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From Downtown Plan to Central City Summit: Trends in Portland's Central City, 1970-1998

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FROM
DOWNTOWN PLAN
TO
CENTRAL CITY SUMMIT

TRENDS IN
PORTLAND'S CENTRAL CITY
1970-1998

October 1998

CENTRAL CITY SUMMIT
DELIBERATING OUR DESTINY

Thursday, November 19, 1998

Convened by:

Association for Portland Progress
City of Portland
Metro
Multnomah County
Portland State University
State of Oregon

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FROM
DOWNTOWN PLAN
TO
CENTRAL CITY SUMMIT

**TRENDS IN
PORTLAND'S CENTRAL CITY
1970-1998**

A Report to
Association for Portland Progress
City of Portland
Metro
Multnomah County
Portland State University
and
State of Oregon

Carl Abbott
Gerhard Pagenstecher
Britt Parrott

Editing and Graphics by Brian D. Scott

October 1998

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
From Downtown Plan to Central City Summit.....	3
1. The Downtown Plan	3
2. The Central City Plan	5
3. Region 2040	5
4. Central City Summit	6
Leadership and Participation.....	7
1. Civic, Neighborhood, and Business Organizations	7
2. Business Leadership	8
3. Political Leadership	8
Transportation.....	9
1. Access to the Central City	9
2. Circulation within the Central City	10
3. Inter-city Passenger Transportation	11
4. Freight Transportation	11
5. Comparisons to 1972 Plan	12
Housing and Resident Population.....	13
1. Population	13
2. Housing	15
3. Housing Location Patterns	16
4. Problems, Prospects, and Comparisons	17
Jobs and Economy	19
1. Employment	19
2. Characteristics of Central City Jobs	20
3. Office Space	21
4. Corporate/Organizational Headquarters	22
5. Retailing	23
6. Tourism	23
7. Industrial Employment	24
8. Comparisons to 1972 Plan	25

Urban Design.....	27
1. Design Review	27
2. Historic Preservation	28
3. Public Art	28
4. Comparisons to 1972 Plan	30
Arts, Culture, and Education	31
1. Cinema	31
2. Art Galleries	31
3. Metropolitan Media	31
4. Museums and Musical Organizations	32
5. Enrollment in Educational Institutions	32
6. Community Events	33
7. Comparisons to 1972 Plan	34
Social Issues.....	35
1. Demographic Patterns and Populations in Need	35
2. Social Service Providers	36
3. Crime and Safety	37
4. Comparisons to 1972 Plan	38
Open Space and Environment.....	39
1. Public Open Spaces	39
2. Air Quality	40
3. Water Quality	41
4. Comparisons with 1972 Plan	42
A Quarter Century of Change.....	43
Acknowledgements.....	47

Introduction

This report looks both to Portland's past and to its future.

It is prepared as background for the Portland Central City Summit, convened on November 19, 1998 by a public-private consortium of the Association for Portland Progress, City of Portland, Metro, Multnomah County, Portland State University, and the State of Oregon.

The report takes a look backward over the last generation of civic action by summarizing changes in Portland's downtown and adjacent central districts from the beginning of the 1970s--when Portland wrote and adopted its first downtown plan--to 1998. It offers a foundation for thinking about the future by profiling the character of central Portland near the end of the twentieth century.

We have used quantitative data where feasible, supplemented by qualitative assessments where appropriate numerical indicators are not available. It highlights important trends and patterns in population, housing, economic activity, transportation, the arts, education, the built and natural environments, social problems, and leadership. It also indicates where additional research is vital for future planning.

This document is intended as a comprehensive and accessible analysis of public data. Readers interested in specific topics should also seek out more detailed documentation from the government agencies, social service providers, and civic organizations whose staff and reports furnished many of the specific data that are reviewed here.

We expect that readers will find confirmation for many of their assumptions and expectations about central Portland--its dominance of high-end professional services, for example, or the systematic effort to incorporate an ethic of good design in the development process. They may find some pleasant surprises, such as rapid growth of transit trips to downtown compared to automobile trips. They may also find such uncomfortable challenges as the slowing market for private office space or the slow growth of mainstream educational and cultural institutions.

In each case, the report is intended to provide a baseline for the discussions of Portland's future that the Central City Summit will initiate.

