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Documents:

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[COMP PLAN \(MEMO AND ATTACHMENTS\).PDF](#)

**LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT
PORTLAND PLANNING BOARD MEETING**

The Portland Planning Board will hold a meeting on:

**Tuesday, December 6, 2016
RIVERTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CAFETERIA
1600 FOREST AVENUE, PORTLAND ME**

Public comments will be taken for each item on the agenda during the estimated allotted time.

EVENING WORKSHOP – 6:00 p.m.

- i. Portland Comprehensive Plan Update: Portland Department of Planning and Urban Development, Applicant. The Planning Board will hold a workshop on the draft Comprehensive Plan, which will include policy and land use goals and strategies.

ELIZABETH BOEPPLE, CHAIR - PORTLAND PLANNING BOARD

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Memorandum

Planning and Urban Development Department

Planning Division

To: Chair Boepple and Members of the Planning Board
From: Christine Grimando, Senior Planner
Date: December 2, 2016
Re: Comprehensive Plan Update – Future Land Use
Meeting Date: December 6, 2016

At the December 6th workshop we'll be discussing the Future Land Use section of the Comprehensive Plan. This memo serves as an overview of the purpose and requirements of that section, and its role in the Comprehensive Plan as a whole, as context for Tuesday's meeting.

The Future Land Use section is one of many elements of a Comprehensive Plan required by Maine's Growth Management Act. Staff has previously outlined Portland's new Comprehensive Plan's table of contents, which represent an outline of how Portland is approaching the State requirements. The five required elements under the Growth Management Act are:

1. *Vision Statement*
2. *Public Participation Summary*
3. *Regional Coordination Program*
4. *Future Land Use Plan*
5. *Topic Area Components*

No. 5, *Topic Area Components*, has many subsections, and will constitute the almost the entirety of the plan. It includes requirements for addressing state goals, minimum policies for each, analysis, conditions and trends, and implementation strategies. *Topic Area Components* becomes the Policy Snapshots as well as the Appendices of the new Plan. The *Vision Statement*, *Public Participation* are addressed in the forthcoming introduction sections, and *Regional Coordination*, addressed in various Policy Snapshots, will be summarized in an Implementation section.

The remaining section is *Future Land Use*, which is framed by the State Goal: *To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the state's rural character, making efficient use of public services, and preventing development sprawl.* The State Criteria overview goes on to say that the Future Land Use Plan must be consistent with the community's vision and other policies in the plan, and that it should guide the

development of land use regulations and ordinances. It requires identifying geographic areas most suitable for growth or most suitable for rural uses, and must include a map that depicts critical natural resources, and any critical rural or critical waterfront areas. Minimum requirements include identification of growth areas that are physically suitable for development or redevelopment, and correspond to areas of planned growth-related capital investments; rural areas that deserve some level of regulatory protection, including areas serving the purposes of agriculture, forestry, open space, wildlife habitat, fisheries, and scenic lands; critical natural resources that are to be protected from development. Optionally, the section may include Critical Rural Areas and/or Critical Waterfront Areas. Critical rural areas and critical waterfront areas are those rural and waterfront areas in a community most vulnerable to impacts from incompatible development.

Other elements of this section include addressing whether the plan aligns with the community vision statement, whether growth areas are actually suitable for new development in regard to public facilities and the transportation network, correlations between growth areas and development trends, an estimation of how much growth can be accommodated in these areas, and how natural resources will be protected from impacts of growth. Required to address all of these things are a map or maps and an accompanying narrative.

Portland's implementation of the Future Land Use section places emphasis on areas most important to its growth over the coming decade. It will include two primary maps – one showing a connected network of trails and open spaces, and one depicting priority corridors and nodes that are poised to accommodate additional growth in the coming decade. It includes an accompanying narrative that is mutually reinforced by the maps. The narrative identifies principles for future growth, including that of **Complete Neighborhoods**, which recognizes that neighborhoods need to be supported in their unique identities and assets, and that all of the city's neighborhoods should have access to services, institutions and amenities central to everyday life within a walkable, bikeable proximity; **Reinforce the Center**, which recognizes that Portland's downtown remains an economic, cultural and transportation hub for the city and the region; **Complete the Chain**, which supports a fully connected network of open spaces, as well as a network of viable on-street bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure between neighborhoods; and strong support for a continued active **Waterfront**, both as a resource central to the identity, economy, ecology and recreational life of the city.

