

PORTLAND CC TASK FORCE: VALUE PROPOSITION COMMITTEE
LISTENING SESSION

REPORT OUT FORM

YOUR TOPIC AND DATE YOU CONVENED THE LISTENING SESSION

Portland Urban Design Panel, convened on October 17, 2023

ATTENDEES (NAMES AND ORGANIZATIONS)

Kathy Wendland - AIA Oregon Staff (AIA Oregon Staff)
Brian Campbell
Erin Reome
Jeramie Shane
DAVID MCILNAY
Cassandra Strauss
Don Arambula
Leslie Hamilton
Julie Baines
Mark Seder
Bert Gregory
Bob Boileau UDP Exec. Comm
Beverly Thruston
adria civiletti
Glen Bolen
Leif Halverson
Jason Essel
Emily Foltz | JHC Construction
Patrick Sullivan
Dave Otte
Callie Bailey
Margaret Raimann
Kathy Fry
Anchal Cheruvari
Meghan Skornia
Becky Coutinho
Troy Doss
Tim Heron
Tyler Sauter
Jason Roberts

Reece Vissia | Mayer / Reed
trent thelen
Jason King | Walker Macy
James McGrath
Saumya Kini
Ken Pirie
Tiffany Swift
Ciara Williams
Randy Gragg
Carine Arendes
Carol Mayer-Reed
Laura Hartzell
Michael O'Brien
Jesse King
Marissa West
Paul Dickow
Kim Bandy
Taylor Bowden
ross swanson
Ryan Singer
Rob Wente
Alix Nathan
sierra gardiner
Rex Prater, AIA
Guy Benn
staci monroe
Joshua Skinner
Nico Larco
Abigale Baines
Rachel Spencer
Serena Lim
Amy Thornton
Mark Raggett
Gary Datka - PP&R
Sakshi Nanda
Cassie Ballew
Alan Costic
Travis Shappell | SERA
Jeffrey Scherer
Carissa Barry
Blessie Saoit
mike smyth
Cooper Williams

Joel Mbala-Nkanga
Anthony Riederer
Barry Manning

VISION: What should the Central City [and/or your particular neighborhood] be known for? (If you used an alternative question, add it here. Character limit: 2500)

- Safe, clean, vibrant and active
- Well connected with green spaces, places to gather, and active streets
- Burnside as a celebrated entrance to Downtown
- A great waterfront
- Interesting, memorable, and unapologetically “Portland”
- Walking and bike friendly, day and night
- Transportation friendly
- Economic vitality and thriving local businesses
- 24/7 dense, active, vibrant community
- A balance of supportive uses
- Housing of all types, especially workforce and affordable
- Historic buildings and urban places
- Center of creative and innovative professions
- Bold things happen here, again
- Future ready
- A place known for sustainability
- An arts and culture destination and home to Oregon’s art scene community
- Diverse and a place that celebrates diversity; offers multicultural events in public spaces
- Amazing food
- Easily accessed and clean public restrooms
- Humane inclusion of vulnerable populations that does not displace problems
- Hard-drug free
- Welcoming (no fences, bars, or solid gates)
- Would like more retail anchors, food options, patrolling in Downtown. Winters don’t feel safe to walk around, better lighting and vibrancy might help.
- Look for opportunities everywhere. We need to work on all of it; we cannot limit ourselves to think of it geographically. Vibrancy includes inclusive of race, culture and generations. Even small efforts will add up to something more positive.

SUCCESS: What would success look like for [Topic or Neighborhood] assuming bold action from the public sector?

By next summer [2024]? (character limit: 1250)

- No camps or tents on the sidewalks
- Safe for families to be Downtown
- Feeling safe before and after dark
- Graffiti and waste are cleaned up
- There are lots of people present for a variety of reasons, which will increase feelings of safety
- Fairless Square is back
- New master plan for Downtown/Waterfront has been developed
- Waterfront dining is available

- Residential rent prices are affordable (needed a.s.a.p.)
- More outdoor music events Downtown June through September and in different locations throughout Downtown
- Active and continually funded events, activation, and programming year round.
- Trusted community resources/support centers are available and known to both housed and unhoused residents
- More opportunities for local and BIPOC wealth building
- Quick actions have been taken (not just planning)
- Free/affordable space for artists, small local businesses, and cultural frontages
- An organization is managing activation of streets (beautification, events, etc.) to show investment and love for the Central City.
- More pedestrian streets with outdoor dining (heated/covered in the winter), greenery, and inviting illumination.
- Continue to plan for and invest in green spaces
- Electeds support equitable investment in Central City
- All Downtown blocks have been “adopted” by various agencies
- Equestrian patrol

In five years? (character limit: 1250)