From Downtown Plan to Central City Summit

Portland's central city has benefited from three decades of active planning and involvement by business leaders, elected officials, and interested citizens. As described below, several formal plans are the milestones of these efforts, but the years between have also been characterized by consistent hard work in crafting the policies and projects that have turned the plans into realities.

1. *The Downtown Plan*

The 1970s in Portland were marked by the construction of a powerful alliance between downtown business interests and residents of older neighborhoods. At the start of the decade, Portland faced the same sorts of problems that were throwing other U.S. cities into a state of “urban crisis.” Downtown parking was inadequate, the private bus system was failing, and a new superregional mall in the affluent western suburbs threatened the end of downtown retailing. At the same time, older neighborhoods were threatened by institutional expansion, schemes for large-scale land clearance and redevelopment, concentrated poverty, and racial inequities.

The chief architect and beneficiary of the political transition was Neil Goldschmidt, elected to City Council in 1970 and as mayor in 1972. By the start of his first mayoral term, Goldschmidt and his staff had drawn on a ferment of political and planning ideas and sketched out an integrated strategy involving the coordination of land use and transportation policies. They were strongly influenced by the 1970 census, which showed the effects of a declining proportion of middle class families on neighborhood diversity and city tax base. During 1973, 1974, and 1975, Goldschmidt's team brought together a variety of ideas that were waiting for precise definition and articulated them as parts of a single political package that offered benefits for a wide range of citizens and groups.

“The so-called ‘population strategy’ emphasized public transportation, neighborhood revitalization, and downtown reinvestment.”

This so-called “population strategy” emphasized public transportation, neighborhood revitalization, and downtown planning. Improved public transit would improve air quality, enhance the attractiveness of older neighborhoods, and bring workers and shoppers downtown. In turn, a vital business center would protect property values in surrounding districts and increase their attractiveness for residential reinvestment. Middle-class families who remained or moved into inner neighborhoods would patronize downtown businesses, and prosperity would support high levels of public services. Neighborhood planning would focus on housing rehabilitation and on visible amenities to keep older residential areas competitive with the suburbs.

The cornerstone of the strategy was preservation of a user-friendly downtown. Business worries about suburban competition and parking problems coincided at the end of the 1960s with public disgust with a blighted riverfront. In 1970-72, an unusual alliance between city and state officials opened the opportunity to rethink downtown planning. Neil Goldschmidt and other city leaders worked with Governor Tom McCall and with Glenn Jackson, chair of the state Highway Commission, to remove the six-lane Harbor Drive expressway from the downtown waterfront. The action fired imaginations about radical responses to other downtown problems. A rising generation of technically sophisticated citizen activists worked with city officials, downtown retailers, property owners, neighborhood groups, and civic organizations to treat previously isolated issues (parking, bus service, housing, retailing) as part of a single comprehensive package.

The resulting **Downtown Plan of 1972**, finished as Goldschmidt moved from City Council to the mayor's office, offered integrated solutions to a long list of problems that Portlanders had approached piecemeal for two generations. It was technically sound because its proposals were based on improvements in

“The plan was politically viable because it prescribed tradeoffs among different interests as part of a coherent strategy.”

access and transportation. It was politically viable because it prescribed tradeoffs among different interests as part of a coherent strategy. It stirred citizen support because it spoke to the importance of making downtown a “pleasurable human environment” as well as dealing with practicalities of real estate and employment. Specifics ranged from a waterfront park and pedestrian-oriented design to high-density retail and office corridors crossing in the center of downtown. The ideas

found strong advocacy in the mayor's office and an institutional home in the form of a downtown design review process.

An essential element of the downtown strategy was a simultaneous shift of transportation investment from highways to public transit. A new Tri-County Metropolitan Transit District (Tri-Met) absorbed the private bus system in 1969. A key feature of the Downtown Plan was a transit mall that drew on the experience of Minneapolis. Opened in 1977, the mall increased the speed of bus service and facilitated transfers. The second major transit decision was the 1975 cancellation of the so-called Mount Hood Freeway, a five-mile connector that would have devastated half a dozen lower middle class neighborhoods in southeast Portland. Most of the federal money was transferred to build a successful fifteen-mile light rail line from downtown to the eastern suburb of Gresham.

2. The Central City Plan

In 1988, sixteen years after completion of the Downtown Plan, Portland City Council adopted a new **Central City Plan**. Started in the midst of a statewide economic slump in the 1980s, one purpose of the new planning effort was to infuse new energy and imagination into thinking about the future of central Portland. The second purpose was to generate a new set of projects for the urban core as many of the specifics of the 1972 plan were being implemented (see appendix for scorecard on the Plan’s suggested First Phase Projects).

