development by Williams and Russell Community Development Corporation, Adre, Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Prosper Portland, and the Portland Housing Bureau. The project involves Legacy Health returning to the community a 1.7-acre vacant block at North Russell Street and North Williams Avenue. The site once was part of a vibrant community that housed the majority of African Americans in Portland. Legacy Emanuel Hospital seized the site via eminent domain in the 1970s, an act that demolished hundreds of Black-owned homes. This project will create a 30,000 square foot **Black Business Hub** providing affordable space dedicated to Black entrepreneurs and community organizations and **85 affordable housing units and 20 ownership units**.

Projects 2027 AND BEYOND

AVT is initiating work on a **large-scale redevelopment of the Portland Public Schools Prophet Center** in partnership with PPS. As shown in their earlier Community Investment Plan, this could bring 1,000 new housing units—half of them affordable—alongside retail, cultural spaces, and public gathering areas, all designed to foster an inclusive, transit-oriented neighborhood. The **relocation of PPS within the Central City** in partnership with PPS could help to increase building occupancy and bring district employees to central areas. Thanks to an agreement with the PPS board, the AVT is on track to enter into a purchase and sale agreement on the Dr. Matthew Prophet Education Center parcel by the end of 2025.

Rendering of future Albina District. Image courtesy of Albina Vision Trust.



Rendering of future Albina Waterfront Park. Image courtesy of Albina Vision Trust.

¹¹. <https://www.albinavisioninc.com/albina-rose-alliance>



The **I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project** includes a continuous cap (or “highway cover”) that will stretch over I-5 to reconnect the historically Black neighborhood destroyed by the original construction of the freeway. The ODOT project is guided by the Historic Albina Advisory Board, which includes Black community leaders like AVT and other prominent organizations with historic ties to the area. The highway cover received \$450 million from USDOT through the federal Reconnecting Communities & Neighborhoods program, the largest such grant awarded to any project in the United States. The I-5 Rose Quarter project also secured an additional \$250M in state funding in January 2025.

The Moda Center is set to welcome **Portland's new WNBA team** in 2026, marking a historic moment for the city's sports culture. A **long-overdue renovation of the Moda Center**—its first in nearly 30 years—along with **updates to the adjacent Veterans Memorial Coliseum** will modernize these iconic venues, enhance the fan experience, improve accessibility, and advance sustainability.



AVT and the City of Portland have a vision for a **Waterfront Park** that will restore long-denied riverfront access to the eastside while creating a vibrant, inclusive public space that benefits the redeveloped surrounding neighborhood and nearby arenas. Portland City Council has furthered this work by providing funding to city partners and AVT for a Lower Albina Waterfront Study. The study considers the feasibility of redevelopment of the Waterfront site to host a publicly accessible arts hub, waterfront open space, and other uses. Investments in park operations will ensure that the park remains a welcoming, well-maintained, and accessible resource for generations to come.

PROJECT KEY


The region's shared gathering place

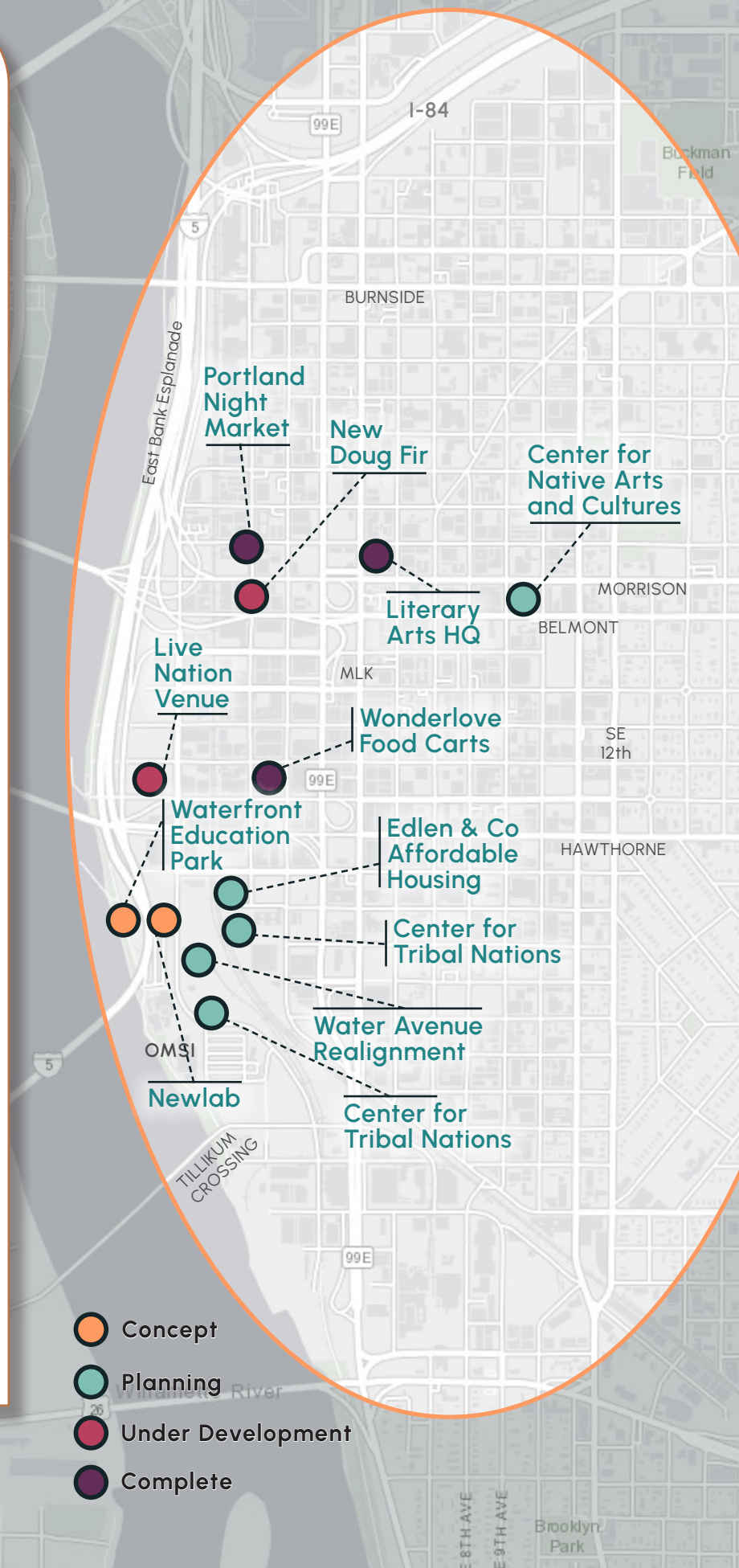
Complete urban neighborhoods

Hub of innovation and opportunity

The Central Eastside, located along the east bank of the Willamette River, has historically been an industrial hub characterized by warehouses and manufacturing facilities. In recent years, it has blended its industrial roots with new restaurants, microbreweries, boutiques, and riverside recreation.

Notable destinations include OMSI, the **Portland Night Market** (which occurs about every two months) and the new **Wonderlove Food Carts**, which features a three-level shipping container bar. In 2024, **Literary Arts** relocated to a 14,000-square-foot headquarters in Portland's Central Eastside Industrial District and features a bookstore, café, classrooms, event areas, and a recording studio. The OMSI District will bring together innovation, culture, arts, and science learning in Portland's Central City. This 24-acre, transit-oriented development will feature a mix of housing, commercial space, and public amenities. Plans include **1,200 new housing units**—both market-rate and affordable—along with over **11,000 new jobs**, sustainability-focused infrastructure, and a unique public learning ecosystem. To bring this vision to life, investment in core infrastructure, including streets and utilities, is essential.

-  Concept
-  Planning
-  Under Development
-  Complete



OMSI/Central Eastside

Projects THROUGH 2026

Led by Beam and Colas Development, the **Live Nation Venue at Workshop Blocks** will add a 3,500-seat concert hall, filling a long-standing gap in Portland's music scene for midsize venues. Construction begins in 2025, completing in 2027.

Doug Fir will open in the former Le Bistro Montage space in summer 2025. The new venue will feature upgraded sound, better parking, and a basement bar.

Newlab is evaluating an investment in the Central Eastside to launch a place-based venture platform that scours the globe for the best start-ups, attracts them to a place, and supports their success with access to purpose-built prototyping facilities, capital, and major corporate partners for piloting. It could attract dozens of top cleantech start-ups to the OMSI district.

Projects 2027 AND BEYOND

The **Waterfront Education Park** is a collaboration with the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission and will feature riparian restoration, outdoor programming, science education, and urban plazas wrapped in Indigenous environmental stewardship.

The first 120-unit **affordable housing development** is being led by Edlen & Co and partners Hacienda CDC, Holst Architects, and Colas Construction. OMSI estimates it will be built in 2027, depending on funding availability.

The **Center for Tribal Nations** will restore Native peoples' connection with the Willamette River while providing spaces for gatherings, business, education, and sustainable community connection.

The **Center for Native Arts and Culture** will serve as the Native Arts and Culture Foundation's new headquarters and will include exhibition and event spaces, areas for artmaking, cultural practices, and ceremonies, fostering a hub for Indigenous artists.