- Reduced need for security services
- Offices converted to housing
- Better support systems and infrastructure for unhoused so they have somewhere to stay (not just the street)
- Meet at least 50% of the housing need for most vulnerable folks in Downtown
- Design that is focused on the pedestrian experience (i.e. the first three floors)
- Frictionless and free transport services to Downtown area from surrounding Portland
- No dark storefronts
- Portland is back on the list places people want to visit
- Frog Ferry! Reduce traffic and increase reasons to visit Downtown
- Incentives for mixed use buildings and micro retail/commercial space for start ups and small businesses
- High occupancy in buildings, great and safe parks, with people out and about at all times.
- Several beer gardens open along the waterfront
- Kids are able to walk around alone
- Shift to land value taxation to motivate people to build or sell to those who will
- Tax on vacancy to house more people
- Active mobility, commuting, and circulation to reduce presence of cars
- People want to be Downtown (they don’t need to be coerced)
- Re-activate public space and revive commercial centers

In ten years? (character limit: 1250)

- 100% of the housing need for most vulnerable folks in Downtown
- Massive growth in housing
- Redesigned waterfront has been implemented
- Burnside is a celebration boulevard – more trees, multimobility, etc.
- Cap I-405
- Much less auto traffic and more transit/ped spaces
- Zero vacant lots, lots of housing, and all of the services/activities you could need/want.
- A diverse neighborhood with a wide swath of incomes and ages living Downtown
- Build a subway.

- Lots of residents, workers + visitors walking around at most times of day, lots of transit riders of all ages and communities
- Active, flexible, vibrant ground floors with pedestrian activity. Needs to be initiated by local/city investment in storefront programs, pop-up, etc, cannot rely on private developers and investment. It is our city we should define what it should be.
- We're not trying to revamp central city anymore.
- Bustling civic / public spaces
- Lifestyle tourism revitalized with intentional interactions / touch points across city
- Maintain outdoor space and connect commercial/residential neighborhoods to valuable outdoor space

COMMUNITY ACTION ITEMS (character limit: 2500)

What are the top three things that your participants would consider doing to support [topic or neighborhood] or the overall revitalization of the Central City, assuming they received the support they needed from the City/other partners? For each, include barriers that would block progress and what the City/private partners can do to remove barriers

Example Action Item: Identify a leader to coordinate a network of community organizations and businesses committed to supporting the expansion of the arts in Portland.

- Volunteer cleaning crews
- Volunteer design services for storefront improvements, street plazas, public water features, alternative housing options, etc.
- Create community committees with volunteers assigned to streets to report needs.
- PSU Planning Club could get students involved with Downtown beautification activities and events.
- Sponsorship for events Downtown
- Charrettes to create more Central City housing
- AIA/ASLA/OAPA continue to work together on these issues
- Host events/meetings Downtown to bring more people to the area
- Pledge to prioritize Central City businesses for vendor services
- Market organizers, **minority organizations**, small businesses, universities (groups that draw people to the city center)
- Advocate for more housing in the Central City
- Help visualize ideas to build community buy-in
- Help public officials draft policies that will incentivize people/environment over profits
- Organize design competitions to generate big ideas
- Raise awareness and Advocate for policy changes through our larger design orgs (AIA/ASLA/OAPA)
- Bring clients from other places to Portland
- Design public art or interpretive displays that educate the general public about community resources and organizations that are already tackling homelessness and drug addiction, that need more support
- Consider those organizations that draw individuals to their programs or buildings - encourage those orgs to discuss how they can co-exist and support each other within the central city
- Share best practices from other cities. Push for creative ideas (not just food carts!)
- Continue to press electeds to invest in planning for the short term AND the long term
- Work with existing AIA Oregon DAT application to ensure AEC community participation.
- Develop safety measures for employees to encourage them to come in to office
- Support organizations like Street Roots that support unhoused community members who are striving to improve their own circumstances
- Advocate and educate our leaders on the value good design brings to our City - it promotes self-worth and wellbeing - it tells people that they matter and are important. This will be vital to remember as we rebuild/revitalize/reimagine our downtown.

BARRIERS (character limit: 2500)

What barriers would block your participants' progress on this action?