The Central City Plan followed many precedents from its predecessor. It worked for extensive citizen involvement. Its overall vision statement called for “an exhilarating environment” in Portland’s core districts with engaging architecture, green spaces, river vistas and access, and development at a human scale. Its specific elements were intended to “enhance the Central City as a livable, walkable area which focuses on the river and captures the glitter and excitement of city living.”

The most striking new feature of the Central City Plan is its definition of an urban core that extends across and along the Willamette River. As with similar plans for downtown San Francisco (1985) and downtown Philadelphia (1988), Portland chose to emphasize horizontal expansion of the downtown rather than vertical expansion through amenity bonuses and higher density allowances in the historic core. The “Central City” not only included the traditional downtown but also added the Central Eastside, Lloyd District, Lower Albina, Northwest Triangle [Pearl District/River District], Goose Hollow, and North Macadam districts. In summary, Portland in 1988 agreed on the careful extension of a thriving business core into surrounding areas containing older industrial and commercial uses and substantial amounts of reusable land.

3. Region 2040

In 1997, Metro completed a multi-year planning process to direct regional growth in the twenty-first century. The **Region 2040** planning effort and the resulting **Regional Framework Plan**, adopted by Metro Council in 1997, recognizes the Portland Central City as “the hub of business and cultural activity in the metropolitan region.” It further states that “the role of downtown Portland as a center for finance and commerce, government, retail, tourism, arts and entertainment will continue in the future.”

Regional planning for compact growth and for a radial transportation network centered on downtown Portland reinforces this continuing importance for core districts and adjacent neighborhoods.

In specific, the Regional Framework Plan builds on development targets defined in the City of Portland’s **Central City Transportation Management Plan** of 1994. That plan set the goal of 15,000 new housing units and 75,000 additional jobs in the central city districts by 2010. Looking at growth

Central City Chronology 1.	
Portland Central City: Plans and Policies	
1958/66	South Auditorium Urban Renewal District
...	
1967	Portland State College Urban Renewal District
...	
...	
...	
1972	Downtown Plan
...	
1974	Downtown Waterfront Urban Renewal Plan
1975	Downtown Parking and Circulation Policy
...	
1977	Corbett-Terwilliger-Lair Hill Policy Plan
...	
1979	Willamette Greenway Plan Design Review Commission AX [RX] zoning for downtown west of 10 th
1980	Comprehensive Plan: Industrial Sanctuary Policy Downtown Design Guidelines
1981	North of Burnside Plan
...	
...	
1984	Transit Station Area Planning Program
1985	Northwest Triangle Plan Macadam Corridor Plan
...	
...	
1988	Central City Plan
1989	Economic Improvement District for downtown Portland
...	
...	
1992	North Macadam Plan
1993	Albina Community Plan
...	
1995	Downtown parking lid removed University District Plan
1996	River District Plan Central City 2000
1997	River District agreement with Hoyt Street Properties

possibilities and needs for the larger metropolitan region, the 2040 plan anticipates that the central city will add jobs at the same rate as the larger region, retaining its 20 percent share of metropolitan employment. It also anticipates new housing through building conversions and reuse of selected central city industrial lands.

4. Central City Summit

In 1997, a group of public sector and private sector partners realized that the twenty-fifth anniversary of the 1972 Plan provided a good occasion to take stock of the progress and problems of the central city. The partners include the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Metro, the State of Oregon and Portland State University through its Institute for Portland Metropolitan Studies, the Association for Portland Progress, and Livable Oregon. One result of this effort is the Central City Summit on November 19, 1998. The Summit builds on work by 200 civic leaders and offers the opportunity to design a long-term agenda. Within a context of rapid regional growth, the intent is to solidify leadership and commitment to the central city and define needs and opportunities for the next twenty-five years of central city development.

Leadership and Participation

Central Portland has benefited in the past three decades from strong civic leadership. It has attracted policy initiatives from elected officials such as Neil Goldschmidt, Lloyd Anderson, Don Clark, Mike Lindberg, Bud Clark, and Vera Katz. A strong business community with an ethic of civic engagement has been supportive of the Downtown Plan, Central City Plan, and district redevelopment efforts. The Portland system of citizen involvement has also invited substantial participation by community activists and advocates.

