

look, shape, design • buildings, streets, parks, plazas, community places • private property & public realm • patterns and design • open spaces • neighborhoods • distinct community character

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Community design is about the physical environment of the places we see and experience every day.

Well-designed buildings, streets and places are welcoming. They complement, but do not always match, surrounding buildings and nearby places. Ideally, they provide a sense of personal safety and comfort. Poorly designed places, on the other hand, are often less welcoming.

Community design is important because the design of buildings, streets and other public spaces make a difference in whether or not your community is walkable, children have safe places to play, neighbors and friends have places to get together and businesses are easy to access.

Community design focuses on the look, shape and arrangement of buildings, streets, parks, plazas and other community places — both public and private. From Powell Butte to Powell's Books, Portland is full of significant and distinctive places. Places where people like to walk, meet, play and eat. Places that help people find their way around

town and places that help shape city form, structure and identity.

As Portland evolves, it is essential to understand which of Portland's important places we need to protect and enhance. It also will be important to understand what new places need to be created.

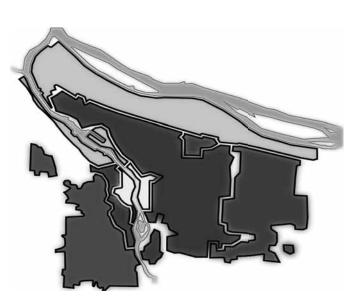
The types of buildings in an area, building setbacks, the width and design of streets and the open spaces — the City's built and natural patterns — give Portland's neighborhoods and districts their distinct community character.

Whether a neighborhood's streets are straight and lined by porches, or curve through forested hills, their physical characteristics are a key part of their personality. Portland has five fundamental pattern areas, each with a distinct character: Western, Eastern and Inner Neighborhoods, Central City and Industrial Districts.

Portlanders value the individual character of the places they live and work. Understanding the elements that make each area distinct and contribute to neighborhood personality will help us manage change and integrate development in ways that are consistent with our shared values.

The public realm is where many people experience the city.

Our public realm—the system of public spaces, streets and parks and building frontages—makes up a huge portion of the city. Portland's streets alone cover over 16,000 acres or 18 percent of the land in the city limits. As of July 2008, Portland Parks and Recreation properties made up approximately 11 percent of the city's land area. As we evolve and our population grows, it will be important to ensure that our public realm (our movement spaces like streets and our staying spaces like plazas and parks) are multi-functional and attractive and enhance Portlanders experience of the city.



Portland's Five Pattern Areas

Central City
Industrial Districts
Western Neighborhoods
Inner Neighborhoods
Eastern Neighborhoods

Read more...

Portland Plan Background Reports Urban Form • Infrastructure Condition and Capacity Background

Report • Urban Forestry

Related Reports and Projects Infill Design Toolkit and Infill Design Project Report Design Central Portland • Central Portland Plan Urban Design Assessment • East Portland Historical Overview and Historic Preservation Study • Civic Planning,

Development and Public Works, 1851-1965 • Parks 2020 Vision • Metro's Making the Greatest Place

Links to all listed reports and projects are provided at the end of this handbook

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Walkability

Walk Score (www.walkscore.com) measures how easy it is to live a car-lite lifestyle—not how pretty the area is for walking. The average score approximates a neighborhood's overall access to many common destinations. Portland's citywide walkscore is 66 out of a 100.

Target: 90% of Portland residents can easily walk or bike to meet all basic daily non-work needs and have safe access to transit by 2030

Source: 2009 Climate Action Plan

TOP 10 WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

Pearl District — 99 Old Town-Chinatown — 98 Downtown — 96 Northwest — 93 Lloyd - 91 Hosford — 90 Buckman — 90 Eliot – 88 Richmond — 88 Kerns – 86

Consider...

1 Neighborhood commercial areas are the backbone of many neighborhoods and serve as hubs of community activity. What would be your priorities for improving these areas?

2 From your perspective, what are examples of attractive and unattractive buildings in your neighborhood? What are your favorite neighborhoods and districts in Portland? What do you like about these places?

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