OMSI District renderings courtesy of OMSI

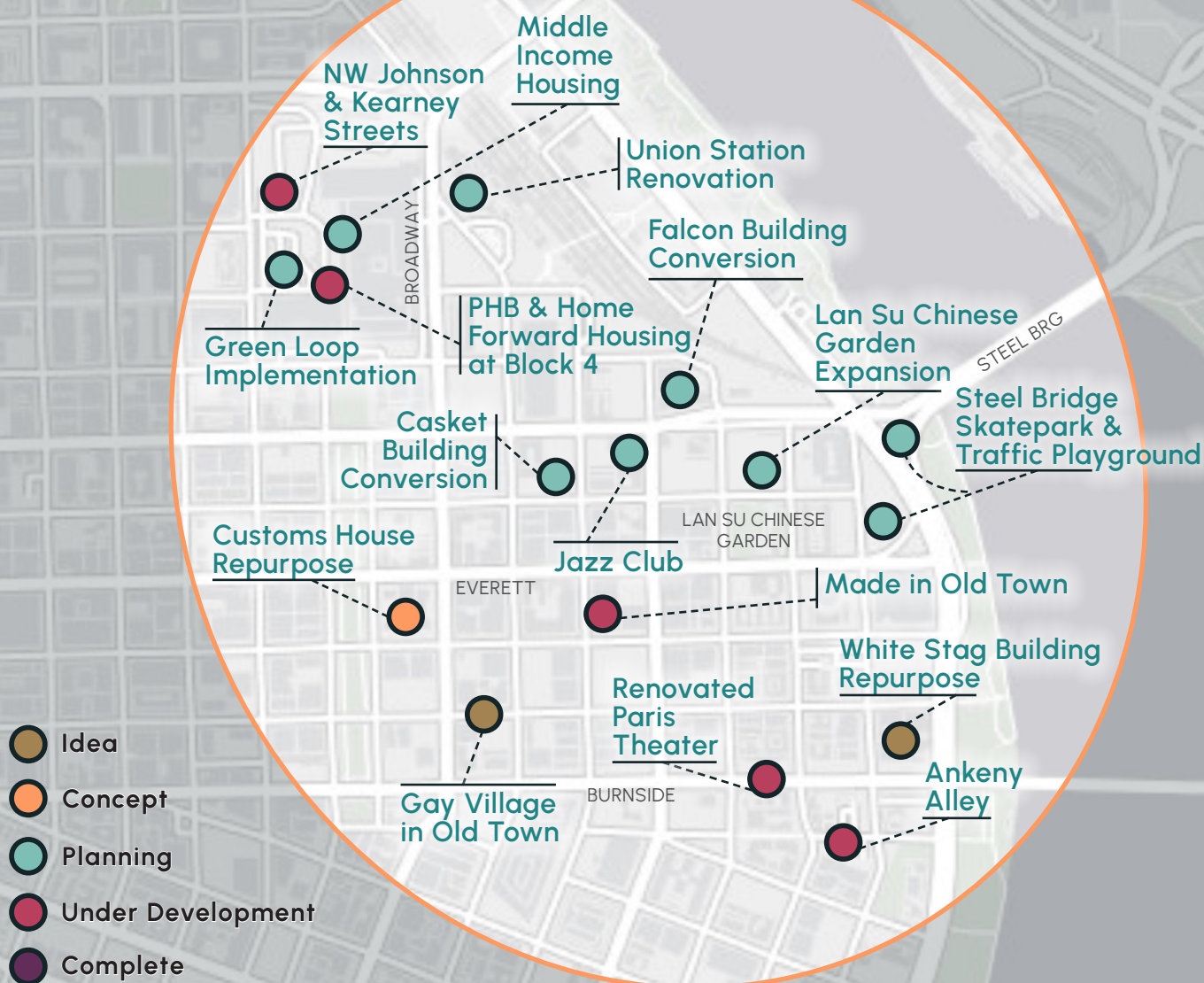


PROJECT KEY

The region's shared gathering place

Complete urban neighborhoods

Hub of innovation and opportunity



Old Town has long been a district of contrasts—home to historic architecture, deep cultural roots, and emerging businesses, yet also impacted by homelessness, addiction, and public safety concerns.

Post-pandemic, it remains a hub for Portland's Chinese American and Japanese American communities, with institutions like the [Lan Su Chinese Garden](#) and [Japanese American Museum of Oregon](#) as anchors. It's also home to essential social services that support Portland's most vulnerable residents. And now, it's home to new organizations working to promote innovation and new community events like the night market, which will operate in Summer 2025.

At the same time, Old Town's struggles create a barrier between downtown and thriving districts like the Pearl, Slabtown, and Northwest 23rd. Burnside, instead of connecting neighborhoods, often divides them. The [Burnside Bridge reconstruction project](#) will last from 2027 to 2031 and will create challenges for several areas that have been working to rebuild. Reintegrating Old Town requires investment in safety, urban design, and ground floor activation that draws people through rather than around the district.

Old Town & the Broadway Corridor

Momentum is building. Investments in the adjacent **Broadway Corridor** project are bringing jobs and housing for people at all income levels, while new retail, restaurants, and cultural investments signal confidence in Old Town's future. Strategic public investments in safety and key redevelopment sites will be critical to sustaining this progress.

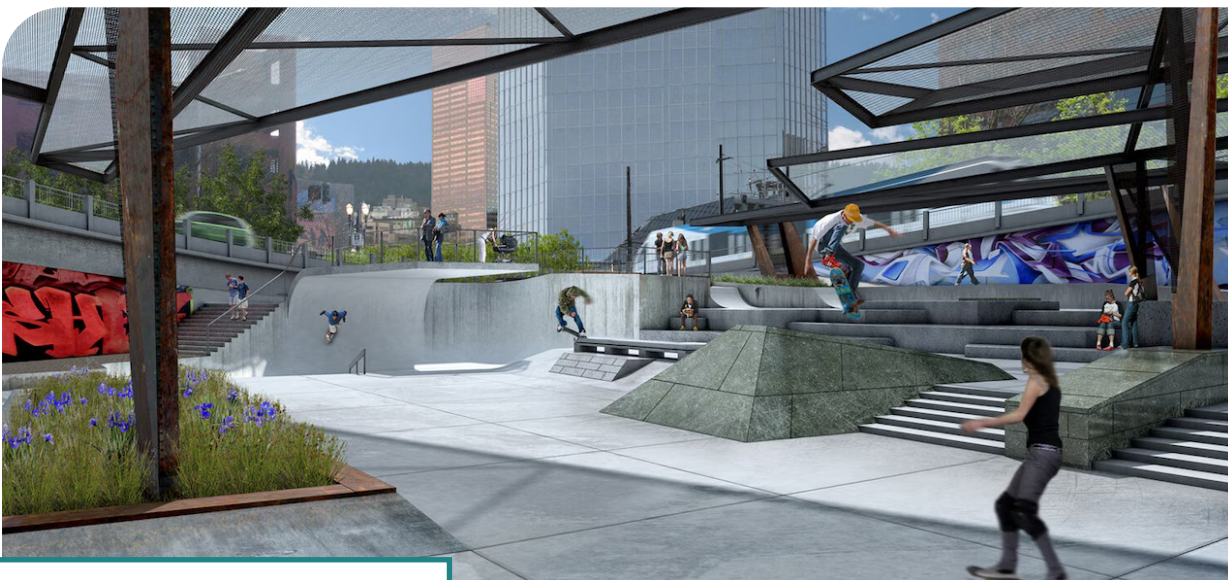
The district will succeed when it attracts a steady flow of residents, visitors, and businesses, filling vacant spaces and restoring a sense of energy. With focused investment and leadership, Old Town can reconnect to the city's economic core and reclaim its place as a center of culture, commerce, and community.

Projects THROUGH 2026

The 34-acre **Broadway Corridor project** offers the potential to create nearly four million square feet of new economic, business, social and community development opportunities, including over 2,000 new units of mixed-income housing. The project is at the heart of a transportation network with multiple light rail, streetcar, and bus stops within 1/8 of a mile of the site, as well as regional connections via Union Station.

PBOT is constructing **two new streets, NW Johnson and Kearney Streets**, that will connect Jamison Park to Union Station's front door. Portland Parks & Recreation is working with PLACE to design an **extension to the North Park Blocks** to include the "PNCA Block," the block between NW Hoyt and Glisan Streets. The design also includes park blocks further north, within the former USPS property, to be developed fully at a later date together with a Green Loop connection at the Broadway and Lovejoy ramps.

Future Steel Bridge Skate Park. Image courtesy of Dao Architecture.



PROJECT KEY

The region's shared gathering place

Complete urban neighborhoods

Hub of innovation and opportunity

Old Town / Broadway

The Portland Housing Bureau, Home Forward, and Urban League are working on a **14-story affordable housing project** incorporating an Early Learning Center and Workforce Development Center on Block 4. In addition, Prosper Portland is working with RelatedNW to advance a proposed **200+ unit middle-income housing project** at NW Johnson and 9th Avenue. The building will achieve net-zero energy and offer on-site construction training opportunities, helping to grow a diverse green construction workforce through a partnership with Constructing Hope and Oregon Tradeswomen.

There's growing support for **further investments in Ankeny Alley**, transforming it into a European-style pedestrian zone with outdoor dining, markets, and events with the recent opening of the Ankeny Alley Experience. Led by the Ankeny Alley Association, this corridor can provide a pedestrian connection from the waterfront to Big Pink.

Creative Homies is planning for a **new jazz club** in the basement of the Horizon Enterprise Building at NW 4th and NW Glisan.

No Vacancy leverages vacant spaces to springboard Portland's creative small business community. The pilot project is activating ground floor storefronts in Old Town. No Vacancy provides access to resources, technical support, and connections to new and existing businesses across the Old Town community. After stores open in 2025, project leaders plan to scale to Central City and other locations.

Launching in 2025, **Made in Old Town** is a planned hub for innovation in the design and production of footwear and apparel that will provide the resources for brands and suppliers to reimagine the industry. As a development project, it provides a new economic driver for Old Town, with partnerships across academia and social services. The project builds on Oregon's dominance in the athletic and outdoor gear industry.