1. Civic, Neighborhood, and Business Organizations

One measure of civic leadership and participation is the number of community groups engaged with downtown issues. Comparison of 1972 and 1998 lists shows substantial expansion of the organizational infrastructure. More groups now represent residents and businesses in different parts of the central city, while the broadly based Association for Portland Progress has developed as the advocate for downtown businesses and downtown users.

Table 1. **Civic, Neighborhood, and Business Organizations**

Downtown focused organizations

1972 only:

- Burnside Community Council
- Downtown Plan Citizen Advisory Committee
- Portland Improvement Corporation

1972 and 1998:

- Downtown Community Association

New since 1972:

- Association for Portland Progress
- Pearl District Association
- Central Eastside Industrial Council
- Lloyd District Community Association
- Old Town/Chinatown Neighborhood Association
- Goose Hollow Business Association
- North Macadam District Council
- Lower Albina Council
- Macadam Corridor Business Association
- Northwest Triangle Business Association
- Historic Old Town [business association]

City/Regional Organizations with Strong Central City Interest

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| - City Club | - Building Owners and Managers Association |
| - Chamber of Commerce | - American Institute of Architects |
| - Livable Oregon | - Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association |

Neighborhood Associations that Overlap Central City

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| - Sullivan's Gulch | - Buckman |
| - Eliot | - Hosford-Abernathy |
| - Kerns | - Goose Hollow-Foothills League |

2. Business Leadership

The composition of business leadership has changed since 1972.

A strong core of locally owned or locally based companies continues to maintain a strong interest in the future of the central city. The leaders of these companies are now able to work together through the Association for

Portland Progress, organized in 1979 at the initiative of Mayor Neil Goldschmidt and such business leaders as Fred Stickel, Bill Naito, and Pete Mark. Many key parcels of central city land remain in the control of local and state government agencies, utilities, and local private investor-developers. Such owners, for example, are playing central roles in the development of the Pearl District, River District, and southern waterfront.

“A strong core of locally based companies continue to maintain a strong interest in the future of the central city, but Portland has experienced the slow erosion in its locally controlled business sector that has characterized most American cities.”

At the same time, Portland has experienced the slow erosion in its locally controlled business sector that has characterized most American cities in an era of economic globalization and corporate consolidation. In 1979, 71 percent of the founding board members of the Association for Portland Progress

represented locally based companies. By 1998, only 59 percent of the APP board represented such local companies. This percentage shift is incremental rather than dramatic, but the change includes the transfer to outside control of three of the most important local businesses—U.S. National Bank, First National Bank, and Portland General Electric. Several important real estate holdings, such as the Morgan Park Properties Portfolio, have passed to national ownership through real estate investment trusts.

3. Political Leadership

Political leadership, as measured by membership on Portland City Council, underwent a generational revolution between 1969 and 1973. After no changes in council membership from 1959 through 1968, the next five years brought a complete turnover. In a change that certainly encouraged and supported the innovations of the Downtown Plan, the average age of council members dropped by fifteen years from 1969 to 1974.

After that wholesale makeover, membership was relatively stable for a decade, with only two new faces in 1974 and 1979. Council membership was more volatile during the 1980s, when the city was coping with a statewide economic downturn and absorbing large numbers of new residents with an active annexation program in central Multnomah County.

The 1990s have brought a less drastic version of the generational revolution of the early 1970s. All of the council members as of 1998 were first elected to their positions in the 1990s. With an average age under fifty, they represent a generation which has built careers within the framework established by the 1972 Plan and which is likely to be open to new ideas about the city's future.

Transportation

From the removal of Harbor Drive to the construction of light rail lines, changes in transportation to, through, and around central Portland have involved much larger investments of public funds than any other downtown initiatives. These investments have dramatically reshaped the central city and provided a framework for its evolution as a center of economic and social activity.

