



West Portland Town Center Plan

COMMON THEMES ARISE FROM ENGAGING A DIVERSE COMMUNITY
Residents in the West Portland Town Center share hopes, aspirations and pride for their diverse and strong community

Nearly 200 residents came together at two events in the spring and summer of 2019 to hear each other's stories, build community, and create a vision for the area. Participants were asked: **"What is your greatest hope for the town center? What are you most proud of now?"**

"West Portland is a beautiful place that I spend most of my time because of my community. I would like to see more affordable housing, a food market, and a community center."

"I want it (West Portland Town Center) to be a real place that naturally draws many people rather than cars to the area, a SW PDX living room like Pioneer Courthouse Square."

"I'm proud of the growing cultural diversity in our neighborhoods so my son can grow up with greater understanding and appreciation for other cultures and languages. I'm worried about non-English language speakers not getting their voices heard — they're so often not at the table but are affected most by displacement."

"It needs to become highly walkable. It needs to become a true urban village. And the land use needs to be efficient, as opposed to empty parking lots and non-place, people of all incomes should be walking, biking and taking transit."

"My hope is that everyone has decent housing, adequate access to healthy food, and efficient transit to school, work, etc."

"My hope is for West Portland Town Center to become a community with easy access to all livability requirements with a diverse population of people across income, ethnicity, age, LGBTQ, and any other under-represented folks. And a complete infrastructure to support all."



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Small group discussions about health, housing, economic prosperity and cultural and community assets

In groups, neighbors discussed their needs and challenges. People talked about the pride in their multi-cultural community and the desire to become more diverse. Some priorities we heard are summarized below:

- Prevent residential and cultural/social displacement. Housing displacement is a major concern. It affects households and the broader community.
- Invest in a walkable and safe pedestrian environment to improve health outcomes and reconnect a divided area and offer choices beyond the private automobile.
- Connect people and places. Community is about relationships, which need cultural gathering spaces and physical improvements across the area.
- Support a more resilient and emergency-ready community
- Support living wage jobs and affordable housing for young adults.
- Plan for healthy food options that bring people together and provide business opportunities.
- Plan for a multicultural commercial hub with affordable retail and culturally relevant goods and services.
- Jobs and training for low-income residents should come with the new development.

A walking tour highlighted the physical challenges of a town center divided by roads

Some themes and highlights we heard are summarized below:

- The town center area is divided in two. I-5 and Barbur split the area into north and south, creating a potential for two “hearts”:
 1. The civic and multi-family/residential area near Markham Elementary south of I-5.
 2. The area around Taylor’s Ferry, anchored by Barbur World Foods, is a commercial center north of I-5.
- Roadway conditions are a barrier and need improvements to de-emphasize the role of cars in local circulation.
- Many people are scared to walk and bike, especially on Barbur and SW Capitol.
- People want places to gather — commercial AND community-oriented spaces.
- Barbur Transit Center has potential for redevelopment to serve community needs, but getting there safely is as important as what is built there.
- The I-5 pedestrian bridge is a critical link, but some people do not know it exists!

Next Steps

Project staff and community partners are using this feedback to inform and guide the development of West Portland Town Center future land use scenarios and a community development framework. In February 2020, a draft of these will be released for review and discussion at an open house. Keep in touch and learn more at: www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/westportland.

Questions? Contact Joan Frederiksen at joan.frederiksen@portlandoregon.gov or call 503-823-3111