Broadway Corridor rendering of NW Johnson



Broadway Corridor Parcel 4A, Affordable

At its pop up markets, **My People's Market** has grown to 150 businesses that have been drawing thousands of shoppers and visitors to Old Town.



Street. Image courtesy of ZGF Architects.



le Housing. Image courtesy of Holst.

Burnside Bridge in Portland, Oregon, is undergoing a reconstruction to ensure it can withstand a major earthquake, addressing its current vulnerability to seismic events. The project, estimated at \$895 million, is slated to begin construction in 2026, with completion expected by 2031. The five-year reconstruction period could provide an opportunity to **reimagine Burnside** and better connect Old Town and Downtown, as PSU's Better Block PDX program has done. Supporting Old Town businesses during construction of the bridge will be critical to the future success of these businesses and the broader district.

This neighborhood is known for its dense concentration of dance clubs and late-night venues that draw both locals and visitors seeking evening entertainment. The **Paris Theater's renovation** by the Can Can Culinary Cabaret will restore the oldest burlesque theater in the United States, further bolstering downtown's nightlife. In 2024, the gay nightclub **Badlands** opened in the former Embers building, which had been vacant since 2018. This area offers the potential for a unified vision of Old Town's Gay Village as a hub for queer nightlife, culture, and community connection.

To further enhance the city's after-dark appeal, **appointing a Night Mayor** could be instrumental. This role has been successfully implemented in cities like Amsterdam, London, and New York, where Night Mayors have worked to promote collaboration between businesses, cultural venues, and law enforcement, creating safer and more vibrant nighttime scenes. This person could also work to support restaurants hoping to extend their dining hours coinciding with major events and weekends.

PROJECT KEY

The region's shared gathering place

Complete urban neighborhoods

Hub of innovation and opportunity

Old Town / Broadway

Projects 2027 AND BEYOND

The **Lan Su Chinese Garden** is seeking to expand onto a Prosper Portland–owned block north of its current location, offering visitors and the community more opportunities to engage with Chinese heritage, arts, and cuisine. The expansion will feature additional gardens, classrooms, a banquet hall, retail space, a gallery, and an expanded café. This work builds on more recent investments at the Garden, including a new teahouse and a greenhouse as an interim use on the future expansion site.

Old Town is set to welcome the **Steel Bridge Skatepark** in 2029, a 35,000–square–foot facility that will provide a premier space for skaters of all levels and will also provide a **transportation connection between Old Town and the waterfront on NW Flanders Street**.

Backed by \$15 million in System Development Charges, the Friends of Steel Bridge Skatepark is leading this effort, which will provide more all–ages and all–skills recreation opportunities in the Central City, including a scooter/bike skills area for small children and a playground developed in conjunction with the Old Town community.



Portland's O



Working Together to Bring People Back to the Central City

Across the Central City, public and private partners are helping bring people back. Enhanced Service Districts are focused on keeping streets clean, adding public art, and making spaces feel safe and welcoming. Business and community groups are organizing events like My People's Market and the Winter Ice Rink, and keeping places like Director Park and Pioneer Courthouse Square active year-round. Prosper Portland, the ESDs, small businesses, and PSU are working on retail activation. The City's Office of Events and Film is proposing funding to help more events grow and succeed with grants and hands-on support. We are rebuilding the social capital that became frayed during the pandemic.



Old Town



Lan Su Garden Expansion rendering. Image courtesy of Lan Su Gardens.

The historic **Union Station** requires approximately \$250 million in upgrades, with approximately 1/3 of those costs related to seismic and other renovations of the building and 2/3 of those costs related to platform, accessibility, and track improvements. Amtrak, the primary tenant, had previously expressed interest but has paused discussions due to funding uncertainties.

Some of Portland's most historic properties could find new futures if the right partners step up. The **White Stag Building** and **Customs House** (a 1901 Beaux-Arts landmark) stand vacant or underutilized, offering opportunities for adaptive reuse, creative workspaces, or mixed-income housing. Prosper Portland owns several blocks in the area, and local businesses and residents would like to see them redeveloped, with a focus on adding market-rate and middle-income housing in the district.

Planning is currently underway for the **extension of the North Park Blocks** through the Broadway Corridor. The block in front of PNCA will be built first in 2027.

One way to bring more activity back downtown is to add residents. The **Casket Building** and **Falcon Building** are being converted into housing, creating a model for how historic structures can be repurposed into modern, urban living spaces.

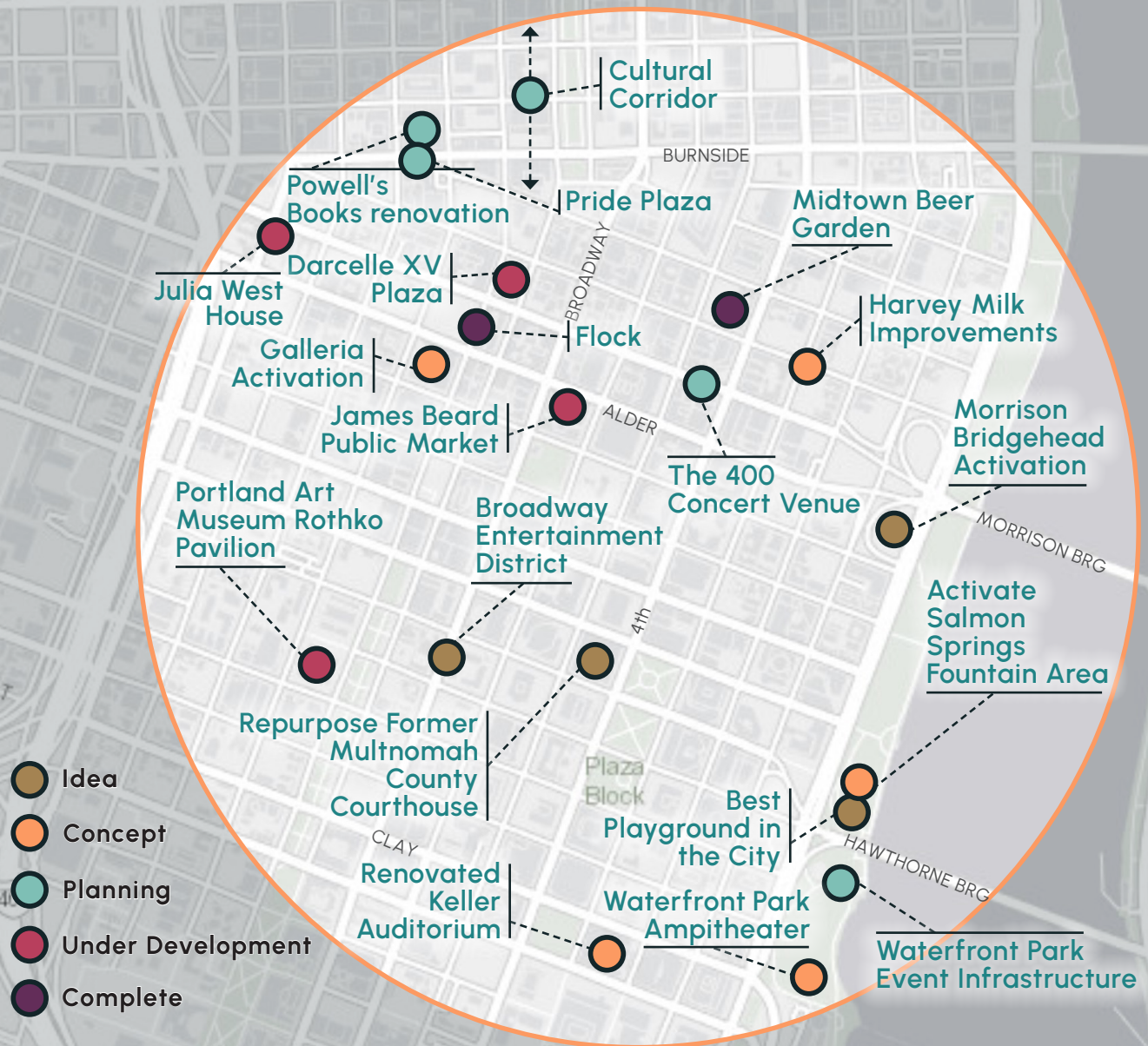
The former flour milling facility, **Centennial Mills**, was purchased in December 2024. Mixed-use redevelopment options are being explored on the site.

PROJECT KEY

The region's shared gathering place

Complete urban neighborhoods

Hub of innovation and opportunity



Portland's downtown core took the brunt of the pandemic's economic disruptions, and its recovery has lagged behind the rest of the city.

The rapid shift to remote and hybrid work hollowed out the daily workforce that once fueled restaurants, retailers, and transit ridership. Office vacancies climbed as employers downsized or abandoned space altogether, leaving fewer workers and visitors to support the local economy. At the same time, Portland struggled with rising homelessness, public safety concerns, and visible disorder—challenges that further eroded confidence in downtown as a place to live, work, and invest.

To stabilize and reposition downtown for the long term, it must transition from a predominantly business district to a **complete neighborhood**—one that attracts and retains residents, tourists, and eventgoers. Increasing housing production, expanding office-to-residential conversions, and strengthening neighborhood amenities are critical to reversing downtown's decline and restoring its role as the city's economic and cultural anchor. Downtown also has an opportunity to become a **true destination for families**, offering educational, recreational, and cultural experiences that encourage people of all ages to spend more time downtown.