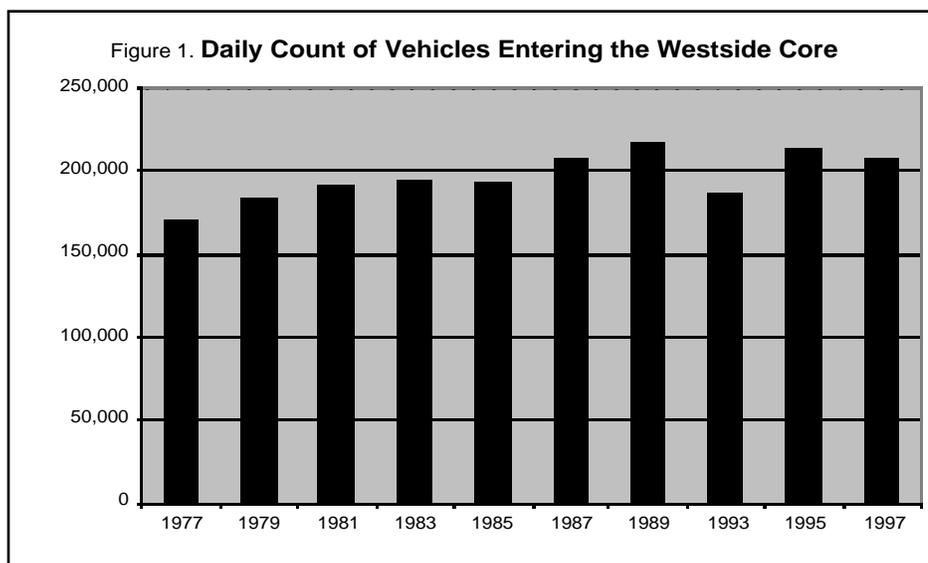
1. Access to the Central City

According to the Texas Transportation Institute, Portland ranks fourteenth among the top fifty urban areas in roadway congestion.

However, getting to downtown today remains relatively easy in comparison to competitor cities such as Seattle, in large part because of public transit improvements. The downtown transit mall built in the mid-1970s along Fifth and Sixth Avenues is the hub for most bus lines. The east-west light rail line crosses the downtown and serves additional central city areas. The location of housing within and near downtown allows for quick pedestrian and bicycle trips.

Transportation agencies periodically count the average number of vehicles entering the area defined by Front, Everett, I-405, and 13th. The number of automobiles crossing this cordon line has grown from 176,845 per day in 1976 to 207,390 in 1997, an increase of 17 percent.

“Although Portland ranks fourteenth among the top fifty urban areas in roadway congestion, getting to downtown today remains relatively easy in comparison to competitor cities such as Seattle.”



City of Portland, Bureau of Transportation, 1998

Efforts to improve air quality led in 1975 to the imposition of a downtown parking space limitation (known as the “parking lid”) for the area bounded by the Willamette River, Hoyt Street, and I-405 (applicable to all downtown parking spaces except those associated with hotels and residences). As a result, the number of downtown parking spaces (on- and off-street) grew from approximately 40,000 in 1975 to 41,000 in 1988 and 43,000 in 1998. Use of the downtown Smart Park garages has grown from 3257 average weekday tickets in 1984 to 7275 average weekday tickets in 1998, showing the growing demand for short-term parking for downtown shopping, business, and entertainment and increasing efficiency in the use of the available parking spaces.

Transit trips to downtown increased from 79,000 daily trips in 1975 to 128,000 daily trips in 1990, an increase of 62 percent. This increase far

“Transit trips to downtown increased from 79,000 daily trips in 1975 to 128,000 daily trips in 1990, an increase of 62 percent, far outpacing the 17% increase in auto trips.”

outpaced the rate of increase in the number of automobiles entering downtown. One source indicates that over 40 percent of commuters to downtown use transit to get to work (APP). Metro’s Household Surveys show that downtown work trip mode share for transit rose from 32 percent in 1980 to 35 percent in 1985 but then dropped to 31 percent in 1994. The share of inner eastside work trips carried by transit was steady at 5-6 percent from 1980 to 1994.

Portland has had an active program to assist bicycle commuting including the development of a set of bicycle lanes on streets accessing downtown.

A striking conclusion from transportation data is that the use of public transit to reach downtown has grown much more rapidly than the use of automobiles. For a comparable period (1975-90), transit use grew by 62 percent while automobile use grew by only 20 percent and has been essentially stable in the 1990s. The average number of persons per vehicle entering downtown has also been dropping since the 1970s, a decade when gasoline shortages encouraged car pooling. The 20 percent growth in vehicle trips thus overstates the actual increase in persons entering downtown by automobile. In contrast, transit trips are presumably increasing further with the completion of the Hillsboro light rail line, which has had strong ridership in its first month of operation.

