

urban laboratory for innovation in sustainability in the U.S., while simultaneously possessing the livability that results from an unrelenting commitment to sustainability. This combination is a powerful draw for green entrepreneurs and an educated, creative workforce.

Maintaining this cutting edge distinctiveness and reputation for sustainability is vital to growing the local economy. To do so, Portland must embark on the next generation of innovation and investment in green building and sustainable living, and complement those investments with equal attention to quality of the experience downtown for arts, culture and retail.

Objective 2.1: Create the Next Generation Built Environment

Portland cannot rest on its laurels as the international leader in green building. The rest of the world has embraced LEED construction standards and LEED certification will soon be the norm. Cities and countries around the globe are racing to uncover the next achievement in sustainable building practices and, while widespread adoption of these practices is an encouraging development, Portland must work to retain its leadership position. The city’s green building industry has a global presence built on the combination of its unrivaled expertise and Portland’s reputation for innovation in green building. A commitment to remain at the forefront of sustainable building practices will produce the dual benefit of enhancing the city’s image and providing local firms with a continuous flow of new ideas and services to export outside of the region.

2.1 Next Generation Built Environment	Responsible Parties
Action 2.1.1: Establish the Oregon Sustainability Center to foster the next wave of innovation in sustainable building and living.	PDC, P+OSI, PSU, OUS, BPS

The Center, which is expected to be the first commercial living building in the U.S., will be established through a collaborative effort by the city, state, PSU and the Oregon University System, Portland + Oregon Sustainability Institute (P+OSI), and a consortium of businesses and non-profit organizations, as part of a larger sustainability district on the PSU campus. Key cluster initiatives, including the Oregon Sustainable Economy Network, will originate from the center. The center will also be a living laboratory for sustainable building materials, test new office environment norms, and serve as a first stop showcase and exhibition space to hose visitors seeking the latest in sustainable building practices.

2.1 Next Generation Built Environment	Responsible Parties
Action 2.1.2: Establish eco-districts in three catalytic locations.	PDC, BPS, P+OSI

Eco-districts offer the opportunity to put in to practice the latest innovations in green building, infrastructure and collaboration. Each site will be different in character and composition but will test new techniques in district-wide power generation, waste and water treatment, and shared infrastructure. The districts will also include experimentation with living buildings, the logical evolution from the LEED standard that has defined Portland leadership in green building in the past.

The catalytic impact of an eco-district is significant: over the next five years, the city is likely to focus its investments in large redevelopment projects in eco-district sites, with an emphasis on the Central City.

A likely first site for an eco-district would have the Oregon Sustainability Center at the PSU campus as its core, and would integrate the emerging concepts for district-wide sustainable development with PSU’s existing redevelopment plans for the area. Such an effort will transform a large swath of downtown Portland and catalyze investments in neighboring areas. The city possesses additional sites with similar synergistic and catalytic potential, including the Lloyd District, Oregon Convention Center/Rose Quarter District, the Schnitzer Campus in South Waterfront, and the Con-way and Freeway Land sites.

The full build-out of an eco-district will not be accomplished during the five year term of this strategy. However, actions undertaken as part of this strategy will advance the planning and design for multiple districts, land acquisition and site assembly, and, most importantly, the innovative thinking necessary to move the eco-district from an exciting concept to an operational reality.

Objective 2.2: Enhance the vitality and distinctiveness of the Central City to showcase our sustainable way of life and attract creative class talent.

Portland’s Central City is a destination of choice by the creative class due to its edgy, unpredictable character and compact, connected urban experience. While the character of the Central City may be attributed to the unique history of the region and its people, the city plays a critical role in maintaining the unique attributes of the Central City by investing in signature projects, continuing a tradition of smart urban planning, fostering an attractive retail environment³³ and providing support for arts and culture.³⁴ Portland is facing a critical moment in the evolution of its Central City and has the opportunity to ensure that the Central City remains a unique place for residents and visitors alike for future generations. Maintaining the character and appeal of the Central City is critical to achieving the objectives of this strategy. There is strong evidence that talented workers are increasingly concentrating in places that have a high quality of life and possess that hard-to-define “cool” factor.³⁵ Because innovation depends on the ready availability of talent, companies as well as local economies can only prosper if they have access to ample supply of talented workers.

