

[< Lat49 Pins Display Advertising On The Map ComScore's Top Startups in Canada - July 2009 >](#)

Portland Economic Development Strategy passes, City formally recognizes open source, mobile, coworking, and startup communities

Posted by [Rick Turoczy](#) on Thu, July 9, 2009 10:12 AM · Filed under [Portland](#) , [Start-up](#), [Mobile](#) · [1 Comment](#)

While the news coming out of [yesterday's Portland City Council meeting](#) will likely be mired in heated he-said she-said debates about the fate of the [39th Avenue / Cesar Chavez hoopla](#), something very important happened late in the day: **Portland's City Council unanimously passed the Portland Economic Development Strategy.**

Why is this so momentous? Well, aside from being the first publicly recognized economic strategy for Portland in 15 years, it's the first time that Portland has formally recognized the open source, mobile, coworking, and startup community. And that's a big step forward. As [Eva Schweber](#) says, [we should be proud](#).

Even though we offered no testimony, we had the largest representation from any industry. City Council and their staff knew most of the folks in that room today (myself included) because we are the ones who show up at every one of these meetings. We are all pretty clear on what perspective each of us represents and know what is going to be said before any of us open our mouths. Actions speak louder than words. The open source, mobile and startup (seriously, we need a better moniker) representatives who came to today's meeting sent a very clear message. We are here and we are ready to take our seat at the table.

I'd recommend reading the whole [Portland Economic Development Strategy document \(PDF\)](#). It's not long. And the Mayor's Office and [Portland Development Commission \(PDC\)](#) did a great job of keeping approachable and intelligible.

Not interested in reading the whole thing? At least read pages 12-13 which focus on the Software Cluster for the Portland area. It looks a little something like this:



Now granted, the open source, mobile, coworking, and startup section of the document is relatively small, covering about a page-and-a-half. But the size of the section isn't really the issue. This is still important. Again, I say "momentous."

Why? It's momentous because this is the first time—to my knowledge—that the City of Portland has formally recognized the open source development community, the mobile app development community, and the Web application development community. They've even recognized the importance of coworking

environments to our community—putting them on the same footing as traditionally recognized organizations like the PDC, the [Software Association of Oregon \(SAO\)](#), and [Oregon Entrepreneurs Network \(OEN\)](#). And in that recognition, they have made a formal commitment to support that tech community.

That means, that with the ratification of the document, the City has put a stake in the ground. It has recognized what you are doing. And it has deemed it important enough to be committed to public record. Long story short, the City of Portland—in theory—is now behind you and explicitly interested in your success.

That is huge. And for that, you should be incredibly proud of what you've accomplished.

Now, the real work begins

Now we need to help move the City from strategy to implementation. And just as [Mayor Sam Adams asked the open source community to better engage with the City of Portland](#) so must the mobile development community, the coworking community, and the startup community find ways to engage and interact with the City. We have to find ways to organize and present a united front. Because if we don't, we risk losing a huge opportunity.

I know we can do it. And I'm looking forward to helping. However I can.

But that will come together. For now please, take a few seconds to bask in this moment. This is a very big deal. It's a big deal for the Portland open source community. It's a big deal for the burgeoning mobile development market. And it's a big deal for each and every startup that calls Portland home today—and in the future.

Thank you, again, to [Mayor Sam Adams](#) and his office for [reaching out to the Portland tech community](#). Thank you to Eva Schweber for spending countless hours as the [resident wonk](#) for the open source, mobile, coworking, and startup community. And congratulations to each and every one of you.

Now, it's up to us. Let's make something happen.