Downtown

Projects THROUGH 2026

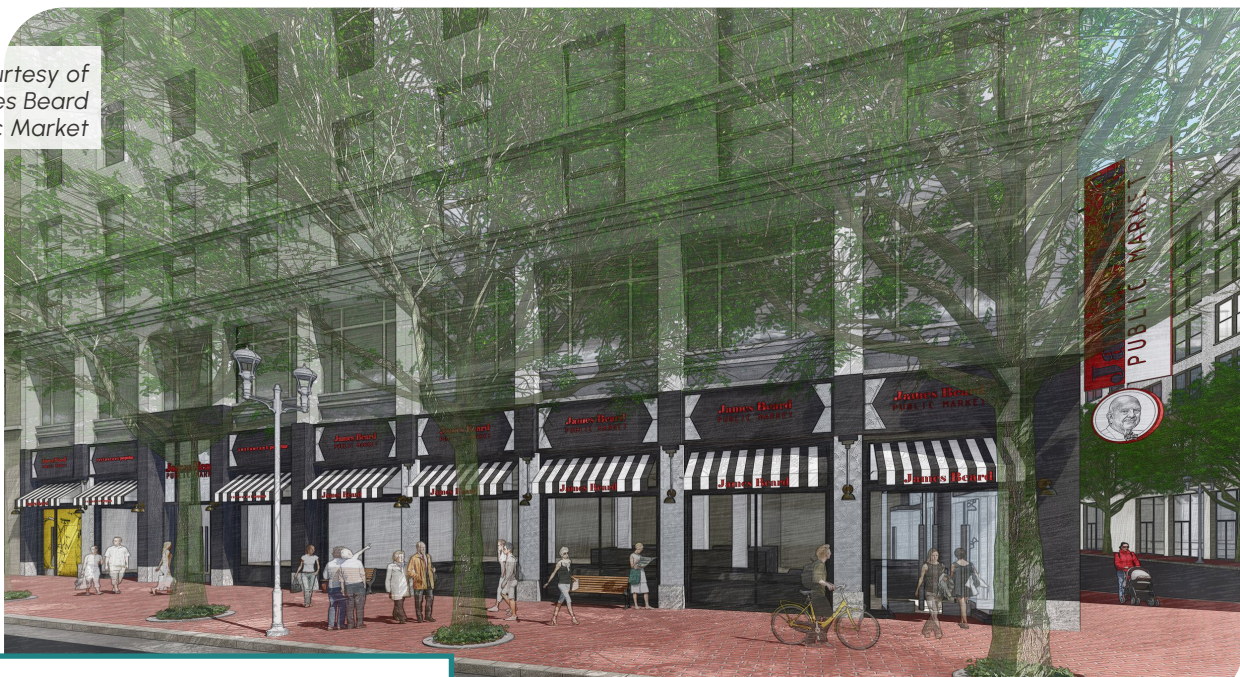
Portland's culinary scene is one of its greatest strengths, and the **James Beard Public Market** will be its centerpiece—a year-round destination featuring over 40 vendors offering local food and goods daily. The market has secured a downtown location and is set to open its first phase in late 2025.

To enhance the market's impact, the surrounding blocks on SW 6th and SW Alder could be branded as a "**market district**," with placemaking improvements, curated retail, and coordinated events. **Flock**, which recently opened nearby on the ground floor of the Ritz on the Green Loop with public support, adds to this momentum, positioning the area as a growing food and beverage hub.

Building on this foundation, efforts should focus on attracting well-known Oregon brands to establish a stronger culinary presence downtown, such as Salt & Straw, Tillamook, and local breweries. Interest is already growing, with restaurants like Nodoguro considering locations near the market.

The Portland Art Museum is nearing completion of its transformative expansion and renovation, one of the largest capital investments in the arts in Oregon's history. With the **Rothko Pavilion** as the centerpiece, this project adds nearly 100,000 square feet, connecting the Museum's historic buildings, creating new galleries to showcase more of its collection, and enhancing accessibility across the campus. The Museum anticipates welcoming 400,000 visitors in the first year following its grand opening, planned for late 2025.

Image Courtesy of
James Beard
Public Market



PROJECT KEY

The region's shared gathering place

Complete urban neighborhoods

Hub of innovation and opportunity

Downtown

Portland's public spaces are being redesigned to reflect its culture and history. The **Darcelle XV Plaza** and **Pride Plaza** will honor Portland's LGBTQ+ legacy with public art, performances, and gathering areas. Following the 2018 renaming of Harvey Milk Street to celebrate the LGBTQ+ icon, the **Harvey Milk Streetscape Project** aims to transform part of downtown into a vibrant LGBTQ+ cultural corridor. The City was **awarded ARPA money** to invest streetscape improvements, signage, and connectivity, but the project has not commenced.

The 400, a project at SW 4th & Washington led by Christopher Pfeifer, will feature a main-floor music venue and an underground speakeasy. This is close to the half-block **Midtown Beer Garden**, which has provided a plethora of food offerings and entertainment on the site of a long-standing food cart pod. Public artist Mike Bennett will open an **immersive art experience** in Summer 2025 on the corner of SW Broadway and SW Alder, which adds to the existing art landscape in the area, including **Roboto Octopodo**.

Portland has more visual art venues within walking distance of one another than any city on the West Coast. The **Cultural Corridor** stretches from Pacific Northwest College of Art along the Northwest Park Blocks to Portland State University located on the Southwest Park Blocks. Along the way are the Portland Art Museum, the Oregon Historical Society, the Chinese Garden, the Jewish Museum, and numerous galleries for a total number of thirty venues to experience visual art. NMWA Oregon, the Oregon Chapter of the National Museum for Women in the Arts, plans to activate the printed **arts map** of the Cultural Corridor and the NW and SW Park Blocks with activities for all ages in 2026.

The **Julia West House** is an upcoming 12-story, cross-laminated timber (CLT) building in West End, designed to provide 90 units of permanent supportive housing for houseless seniors and BIPOC individuals. McMenamins bought the **former Taft Home** and appears to be converting it into a new hotel. Powell's Books opened the **Powell's City of Books** in 1979, which attracts nearly 2 million visitors per year. Powell's is exploring additional culinary experiences and renovations to rooms, doubling down on their investment in downtown Portland.

Large-scale office-to-residential conversions often do not pencil due to the additional seismic upgrade requirements the City of Portland imposes on residential (above the fire, life, and safety standard) beyond the rest of the state. For structures that meet state seismic codes, the City should consider waiving these extra requirements. In addition, the City could target incentives such as tax abatements, TIF dollars, or low-interest financing to support financially viable projects.

A creative way to activate vacant office space downtown could be a **paid viewing deck** atop a high-rise like Wells Fargo, Pacwest, or Big Pink. Many cities have them, and they're consistently popular with visitors, offering stunning skyline and mountain views.

Downtown Portland attracts visitors from all over the country for our collection of stores and lack of a sales tax. However, our retail strategy has not been updated since 2009. Several groups working on retail activation are interested in an **updated retail strategy**, including working with Pioneer Place on their future plans and identifying the retail centers of gravity and capturing new opportunities such as breweries/taprooms, outlets for signature Portland food products, Uniqlo, Sur la Table, and a small-format urban IKEA. We should attract more luxury stores, given our lack of sales tax. The recent opening of Mahler's new store (selling Rolex and Tudor watches) and the **Ben Bridge Omega boutique and remodel** show there is demand for this.

Early-stage work on an **AI Tech Village** is exploring how Portland can become a regional hub for artificial intelligence and tech startups. Since the relocation of the courthouse and purchase of the site in 2018, the **Former Multnomah County Courthouse** and the **Gus Solomon Courthouse** have remained vacant.



Rothko Pavilion at the Portland Art Museum.
Courtesy of Hennebery Eddy Architects.



Julia West House, a cross-laminated timber building providing 90 units of Permanent Supportive Housing.
Courtesy of Community Development Partners.

PROJECT KEY

The region's shared gathering place

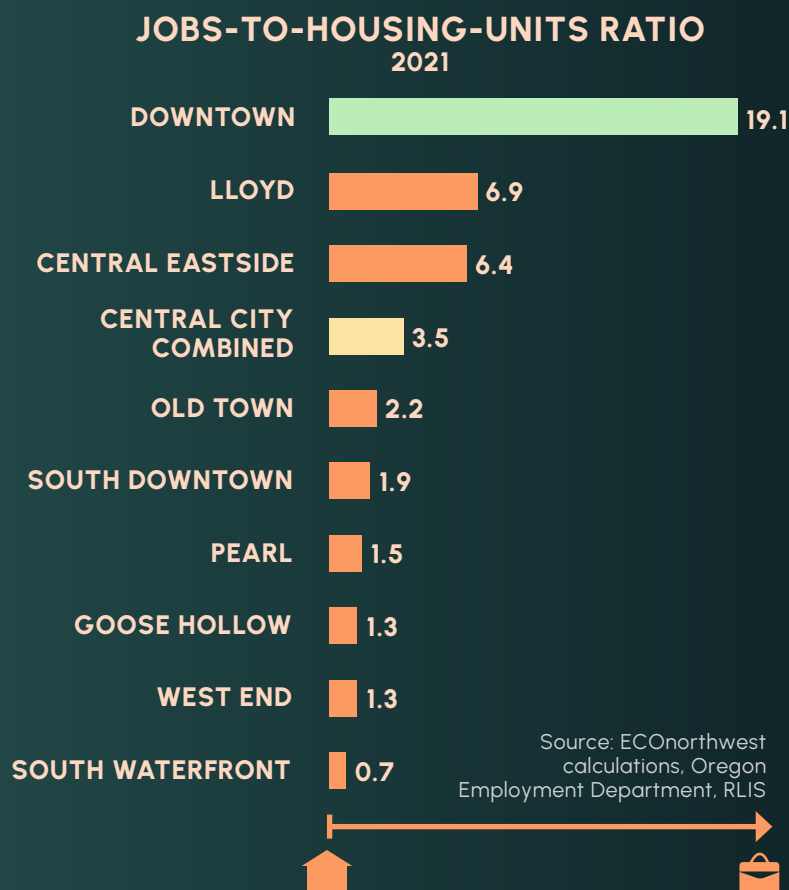
Complete urban neighborhoods

Hub of innovation and opportunity

Downtown

For decades, downtown has been dominated by office towers with very little housing, leading to a significant imbalance between jobs and residential units.