2.2 Vibrant Central City	Responsible Parties
Action 2.2.1: Invest in catalytic Westside redevelopment projects, including Post Office, Centennial Mills, PSU, Con-Way and Goose Hollow.	PDC, BPS, Mult. Co., PPS

Capturing the job growth envisioned by the strategy will require the continued development of Westside employment districts. These districts, which include the Downtown Core, University District,

³³ A study of Portland’s downtown retail core recommended a strategy for establishing, revitalizing and protecting this core which included creating a signature retail armature on primary downtown corridors, gateways into four key signature streets, catalyst sites for signature retail, and continuity on streets within the core that have weak or spotty retail components. The city will assist the Downtown Task Force in implementing the recommendations of the study.

³⁴ On April 29, 2009, the Portland City Council adopted Act for Art: The Creative Action Plan for the Portland Metropolitan Region. The plan is the city’s strategy for strengthening its cultural infrastructure, improving access to the arts and arts education, and investing in creative talent.

³⁵ See *Who’s Your City?: How the Creative Economy Is Making Where to Live the Most Important Decision of Your Life*, Richard Florida, Basic Books, 2008.

Pearl District, and Old Town/Chinatown, can serve as potential headquarters sites as well as locations for clustering firms seeking a wide range of office space. Examples of expanded job centers could include the Post Office site and property near the proposed Oregon Sustainability Center.

The Pearl District and Old Town/Chinatown currently have urban renewal funding. However, the development of the catalytic downtown projects envisioned by this strategy may require the formation a new urban renewal area (URA) encompassing key Westside locations to provide the financial resources to further develop targeted employment districts and fund the job creation activities within those districts. The city is following a methodical public process to consider a new URA that includes analysis of the projects that might require public-sector support and estimates of the tax increment that could be generated in the proposed area to finance such projects. The process includes collaboration with land and business owners, taxing districts, neighborhood organizations and other stakeholders. An Evaluation Group has been established to develop recommendations to the City Council on the formation of a new URA and, if recommended, the boundaries and maximum financial resources available for projects of such an area.

2.2 Vibrant Central City	Responsible Parties
Action 2.2.2: Support the planned expansions of the PSU and OHSU campuses.	PSU, OHSU, OUS, PDC, BPS

By virtue of the size and location of their campuses, PSU and OHSU influence the character and feel of the Central City. Both universities are in the midst of dramatic expansions to their campuses. If done properly, each of these campus expansions will enhance the Central City’s reputation as a vibrant location to live, work and study. PSU is engaged in a campus planning effort that will result in recommendations for expanding the capacity of its land-constrained South Park Block campus and the creation of an eco-district. Expanding within close proximity to its current footprint would result in a significant increase in the density of that neighborhood and would allow for the leveraging of existing university and public infrastructure. Alternatively, PSU could look to South Waterfront to expand and create an integrated campus with OHSU.

OHSU’s planned campus on 20 acres of undeveloped land in the North District of South Waterfront provides another opportunity to showcase Portland’s expertise in smart urban design and sustainability. This area, known as the Schnitzer Campus, is an ideal site for an eco-district because it does not require the redevelopment or replacement of existing buildings and infrastructure. In addition to the campus for OHSU, current plans for the area include a potential OUS Collaborative Life Sciences Center and a new light rail line and station. The city has already convened the property owners and other parties contemplating development in this district and will develop a plan for the phasing and funding of development in this district.

2.2 Vibrant Central City	Responsible Parties
Action 2.2.3: Invest in catalytic Eastside sites, including Headquarters Hotel, Rose Quarter redevelopment and Burnside Bridgehead.	PDC, MERC, BPS, Metro, Mult. Co., property owners

The physical, economic and cultural health of the Eastside is critical to the maturation of Portland’s Central City and its economic development efforts. The Eastside is a strategic location for the city’s manufacturing base and home to the city’s burgeoning design-related industries. The Eastside fills a

critical need for non-Class A commercial and industrial space options for these firms and, equally important, offers a culture distinct from downtown that includes communities of entrepreneurs and firms to support the growth of local businesses.

The city is currently exploring major catalytic investments on the Eastside, including a potential Headquarters Hotel for the Oregon Convention Center, the redevelopment of the Rose Quarter as an entertainment district, and the development of Burnside Bridgehead as an iconic anchor and gateway to the thriving Central Eastside business district. Combined, these projects and others will have a transforming effect on the Central City’s east side and strike an even healthier balance of economic activity on both sides of the Willamette River.