2. Circulation within the Central City

Circulation within the central city was enhanced in the 1970s by the creation of the transit mall and establishment of the “Fareless Square” program for free bus ridership within the downtown core. Light rail service has enhanced opportunities for movement within downtown.

The planned Central City Streetcar from Portland State University to Northwest Portland will further enhance travel within the central city.

Compared to those in the rest of the region, a higher percentage of people who live downtown can reach their place of work in ten minutes or less. At the same time, however, a growing proportion of downtown residents own at least one car, an indication of the number of middle and upper income residents who have been moving into new downtown housing. According to the Downtown Community Association, fewer than 29 percent of households in downtown had access to a car in 1980. By 1990, the total was 45 percent.

3. Inter-city Passenger Transportation

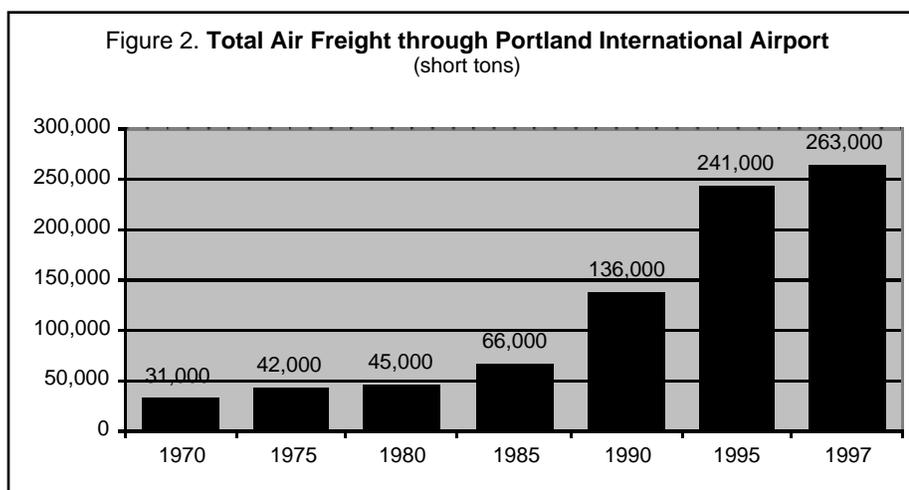
The major change in inter-city transportation relative to downtown has been the relocation of inter-city bus terminals near Union Station, as suggested in 1972.

In addition, downtown benefits from the close-in location of Portland International Airport. The planned light rail connection from the airport to the eastside MAX and downtown promises to enhance this accessibility.

4. Freight Transportation

Although downtown Portland is not a major origin or destination for inter-city freight, the adjacent industrial areas depend on both rail and truck access. Truck access to the Northwest Industrial District and waterfront north of downtown has been enhanced by improved access from I-405 to Yeon Avenue. Access to Lower Albina benefits marginally from the new I-5 to Greeley Avenue ramps. The reconstruction of the I-5 to I-84 connection off the Marquam Bridge has marginally improved access into the Central Eastside District but truck access from the district onto the Interstate system remains poor.

The volume of airfreight through Portland International Airport has grown eight-fold since 1970. Use of airfreight is particularly important to high technology industries with high value-to-weight products and to specialized wholesaling and distribution businesses.



Central City Chronology 2.

Central City Transportation Development

1969	Tri-Met established
...	
...	
...	
1973	Fremont Bridge opens
1974	Harbor Drive demolished
1975	Downtown Parking and Circulation Policy (parking lid)
...	
1977	Transit Mall opens
1978	Transit Mall dedicated
...	
...	
...	
...	
1984	Transit Station Area Planning Program
...	
1986	MAX opens to Gresham
...	
...	
...	
...	
...	
1994	Transit Mall north extension Central City Transportation Management Plan (parking lid replaced)
...	
...	
...	
1998	MAX opens to Hillsboro Central City Trolley plans move forward

5. Comparisons to 1972 Plan

The 1972 Plan called for the city to encourage pedestrians and bicycling; the city has responded with a strong bicycle program and with design standards that promote a lively streetscape. There is little question that Portland has one of the most pedestrian friendly downtowns among large U.S. cities.

“There is little question that Portland has one of the most pedestrian friendly downtowns among large U.S. cities.”

The Plan proposed the development of a system of short-term parking facilities to support retail and service businesses. The construction and management of several new parking garages has responded to this goal.