- Lack of training and solutions to address houseless populations in a compassionate way
- Lack of time/funding to go beyond traditional modes of public outreach - traditionally only those with time/money can participate in "outreach" events, so planners, developers, owners, and designers need to make more efforts to reach and build trust with low-income community members, people who have kids, people who work multiple jobs, are caring for loved ones, etc. for their input
- Rising interest rates and increased construction costs
- Poor perception of Portland from outside investors
- Lack of property owner interest/cooperation

- Having to combat the perception that design/urban design is an extra or nice to have and not essential to rethinking how to revitalize CC and make it more inclusive.
- Lack of incentives for different types of housing throughout portland - missing middle housing elsewhere should compliment higher density housing in downtown
- City Bureau silos, a lack of leadership in City government, and not bringing on department directors quickly enough
- Land use / historic landmark requirements that make design and construction (especially for adaptive reuse of existing buildings) cost prohibitive
- Waiting to achieve consensus on what the solutions will be (perfect being the enemy of the good)
- Underfunded City Bureaus
- Hiring Diverse managers who share a positive vision and are willing to court public disapproval to implement the vision
- Pushback from neighborhood organizations
- We don't have the level of philanthropy we need.
- Lack of sustained efforts and funding
- Put cost of street infrastructure improvements on the motorist
- Employees continuing to work from home
- Not knowing what downtown is without an office work/commuter schedule - need a new identity and activity driver
- Pendulum swing to wanting more police presence
- Failure to enforce the law / allowing or ignoring criminality
- Vulnerable communities don't have \$\$ to represent their interests

CITY ACTION ITEMS (character limit: 2500)

What specific concrete actions should the City and its partners take to support [topic or neighborhood] and/or remove barriers to the community actions identified above?

- Establish City lead on recovery, with committee of bureau and private partners tasked with developing and implementing actions within a specific timeline, and supported by Council and the new City Administrator
- Revise and update inclusionary housing provisions to better address needs of families with children and seniors.
- Work with Parks and PPS to provide amenities (schools and parks with play areas) to support residents.
- Increase response time to urgent safety calls; quadruple Portland street response a.s.a.p.
- Restore annual Central City housing inventory to track housing production and diversity.
- Subsidize small retail and cultural frontages
- Align revitalize efforts around wider city moves such as the Green Loop
- Daylight Tanner Creek
- Fund more public space programming, parks and rec, PBOT, City maintenance crews, and human and family services.
- Re-commit to programming of Director Park. Maintain investment in facilities that we already have.
- Provide free, and safe, transit into Downtown, or at a minimum, offer less expensive monthly transit passes to encourage broader use.
- Establish a car-free downtown 7-7 all days except Sunday
- Establish new connections! - centennial mills to lower albina, salmon to salmon at street level, South Portland to Ross Island.
- Establish a STEM high school and ARTS high school in downtown available to any PPS student
- Don't rely heavily on employers bringing workers back into the office. this is not a realistic or equitable solution
- Revision of the Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines for downtown so that they allow for a more streamlined/efficient review process and reflect current design strategies and community needs
- Relax some development requirements to allow re-purpose buildings.
- Give City staff permission and support to champion more community led projects that do not fit the

typical project mold.

- More tactical urbanism programs - take the Multnomah County model of Getting to Yes - getting out of the way of ideas - finding ways to make things happen.
- Develop initiatives to activate underutilized surface parking lots.
- Take ownership and support public spaces stimulated by community within the street ROW
- Plan and communicate workshops that empower community input
- Develop a large scale community land trust to buy and build affordable housing (organizations like Proud Ground, Square One Villages are doing this at a smaller scale to serve individual families/unhoused folks)
- Establish well-maintained/ attended public restrooms asap so all people downtown can at least take care of their most basic needs.
- Increase parking fees so transit becomes more attractive
- Greater accountability prioritization of actions that promote diverse and livable CC neighborhoods, as well as more transparency on where tax dollars are being spent.
- Institute a statewide sales tax (no local option) to help fund the above
- Restructure property taxes - fix M5 imbalances
- Tax vehicle ownership, not just gas (and invest that money in transit)
- Price the curb space

LOOSE ENDS/QUESTIONS REMAINING

What data or questions remained after the meeting or were identified in the parking lot? What requires further action from the team?

- Recurring engagement with this group - it would be great to provide feedback on policies that are actually being drafted!
- There is an opportunity and big need for more partnerships:
 - museums + parks department
 - universities + corporations
 - housing + corporations
 - pbot/trimet + corporations
 - health centers + parks departments
 - city planning + schools
 - district coalitions + pbot + trimet
- There is a need to ensure we have a means of prioritizing health and safety before initiating larger infrastructure projects.
- Are there any efforts for “Chinatown” similar to Albina Vision Trust?
- The decision to decriminalize drug use was based in the general agreement that prison is not a constructive solution to the problems of homelessness and drug addiction. If society is beginning to reject imprisoning people against their will as a solution, can society begin to stomach the idea of bringing people into rehab regardless of whether or not they want to be there? Mental institutions definitely earned their terrible reputation but so much has changed in the medical and mental health fields since then - is it possible to form policies and a program that would pull people off the streets and out of addiction? What would that look like?