

## **What is the Comprehensive Plan?**

The Comprehensive Plan is a long-range land use plan that reflects the community's desires and priorities regarding how Portland will accommodate population and employment growth over a 20-25 year period. The Comprehensive Plan is about physical development. The plan provides direction for City decision-making on land use, transportation, sewer and water systems, and natural resource management programs, while ensuring that investments in major city systems are coordinated. The Comprehensive Plan is required by state law, and it must comply with 14 of the 19 statewide land use planning goals (the remaining five statewide goals do not apply to Portland).

The Comprehensive Plan consists of three parts: goals and policies, a set of maps and a list of capital projects.

- The **goals and policies** are broad statements of the community's long term desires, values and preferred future directions related to the physical development of the city. Goals describe the ideal future that would result if the plan was fully realized, while policies are choices made to carry out the goals.
- The **set of maps** depicts the community's desired future development pattern and how and where the city will accommodate growth. The maps show land use designations, which set where and at what intensity particular uses (residential, commercial, industrial and open space) are allowed. The maps also show things like the city limits, urban services boundaries and street classifications.
- The **list of capital projects** describes significant public facilities needed to support future development depicted on the map and described in the goals and policies.

State law requires that a comprehensive plan have sufficient and effective implementing measures. Some of these implementing measures are familiar, such as the Zoning Maps (e.g., base zones, overlay zones) and the Zoning Code. The zoning code contains the regulations that govern development. The regulations provide specifics on allowed uses, standards for development (e.g. minimum and maximum density, setbacks, maximum height), procedures for reviewing proposed development, approval criteria and design guidelines. Other implementing measures include urban renewal, interagency agreements and tax abatements.

## **How is the Comprehensive Plan Used?**

Together, the three elements of the Comprehensive Plan guide decisions about land use and public facilities. The plan is framed in broad terms and guides future implementation, such as parcel-specific zoning or the design of infrastructure projects. Often, these types of decisions are made as part of plans developed by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. For example:

- Area plans such as the Airport Futures Plan, the Cully Main Street plan, and the N/NE Quadrant Plan.
- Natural resource protection plans such as the Southwest Hills Resource Protection Plan, and the Johnson Creek Basin Protection Plan.
- Topic-specific updates to zoning code regulations such as the Urban Food Zoning Code Update, portions of the Citywide Tree Project, and the Infill Design Toolkit.

In these cases, staff must make findings that the changes proposed are consistent with all of the applicable goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

The transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan is maintained by the Portland Bureau of Transportation. When the bureau amends street classifications or other aspects of the transportation-related goals and policies, staff must make findings that the changes are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

**Portland Comprehensive Plan Update:** Community Involvement PEG (originally created for the Watershed Health and Environment PEG)

In addition, individual property owners can ask to amend the Comprehensive Plan map and zoning map. This type of review is called quasi-judicial and it is processed by the Bureau of Development Services. When this type of review occurs, the Bureau of Development Services staff must make findings that the change to the comp plan map is supportive of the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies.

The Comprehensive Plan is overall City policy, and although not required, the plan can be used as guidance to support other types of efforts carried out by City agencies or community organizations, such as watershed planning, park and open space planning, emergency preparedness, and stormwater management.

Frequent users of the Comprehensive Plan include:

- the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability;
- the Bureau of Development Services;
- the Portland Bureau of Transportation; and
- community groups (when responding to or appealing legislative decisions or quasi-judicial land use reviews).