The Plan called for public transit to achieve a 65-75 percent share of all downtown trips, a goal that far exceeds the reality of 1998 and may continue to be unrealistic

Housing and Resident Population

Central city population has been relatively stable since 1970, after falling rapidly in the 1950s and 1960s. The 1972 Plan estimated that downtown population had dropped from 28,000 in 1950 to 11,000 in 1970. Adjacent areas of the central city also lost population, largely as a result of land clearance for urban renewal projects and freeway construction.

Preservation or expansion of downtown housing was a major feature of the 1972 Plan. Since that time, the central city has been the site for at least 60 housing projects (renovation or new construction), a record that far surpasses that in comparable cities such as Columbus, Indianapolis, or Kansas City. The pace of housing production accelerated substantially in the middle and late 1990s.

1. Population

Permanent Residents

There are several challenges in finding reliable measures of central city population. Census tracts and zip code areas either underbound or overbound the downtown and central city areas. Different agencies and organizations use different combinations of census tracts as their “downtown” district. For example, Multnomah County’s “downtown” for measuring social variables and services is larger than the “downtown” of the 1972 Plan and the “downtown” of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement. Nevertheless, we can use a consistent set of census tracts to compare basic demographics of permanent residents of a core district from 1970 to 1990. Metro’s tract estimates for 1995 and federal American Community Survey data for 1996 can be used to extend the population counts.

“The central city has been the site for at least 60 housing projects (renovation or new construction), a record that far surpasses that in comparable cities such as Columbus, Indianapolis, or Kansas City.”

For the downtown core, census tracts work relatively well because the tracts have a rough fit with the customary geographic boundaries for downtown, namely I-405 and the Willamette River. For the broader central city, however, census tracts cover a larger territory than is defined by the Central City Plan. For example, the census tracts on the east side of the river span both central city industrial areas and adjacent neighborhoods not usually considered parts of the central city. Central city data compiled by the Portland Development Commission also include one census tract that is entirely outside the Planning Bureau’s definition of the central city. The census tracts used in the following table approximate three central areas:

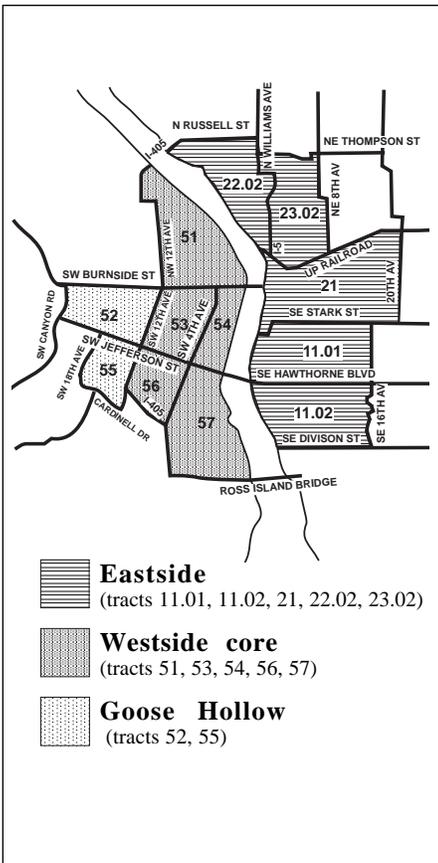


Table 2. Central City Population

Tract	1970	1980	1990	1995*	1996**
11.01	2,313	1,663	1,852	1,874	1,712
11.02	1,835	1,471	1,331	1,373	1,278
21	2,551	2,066	2,066	2,246	1,935
22.02	462	180	184	274	197
23.02	1,262	1,086	972	984	1,001
Eastside Subtotal	8,423	6,466	6,405	6,751	6,123
51	1,487	1,390	1,590	1,694	2,067
53	2,047	1,983	1,864	1,879	2,011
54	963	435	866	1,179	785
56	2,778	2,807	3,433	3,507	3,417
57	1,015	1,469	1,775	2,000	2,682
Westside Core Subtotal	8,290	8,084	9,528	10,259	10,962
52	3,516	3,479	3,388	4,060	3,545
55	1,222	1,366	1,385	1,775	1,614
Goose Hollow Subtotal	4,738	4,845	4,773	5,835	5,519
Central City Total	21,451	19,395	20,706	22,845	22,244

* Metro, August 27, 1997, assuming fairly even growth among all central city tracts.
 ** American Community Survey (sampled data), adjusted by PSU Center for Population Research and Census to include residents in group quarters