As of 2021, downtown had approximately 19 jobs for every home, reinforcing its role as the city's economic core but limiting residential development. In contrast, the Pearl District and South Waterfront have seen substantial housing growth. The Pearl has emerged as a major residential hub, with significant increases in housing density alongside retail and mixed-use development. The South Waterfront has also experienced a surge in residential construction, with the majority of its housing units occupied by renters. These areas reflect a shift toward mixed-use urban planning, accommodating both residents and businesses, in contrast to downtown's historically office-dominated landscape.



Projects 2027 AND BEYOND

A **Children's Museum** could anchor a new family-friendly hub, drawing visitors with interactive exhibits and hands-on learning.

After the Children's Museum in Washington Park closed, the [FLIP Children's Museum](#) rose to the occasion to provide educational museum experiences for kids in a smaller format throughout the region. In late 2024, the City of Hillsboro partnered to attract the museum's first permanent location to downtown Hillsboro in a City-leased space that had been home to artist studios. They will be looking for a new location in the Central City in coming years, and Central City champions should work to find a location to accommodate them.

Home to a vibrant concentration of arts institutions, the **Broadway Entertainment District** has the potential to become an even stronger cultural hub. With targeted placemaking investments, this area could enhance its identity, attract more visitors, and better support the local creative economy. The investments can be targeted. For example, the City should consider permanently closing Main Street between Broadway and Park to permit the construction of a glass-enclosed extension of the Schnitz. In addition, ensuring long-term upkeep and sustainable operations will allow both local and touring productions to use the facility effectively.

Removing the Morrison Bridge loop ramps, which were originally built for the 1960s Harbor Drive, would **open up the two sites for housing development** and bring sorely needed housing units to downtown or activate these areas for year-round visitor-focused uses that could complement Waterfront Park investments.

Other ideas under discussion include **activating the Galleria** (a prominent five-story, 195,000-square-foot office building) with a mix of national brands and locally owned businesses.



A Connected, Activated Waterfront Park

Waterfront Park is at a crossroads. The last master plan was developed more than 20 years ago. Today, the park lacks the infrastructure needed to support events and daily activation. The absence of connection across SW Naito Parkway has left prime riverfront real estate empty and underdeveloped. **But we have a rare opportunity to reimagine the entire stretch from the Steel Bridge to RiverPlace as a cohesive, world-class waterfront.**

Visionary waterfront projects like the Vancouver Waterfront, Seattle's new [Waterfront Park](#), Cincinnati's [Riverfront](#), and Nashville's [Riverfront Park](#) prove the return on investment on great waterfronts. Now it's Portland's turn. Several catalytic projects are already reshaping the waterfront, including the Burnside Bridge reconstruction, the new Steel Bridge Skate Park, and Portland Park's efforts to raise money to fund design of an amphitheater at the waterfront bowl. A revitalized Waterfront Park should be Portland's signature public space, offering everyday amenities for residents and visitors and a hub for cultural events.

Waterfront Park

Waterfront Park's current design was always meant to be the first phase: a linear park, basically a greening of Harbor Drive, with no connections to the city. It's time to rethink the park as a series of destinations—parks within the park—that can serve events but also other audiences: downtown residents, families, and other daily visitors looking to enjoy the Willamette River.

Reconnect Waterfront Park to Downtown

Naito Parkway limits the park's integration with the city's core. A reinvestment strategy must create stronger pedestrian and business connections as well as active ground floors on specific corridors on the west side of Naito with a mix of housing, retail, and community uses. This will make the park feel like a true extension of downtown.

Unify the Waterfront on Both Sides of the River

Waterfront Park should link seamlessly to South Waterfront, the OMSI District, and the Albina Vision Trust riverfront park. The park should connect to the water and the bridges through partnerships with groups like [Frog Ferry](#), the Willamette Light Brigade's [Bridge Lighting Initiative](#), and the [Human Access Project](#).

Make the Park a Daily Destination

Pioneer Courthouse Square and Director Park have shown the power of activation. Waterfront Park should follow suit with everyday activations, even in winter and on weekdays.

- ♦ **Transform the Salmon Springs Fountain Area** into an all-season attraction, with food vendors, seating, a playground, active recreation, and flexible event space.
- ♦ **Build waterfront playgrounds** to draw families downtown.
- ♦ **Expand recreation opportunities** with boat rentals and rebuild the dock south of the Burnside Bridge.
- ♦ **Explore management structures** to coordinate programming, activations, vendors, and security.

Strengthen Portland's Event Infrastructure

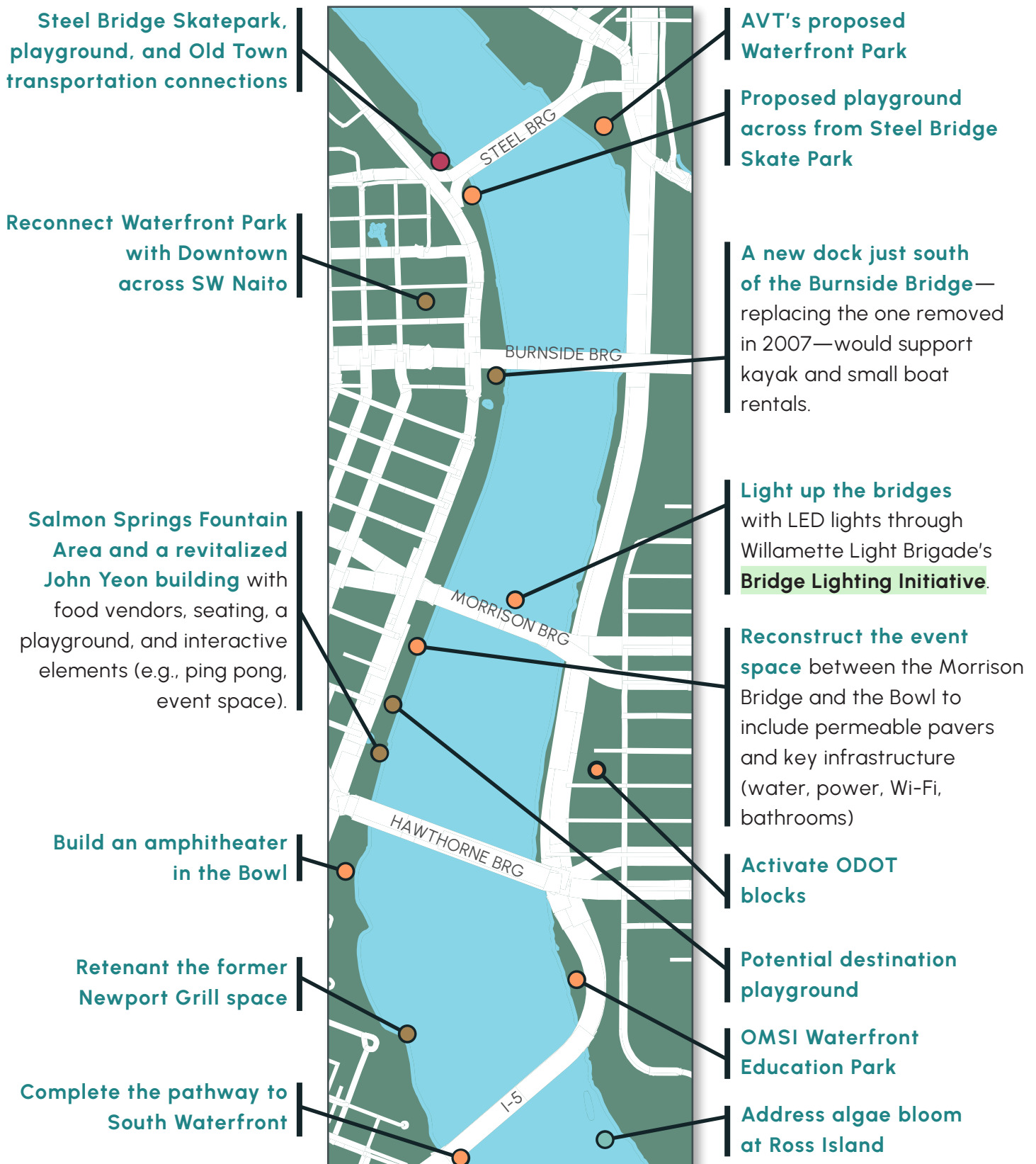
Portland's iconic events—Waterfront Blues Festival, Rose Festival, Pride, and Cinco de Mayo—bring vibrancy and economic impact. But event organizers must build infrastructure from scratch each year, driving up costs. Investments should include:

- ♦ **Dedicated hard-surface event space** for year-round events like winter markets and light festivals.
- ♦ **Permanent utilities** (bathrooms, power, water, and Wi-Fi) to support diverse event configurations.
- ♦ **An amphitheater in the Bowl**, realizing a vision first discussed in 2007. Portland Parks and Recreation secured a \$750k Metro grant to support a design competition.

Coordinate Investments and Improvements

Projects like the Steel Bridge Skate Park, Burnside Bridge, and PPR's planned design competition for an amphitheater need to be developed within a larger strategy to spur new development.