Objective 2.3: Actively market Portland as the leader in sustainability throughout the world.

Without any active effort or strategy, Portland has become a brand. That brand is associated with a passion for sustainability and a commitment to quality of life. Through newspaper articles, television stories, and word of mouth, people throughout the country and in some parts of the world have come to know Portland through this organically grown brand. Our brand, while successful in creating an appealing image of the city to educated, mobile workers seeking a place to start their careers, does not resonate internationally and can be a hindrance in selling Portland as a competitive location to do business. Active management of this brand will allow the city and region to cultivate and leverage its value to realize maximum benefit for our city and regional economy.

2.3 Selling the Portland Brand	Responsible Parties
Action 2.3.1: Convene public – private working group to develop objectives for branding strategy.	Mayor’s office, PDC, GGP, Port, Metro, PBA

The Mayor’s office will convene a group of public and private stakeholder to discuss the objectives for a branding strategy and decide what values the strategy should communicate to distinguish Portland from competitors. The city will model its process after the successful branding campaign for Amsterdam known as “I amsterdam.” Prior to the development of a brand and marketing strategy, Amsterdam’s political and business leaders met to answer the key questions about what message the city wanted to convey about itself. The branding effort in Amsterdam had an underlying economic mission, so the campaign attempted to express an attitude that was welcoming to both businesses and employees. These early conversations serve as the foundation for the campaign and, because agreement has been reached about the message, later decisions about the brand and campaign are less contentious.

2.3 Selling the Portland Brand	Responsible Parties
Action 2.3.2: Implement a unified branding strategy for the city and region.	Mayor’s office, PDC, GGP, Port, Metro, PBA, Travel Portland

The brand and marketing strategy that emerges from this effort should be a coordinated message from a range of city, regional and state agencies. In addition, the message should be embraced by Portland’s diverse business community, which will use this campaign as a foundation for their own national and international marketing campaigns. The campaign will be most relevant for Portland area businesses that depend on international trade or make use of Portland’s reputation as part of their sales efforts.

Portland is home to a host of internationally-known design and advertising firms and will seek their expertise in developing a branding and marketing strategy. Despite an undeniable reputation as a leader in sustainability, Portland lags other cities in the focus and sophistication of its message. Leveraging the design talent in the city should help to level the playing field.

3. Building the Sustainable Economy: Neighborhood Business Vitality

Many of Portland's successful businesses and industries started in neighborhoods serving local markets, often expanding to national and even international distribution. Examples of home grown enterprises that have been nurtured to national prominence in Portland neighborhoods include brewers and distillers, coffee roasters, chocolatiers, and tea importers.

Equally important are the local serving businesses that support our neighborhood commercial districts, serving residents, attracting investment, supplying jobs and creating local wealth. Portland's commercial districts provide entertainment, shopping and services, contribute to the city's vibrancy and praised quality of life, and are entry points to wealth creation³⁶ for a growing number of people. Continued and expanded support for neighborhood serving businesses is required for Portland to achieve its vision of 20 minute neighborhoods, where residents have easy access to goods and services within a minimum radius through walking, biking or public transit.

Portland will assist small businesses in becoming more competitive by:

- offering customized service targeted at businesses with particular promise to create jobs and expand into new markets;
- improving access to information relevant to small business including technical assistance, financial services, permitting and other resources; and
- giving neighborhood business districts the capacity building knowledge to start, maintain and grow the vibrancy of local serving retailers and services.

Objective 3.1: Build the capacity of local entrepreneurs to innovate and compete in the global economy through the establishment of an economic gardening program.

Economic gardening is premised on the belief that local entrepreneurial firms, rather than firms recruited from outside the region, are the engine for the creation of wealth and new jobs, and the role of the city is to provide a nurturing environment within which these small firms can flourish.³⁷ An

³⁶ In July 2009, PDC will assume oversight over the City of Portland's Economic Opportunities Initiative (EOI), which assists low-income, multi-barriered individuals in increasing their incomes through workforce and microenterprise development programs. In cooperation with key stakeholders and the community, PDC will, over the course of FY 2009-10, integrate the objectives of EOI with the economic development priorities defined in this strategy.

³⁷ According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, *Economic Development America*, Spring 2007, the concept of economic gardening originated in Littleton, CO, in 1989 in response to the limitations of strategies focused exclusively on recruitment. Since that time, Littleton has not spent any money on