Priority Growth Areas Map

The draft Priority Growth Areas map evolved out of extensive public engagement over the course of the past year, best planning practices, and areas known to be undergoing change or the subject of recent planning efforts. The map is intentionally conceptual - it does not precisely delimit parcels of land, or exhaustively catalog areas that may change in the coming years, but rather focuses squarely on where the city should best prioritize future growth. Further, the map is intentionally time-limited - it does not attempt to identify all areas of future change, but instead only those areas that will be prioritized over the coming decade. The map includes four central elements:

1. *Priority nodes* - Nodes are areas with concentrated mixed-use activity, which can occur at varying scales and serve varying catchment areas - Portland's downtown supports a large

successful node, for example, but nodes are also smaller convergences and intersections such as at Stevens and Pleasant Avenues in Deering Center. The plan identifies nodes of these varying scales, which are particularly primed for change over the next ten years. These are nodes that may have seen disinvestment, grown in sprawling patterns, or simply have the potential to serve as focal points for targeted growth in the forms of increased density, height, better relationships to the street, or a more diverse mix of uses to better serve neighborhood needs. These nodes fall into three categories:

- Evaluate: Nodes, as diverse as East Bayside and Allen's Corner, which should be assessed for their ability to address neighborhood needs/serve complete neighborhoods;
 - Transform: Nodes, such as Morrill's Corner, which have been previously recognized as target areas for major transformation, but need comprehensive revisioning; and
 - Enhance: Nodes, such as Woodford's Corner, which have been studied and planned for and are awaiting implementation of a vision.
2. *Priority corridors* - The map also identifies priority corridors - those that connect major nodes and therefore serve as major commuter routes, with active transit service, bike infrastructure, and pedestrian infrastructure - as areas for additional planning and investment. Priority corridors connect nodes, connect neighborhoods, and also can serve as areas of additional mixed-use, higher density growth that can take advantage of the transit benefits and services that well-designed corridors can offer.
3. *Waterfront* -, The plan recognizes crucial and singular role of the waterfront in Portland's past present and future. We anticipate that change will occur in our waterfront over the next decade and that the waterfront should also be targeted for future growth that is consistent with existing waterfront land use policies that seek to preserve marine-dependent uses, provide investment opportunities, and offer public and recreational access to the water where possible. The waterfront is classified much like the nodes:
- Evaluate: Areas of the waterfront that should be assessed for their potential to serve future growth, preservation or potential improvements.
 - Enhance: Areas of the waterfront which have seen extensive planning and require investment to realize change.

Drafts of both maps are included in Attachments 1 & 2.

The Future Land Use section consistently reinforces recommendations in multiple places in the Policy Snapshots. The following is a sample, not an exhaustive list, of goals and strategies in the Policy Snapshots that align with these Future Land Use priorities:

Transportation Policy Snapshot - Create incentives to spur transit-oriented, mixed use development on corridors and in areas that can support high quality transit service.

and

Support the waterfront as a signature transportation resource.

From Economy Policy Snapshot - Evaluate zoning and the condition of existing infrastructure in target areas - downtown, in identified neighborhood centers, and along transit corridors – to ensure that employment growth can be supported.

and

Reinforce the waterfront as a key component of Portland's economic health, balancing traditional and emerging industries with tourism and recreation.

Housing Policy Snapshot - Encourage additional contextually appropriate housing density in and proximate to neighborhood centers, concentrations of services, and transit nodes and corridors as a means of supporting complete neighborhoods.

From Recreation & Open Space Policy Snapshot – Connect the Chain. Create linkages between Stroudwater and the Fore River, Evergreen Cemetery and the Presumpscot River, Portland Transportation Center and Bayside, Martin’s Point and the Back Cove, and the Western Waterfront and the Fore River.

and

Connect to the Waterfront. Encourage access to Portland’s waterfront - Casco Bay, Back Cove, and the Stroudwater, Presumpscot, and Fore Rivers - as a “blueway” network and an extension of public space for local and regional recreation and transportation needs.

From Waterfront Policy Snapshot (many goals and strategies from throughout this section, including but not limited to) – Prioritize and promote Portland’s unique mix of water-dependent, marine-related uses and compatible non-marine uses.

and

Promote passive and active recreational access to the waterfront.

At the December workshop there’ll be opportunity for discussion of the draft maps, as well as tools for implementation of Future Land Use principles and priorities.

Attachments:

1. **Draft Priority Growth Areas**
2. **Draft Open Space Connections**