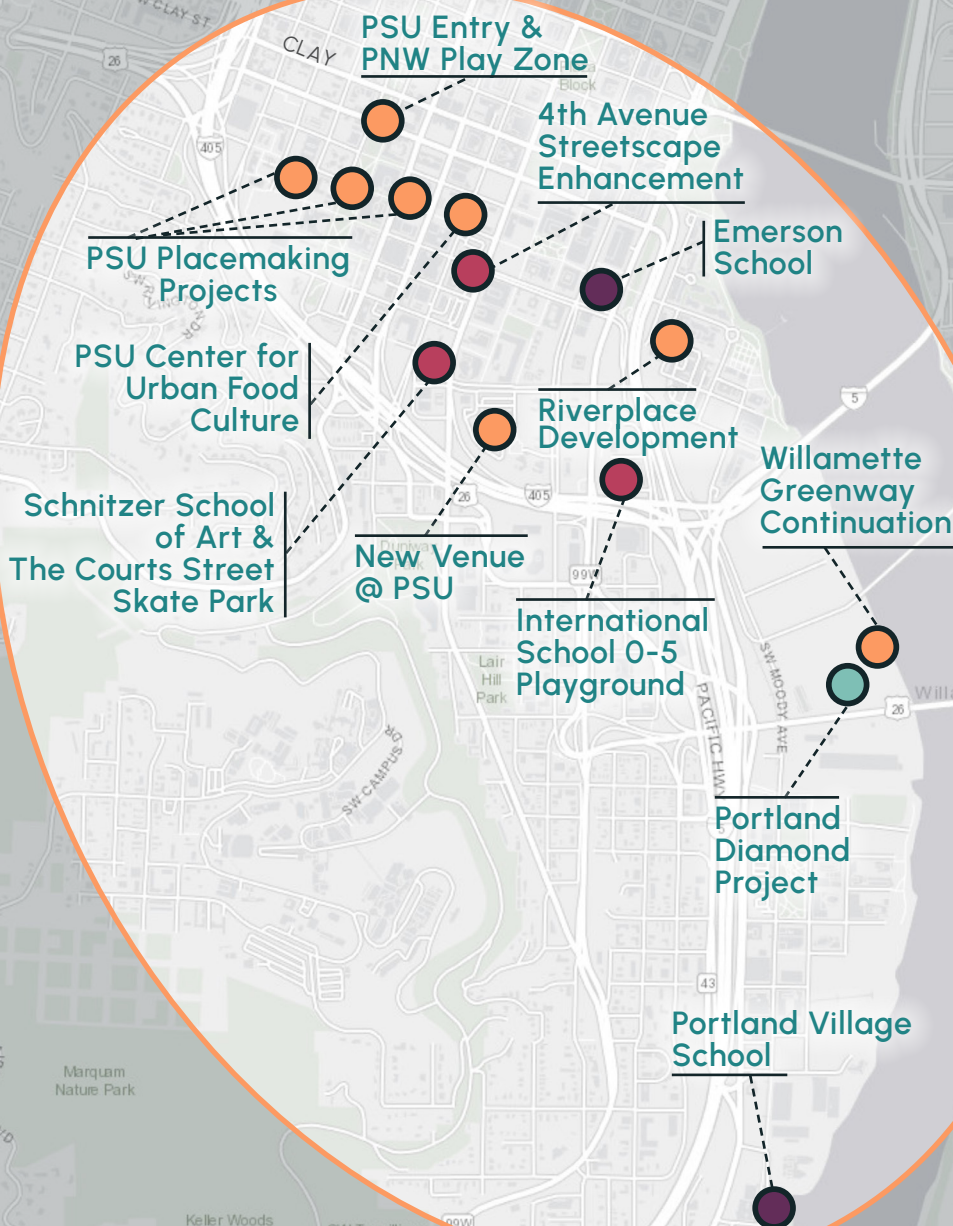
Big Ideas for Willamette Riverfront



Anchored by Portland State University, **South Downtown** is a regional educational and cultural hub with excellent multimodal transportation access, thousands of housing units, and concentration of arts-focused organizations.

Investments in new and existing schools have shown an innovative use of former office space, including **Emerson School**, **Portland Village School**, and an **expansion of the International School**, showing that the Central City is a place for education.

-  Idea
-  Concept
-  Planning
-  Under Development
-  Complete



South Downtown & South Waterfront

Projects THROUGH 2026

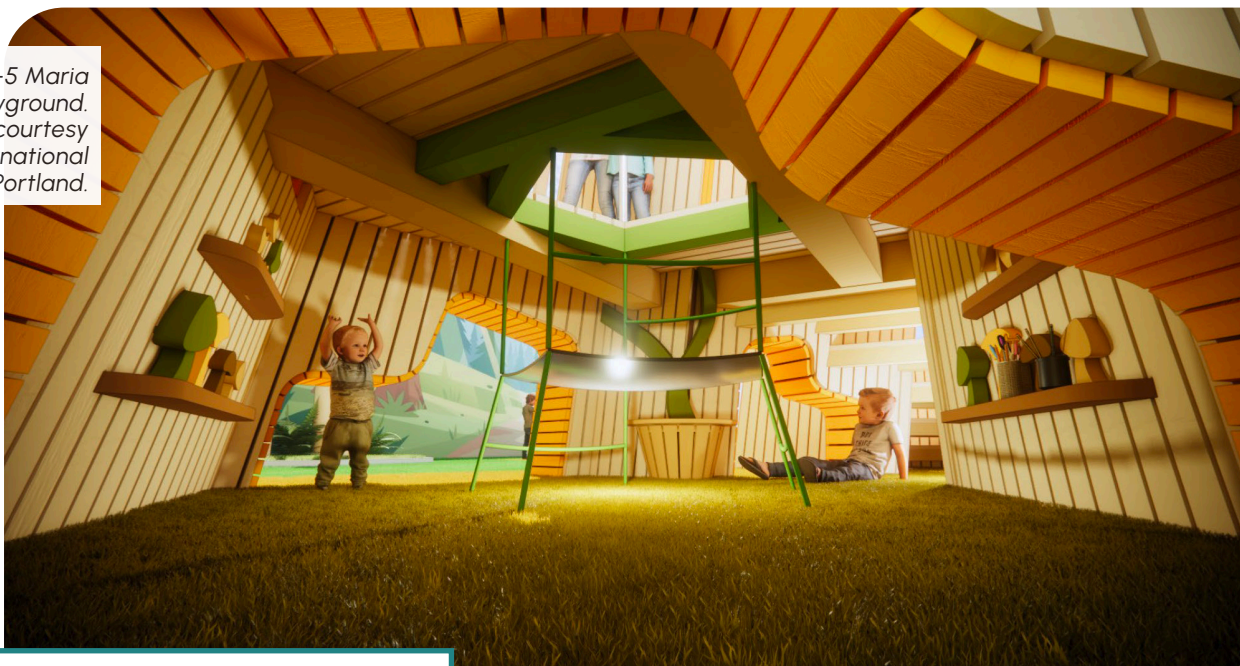
The **PSU Schnitzer School of Art + Art History + Design** is a new building for art, art history, and design programs opening in fall 2026 on the Park Blocks that will strengthen PSU's connection to the Portland Cultural Corridor.

As part of Central City in Motion, PBOT is leading the **repaving of SW Fourth Avenue from Lincoln to W Burnside streets** with safer crosswalks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, a protected bike lane, improved street lighting, and a business access and transit lane.

PSU announced a **550-bed student housing project** on the South Park Blocks in January 2025. The student housing building will open for fall term 2028.

The Courts Skatepark is a newly activated public space in Portland's Central City, designed to provide a dynamic, all-weather spot for skaters, BMX riders, and urban athletes. As part of the broader effort to bring more youth-friendly amenities downtown, it serves as both a recreational hub and a gathering space, contributing to the city's goal of making the Central City more inviting for all ages. The International School of Portland is planning **a world-class playground** for kids ages 0-5 on its campus that will be open to the public. It will be located near a Better Block PDX project to **redesign Sheridan Street**.

Portland State is embarking on a **retail activation strategy** to creatively tenant many of its vacant retail spaces. In addition, a **new food cart pod** is planned for the now-closed Wells Fargo building near many classrooms and homes in South Downtown.



Proposed 0-5 Maria Abad Playground. Image courtesy of International School of Portland.

PROJECT KEY

The region's shared gathering place

Complete urban neighborhoods

Hub of innovation and opportunity

South Downtown & South Waterfront

Projects 2027 AND BEYOND

Portland State University is reimagining its campus with public spaces and welcoming community hubs that enhance the student experience and strengthen PSU's role in downtown Portland. PSU is actively working on locations for new murals, scheduling a spring community convening event, and is fundraising for improvement ideas recommended by the **2024 PSU PLACE Matters Placemaking Project** that include a new South Park Blocks entrance at SW Market Street, a new student welcome center, upgrades to Montgomery Plaza, improved signage and wayfinding, new outdoor family-friendly spaces, and enhancing the PSU Oak Savanna located between SW 10th and 11th Avenues.

The Keller Auditorium is aging and in need of significant upgrades, raising questions about its long-term viability as Portland's premier large-scale performance venue. In October 2024, City Council approved **major renovations to Keller Auditorium** following the construction of a new **Performing Arts and Culture Center at PSU**. This investment will solidify PSU's role as a cultural and performance hub. The situation remains fluid as stakeholders evaluate funding, feasibility, operating considerations, and the broader vision for the city's cultural infrastructure.

The **Portland Diamond Project** signed a letter of intent to purchase Zidell Yards for the future baseball park, which would bring Major League Baseball to Portland's South Waterfront. With the Portland Diamond Project announcement, there is the potential to restart discussions to connect the **Willamette Greenway** from Waterfront Park to South Waterfront, as well as even more transit connections between SW Waterfront and downtown Portland.

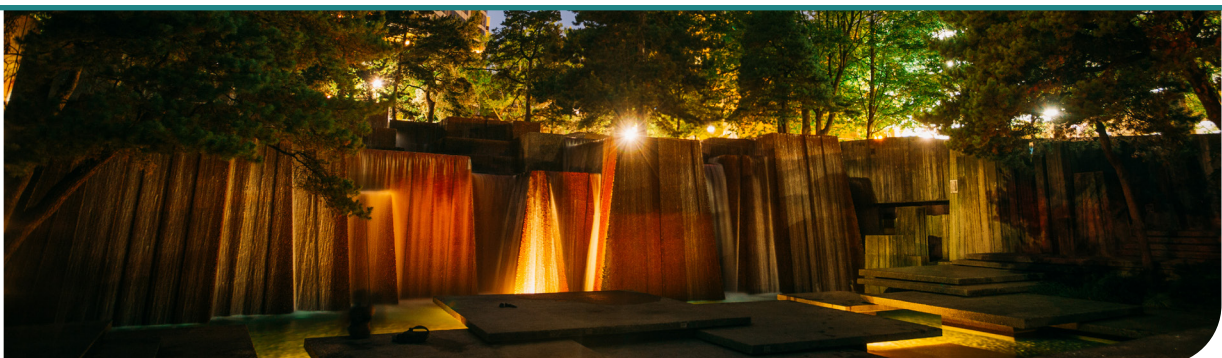
Frog Ferry proposes an electric passenger ferry service with a vision for nine stops from Vancouver, WA to Oregon City, OR. The first two stops will include Cathedral Park/St Johns to the SW Waterfront, for commuting, emergency response, climate mitigation, waterfront revitalization, and stewardship/educational opportunities. Operational within three years of funding (with opportunity for 80% infrastructure from the Federal Transportation Administration).

PROJECT KEY

The region's shared gathering place

Hub of innovation and opportunity

A complete urban neighborhood



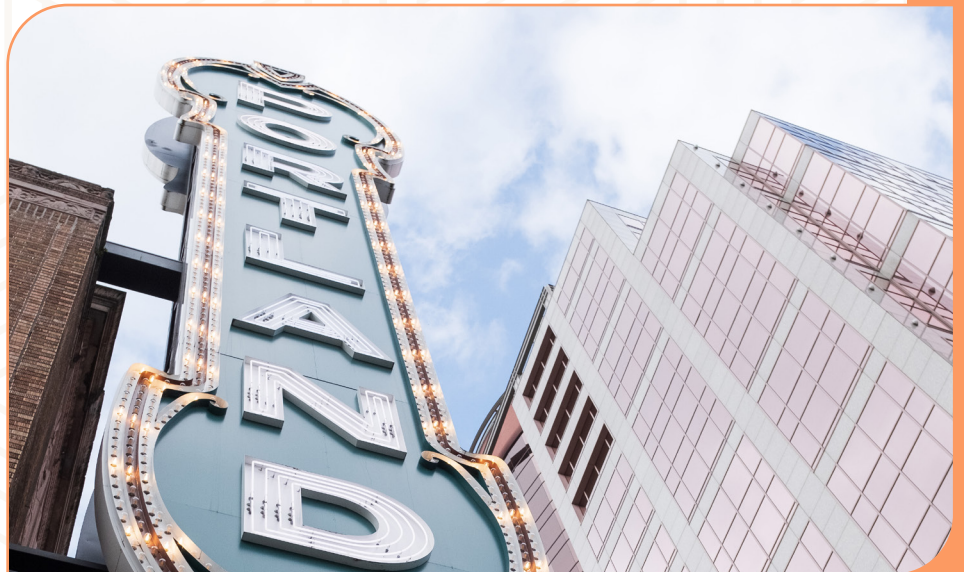
Keller
Fountain



PSU Placemaking:
Pulse Park.
Courtesy of
Walker Macy.



Rendering of Major
League Baseball Stadium
on Portland's waterfront.
Courtesy of Portland
Diamond Project.



Arlene Schnitzer
Concert Hall
Courtesy of Travel
Portland.

The Future of Central City Transportation

Streets and public spaces shape how neighborhoods feel. They offer quiet moments in residential areas and set the stage for lively storefronts, events, and everyday gathering. If Downtown Portland is going to thrive as a place to live, work, and visit, it needs a fresh take on how its streets and shared spaces look and function.

Across the Central City, the Portland Bureau of Transportation is stepping up to that challenge. From early ideas to projects already under construction, PBOT is working to create a street network that supports future development, energizes ground floors, and builds a sense of place through public life.

Some efforts are small but catalytic, like **Ankeny Alley** and **Pride Plaza**. These projects are designed to complement nearby businesses and create moments of vibrancy. Others are bigger investments in public infrastructure, including upgrades along **SW 4th Avenue downtown** and **NE Broadway** in partnership with **Albina Vision Trust**.

New connections are taking shape too. PBOT is rebuilding sections of the historic street grid, including **NW Johnson and Kearney Streets**, to extend the North Park Blocks and add new retail near Union Station. In other places, they're repurposing streets to make way for plazas, gathering spaces, and pedestrian life—especially **along the Green Loop**.



NW Johnson & Kearney Street Extension



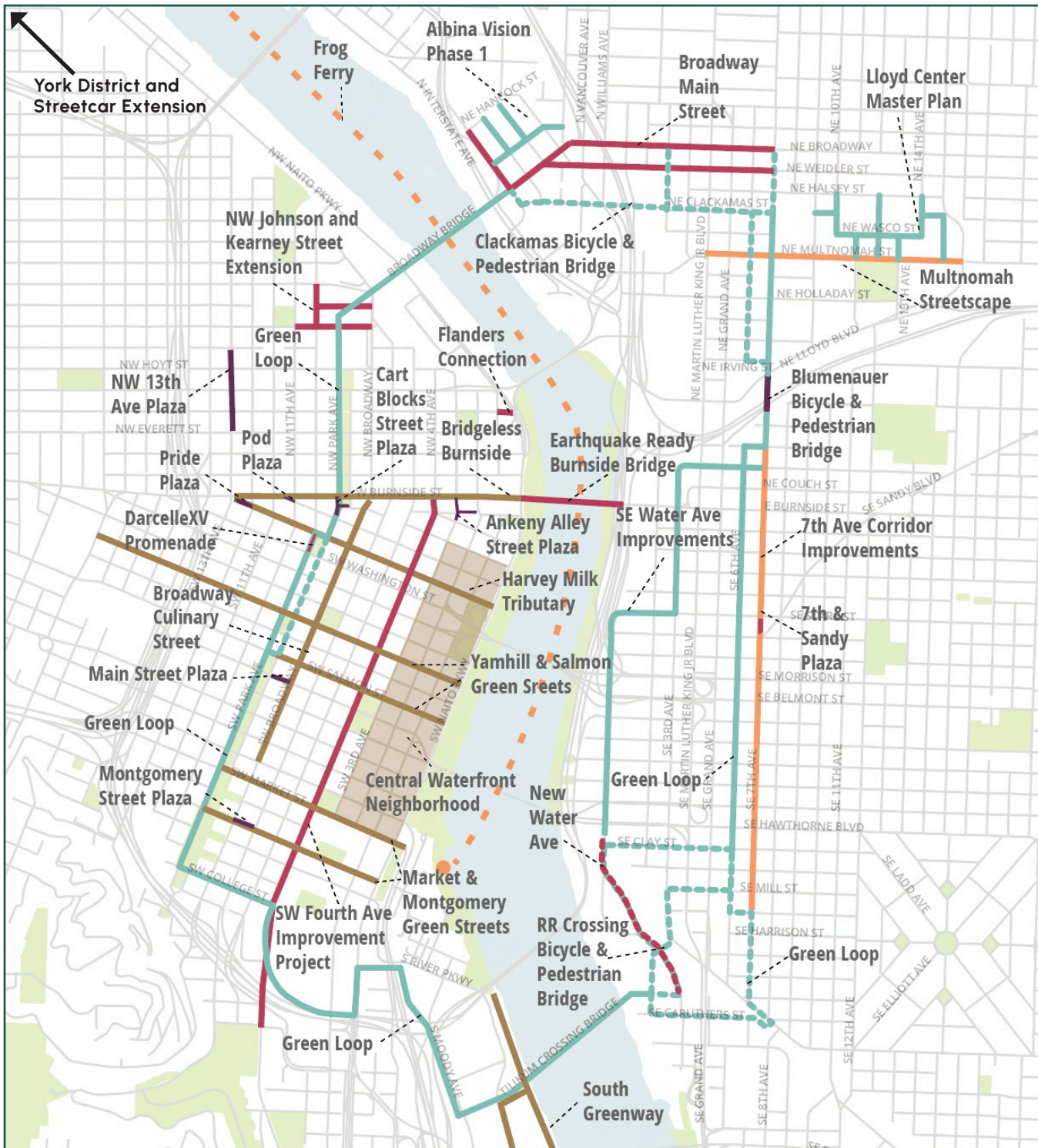
Green Loop Concept - South Park Blocks



Albina Waterfront - Larrabee Ave Public Open Space



SW Fourth Improvement Project



LEGEND

- **Idea:** Early-stage proposals under initial consideration.
- **Concept:** Emerging ideas with a rough outline of scope and intent.
- **Planning:** Actively being scoped, budgeted or scheduled for development.
- **Under Development:** Currently being designed, built, or implemented.
- **Recently Completed (2022-):** Fully finished and operational.



PBOT
PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION



A Path Forward

In the years leading up to the pandemic, Portland earned a reputation as a center of U.S. urban innovation—and it can again. The Central City's recovery requires sustained partnerships and focused attention on economic opportunities in the Central City.

A solid policy foundation

Long-term success depends on combining project investments with public policies that enable development, streamline processes, and create certainty for businesses and residents. Without a strong policy framework, investors will remain cautious and momentum will stall.

One of the most significant opportunities for alignment comes with Portland's 2025 governance transition. Charter reform is fundamentally changing how decisions are made at City Hall, shifting from a commissioner-led structure to a mayor-council system with a professional city administrator. This transition offers a rare opportunity to make downtown recovery a top priority within the city's restructured government. The Central City falls within three of the four new City Council Districts, meaning that our Council will need to collaborate effectively to make change. With clearer accountability and a more functional decision-making process, Portland can be more responsive to investment needs, implement long-term strategies, and create policies that support economic and residential growth. But this will only happen if downtown stakeholders engage early and assertively to shape the city's agenda.

Portland's past and current work to streamline process and development regulations supports these efforts and this vision. The upcoming Central City code amendment project further seeks to create flexibility and remove barriers to housing development, economic development, and small businesses success.

Several key policies—[Advance Portland](#), the [Housing Production Strategy](#), [Central City 2035](#), and [Portland's Tax Increment Financing \(TIF\) districts](#)—provide a policy foundation for economic revitalization and housing development. However, meaningful TIF revenue won't materialize for at least five years, and the City's budget shortfall may continue for years. In uncertain budget times, these tools will only drive real impact if they are well executed, aligned with private-sector investment, and leveraged to create sustained momentum.

New partnerships

For too long, we've leaned on the public sector to carry the weight of Central City's recovery. The private sector has invested—keeping businesses open, maintaining properties, and funding cleanup efforts—but we haven't seen the kind of coordinated public-private action that moves the needle at scale. With city and state budgets stretched thin, it's time to rethink the approach.

The most effective public-private partnerships aren't about philanthropy; they're about aligning incentives, reducing risk, and structuring investments so that the private sector sees a return while advancing public goals. Portland has done this before—turning a freeway into Waterfront Park, building a streetcar system when other cities stalled, and leveraging tax increment financing to drive neighborhood growth. The next wave of investment won't come from one-off deals but from structured partnerships that make big moves possible: unlocking underused real estate, converting office buildings into housing, and accelerating projects that bring people downtown.

"Great cities are not inherited.
They are made, and remade, by
successive generations."
— Rukaiyah Adams

A laser focus on the center

The task force convened to address the ten neighborhoods most affected by the abrupt shift to remote and hybrid work. Focused attention paid off: conditions are now more favorable for recovery.

But recovery isn't the same as stability. Too many offices remain vacant, too many streets are quiet, and too many storefronts are dark. And as the task force concludes its work, no single agency or organization is positioned to provide the sustained, disproportionate attention the Central City will require over the next several years.

The Portland Metro Chamber (PMC) and Greater Portland Inc. have led key recruitment and activation efforts, but both have regional economic mandates. PMC's Enhanced Service Districts (Downtown Portland Clean & Safe, Central Eastside Together, and Go Lloyd ESD) have been critical to early recovery efforts, programming key spaces, and supporting successful retail pop-up programs, but their scope is heavily weighted toward public safety and cleanliness. Portland oversees downtown economic strategies, received City Council approval in 2024 for three new Central City TIF districts, and owns key properties, but its focus is citywide.

Unlike Seattle, Denver, and Miami, Portland lacks a dedicated Central Business District (CBD) economic development entity. The Association for Portland Progress (APP) filled that role from 1983 until it merged with the Chamber of Commerce in 2002 to form what is now the Portland Business Alliance. While a full reestablishment of APP's capabilities may not be necessary, a structured, CBD-focused entity is.



A PLACE TO START: **The Central City Roundtable**

A collaborative, structured, and professionally supported Central City Roundtable should be the next step—a coalition of business leaders, civic organizations, policymakers, and philanthropic partners committed to revitalizing Portland's urban core.

The Roundtable would:

- ◆ Champion downtown recovery efforts and ensure sustained leadership.
- ◆ Track progress toward measurable goals and hold stakeholders accountable.
- ◆ Elevate emerging projects by ensuring they receive visibility, funding, and coordination.

It would serve as a catalyst for investment and innovation, ensuring that Portland's Central City remains a dynamic hub for commerce, culture, and community life.





The Roundtable

Purpose

Portland's Central City is at a turning point, and its long-term recovery demands leadership that cuts across sectors.

The proposed Central City Roundtable is an independent coalition of civic, community, business, and philanthropic leaders committed to ensuring Portland's Central City recovers, evolves, and thrives. The Roundtable will serve as a steward of the recovery vision outlined in All in on Portland's Central City, aligning resources, connecting champions to decision-makers, and holding stakeholders accountable for progress. The Roundtable is not a governmental or planning body but a civic leadership group charged with mobilizing leadership, leveraging public and private investment, and delivering results that reinforce the Central City's role as the economic, cultural, and social heart of the region.

How would the Roundtable differ from existing organizations?

The Central City Roundtable is designed to fill a gap in Portland's recovery efforts—not to duplicate or replace existing organizations. While groups like **Prosper Portland, Clean & Safe, Portland Metro Chamber (PMC), Greater Portland Inc., and the TIF district Community Advisory Committees** each serve critical roles, no single entity is responsible for aligning efforts, tracking long-term progress, and ensuring that Central City recovery is sustained over the next decade.

Why now? Portland's downtown has always been a hub of culture, commerce, and connection. However, structural changes in work patterns, commercial real estate dynamics, and urban livability demand a new approach to sustaining its vitality. The Roundtable will ensure that emerging projects receive the necessary attention, that measurable goals are in place to track recovery, and that innovative ideas gain traction by connecting them with the right partners.

How would the group interact with the Central City TIF Committees?

The Roundtable could establish a standing commitment to information sharing with the Central City TIF Committees. A liaison role would be created within the Roundtable to attend TIF Committee meetings as an observer and report back on potential areas for coordination. In turn, TIF Committees would receive regular updates on broader economic trends, business climate insights, and potential funding opportunities that could complement their investments. This approach ensures transparency and informal collaboration without adding new governance layers.

Charge to the Central City Roundtable (2025–2030)

The Central City Roundtable is tasked with stewarding the recovery framework outlined in this document by focusing on three core objectives:

1. Stewards the Vision for the Central City

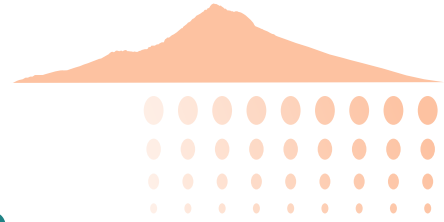
- ◆ **Host quarterly roundtables:** Gather stakeholders to steward the vision, evaluate progress, troubleshoot barriers, and identify new opportunities for collaboration. This would include government agencies, business leaders, philanthropists, and developers.
- ◆ **Maintain focus on the key recovery pillars:** gathering and connection, economic innovation, and livability.
- ◆ **Set clear metrics for success:** Establish quantitative targets to measure progress, including increased foot traffic and public space activation, reduction in office vacancy rates, growth in downtown residential population, and enhanced safety perceptions (daytime and nighttime benchmarks).

2. Elevate Emerging Ideas and Connect Champions

- ◆ **Act as a civic accelerator** to identify and support high-impact projects in commercial revitalization, arts and culture, and placemaking and ensure they gain momentum.
- ◆ **Support champions with resources and connections:** Facilitate introductions between project leads and investors, policymakers, and civic leaders. Align city, state, and federal policies with investments that accelerate downtown's transformation.
- ◆ **Quarterly public reporting** to ensure transparency and urgency in execution.
- ◆ **Maintaining a map and repository** of ongoing initiatives and ideas in the Central City.

3. Track Recovery Metrics

- ◆ **Issue progress reports:** Provide transparent updates on achievements, challenges, and course corrections. Explore developing an accessible platform tracking data on commercial leasing, housing starts, business growth, and public safety.



Implications for Operating Structure

The Central City Roundtable should operate as an independent civic organization, with structured leadership and working groups aligned with key priorities. It will work in close collaboration with public agencies but remain nimble and responsive to the needs of the private sector and community leaders.

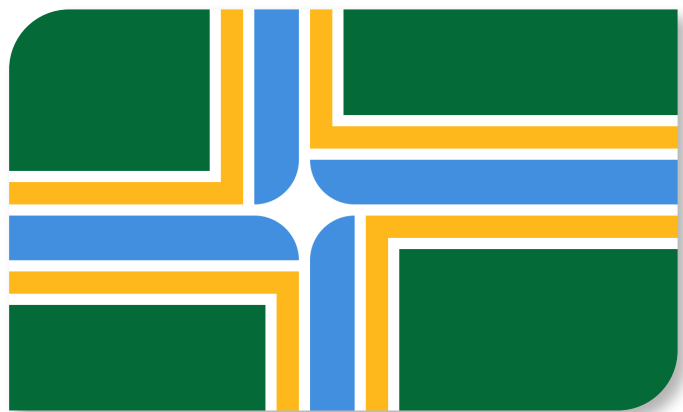
Governance and Membership

- ◆ **Leadership Team:** A core steering committee will guide strategy, set priorities, and ensure execution.
- ◆ **Working Groups:** Dedicated groups could focus on specific areas such as business recruitment, cultural activation, and housing innovation.
- ◆ **Term-Based Membership:** To balance continuity with fresh perspectives, membership could be structured with staggered three-year terms.
- ◆ **Staffing Support:** A dedicated executive director or program coordinator will manage operations, track progress, and facilitate partnerships.

Funding and Sustainability

The Roundtable will be fully funded by private and philanthropic contributions, ensuring its independence. Resources will be allocated to:

- ◆ Staff support for coordination and execution.
- ◆ Research and data tracking for the Impact Dashboard.
- ◆ Leadership convenings and stakeholder engagement efforts.



ALL IN ON CENTRAL CITY