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

Population declines since 1970 have been greatest on the close-in east side, where most of the loss occurred in the 1970s. The southern end of the downtown south of Jefferson Street has shown substantial increases, reflecting the location of the largest cluster of new housing (with roughly 600 additional units in progress). The data since 1990 also show the onset of substantial population growth in the Pearl District and River District [51], again with several hundred further units in process.¹

¹ There have been several other attempts to count the population with the downtown area, either based on census information or on other primary sources of information. The main problem with some of these counts is their definition of downtown. For the Downtown Community Association, population counts are based on DCA boundaries, which do not include the Pearl Neighborhood Association area. For 1990, the population within the DCA boundary totaled 8,305, which does not include all of tracts 51 and 57, but includes parts of 52 and 55.

Transient Residents

In addition to permanent residents, the central city houses two populations on a short-term basis. Occupants of day-to-day hotel rooms are discussed under tourism. Downtown has also been the home to a transient skid road population since the nineteenth century—drifters, casual laborers, temporary renters of single rooms and flophouse beds, and homeless persons. In turn, homelessness is a condition with imprecise definition. That used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and adopted by the Housing Authority of Portland defines a person as homeless whose “nighttime residence is (a) in public or private emergency shelters . . . and, where temporary vouchers are provided by private or public agencies, even hotels, apartments, or boarding houses; or (b) in the streets, parks, subways, bus terminals, railroad stations, airports, under bridges or aqueducts, abandoned buildings without utilities, cars, trucks, or any other public or private space that is not designated for shelter.”

On February 28, 1989, social service agencies conducted a snapshot census. On that night they found that 1,165 persons in Multnomah County received emergency shelter under category (a); no count was attempted for category (b). Over the course of a full year in 1988-89, roughly 17,000 different individuals received emergency shelter for at least one night. The data do not divide these persons by central city/outside central city. By November 1995, the snapshot count found 1,590 individuals receiving shelter and 447 turned away due to lack of space.

2. Housing

Downtown housing is in rapid change in the 1990s. The continuing loss of affordable housing contrasts with increasing amounts of market rate and higher income housing in newly developing areas such as the Pearl District and south downtown.

The Northwest Pilot Project reported in its *1998 Affordable Housing Inventory* that the total number of units of affordable downtown housing has been decreasing since 1978 [the 1998 inventory used monthly rent of \$425 as the top limit of affordability, even though that figure is higher than the U.S. H.U.D. standard]. The count of affordable units went from 5,183 in 1978 to 4,554 in 1994, 4,021 in 1997, and 3,832 in 1998. Older data on the decline in single room occupancy (SRO) units show a similar decline, from 4,128 rooms in 1970 to 2,738 rooms in 1978 and 1,702 rooms in 1986, but rising to 2,310 rooms in 1994.

“Continuing loss of affordable housing contrasts with increasing amounts of market rate and higher income housing.”

Much of the loss of affordable units in the 1970s and 1980s resulted from demolitions or from renovations of older low-rent hotels such as the Heathman and Governor for the tourism and business markets. In the 1990s much of the loss has come from rapidly rising rents in a tight housing market.

The Northwest Pilot Project notes that a person at a full time minimum wage job would earn \$1040 per month; at the customary rule of thumb of 30 percent of income for housing, such an individual should pay no more than \$312 per month for housing. Average incomes of individuals depending on military pensions or social security fall below the minimum wage level. As a consequence, residential hotels that previously catered to retirees now rent to the working poor.

“The central city will need to add roughly 500 housing units per year to meet the goal of 15,000 new units between 1994 and 2015.”

While affordable housing suffers a loss, the total amount of housing in downtown and Goose Hollow has increased slightly since 1970. According to a Central City Plan Housing Report issued by the city in July 1994, there were 9,274 units in downtown (including the River District) and Goose Hollow in 1970. The total grew to 10,766 units in 1980 but slipped to 9,902 in 1990.

Metro’s data for the census tracts covering the central city showed a total of 13,644 housing units in 1994. The Central City 2000 report showed the number of units in the same year at 14,700, a 9 percent gain from 13,500 in 1990. Portland Development Commission figures show an increase of 1,538 housing units in the central city between 1990 and 1995, suggesting a 1995 total of slightly more than 15,000 housing units.

The central city will need to add roughly 500 housing units per year to meet the goal of 15,000 new units between 1994 and 2015 as set by the Region 2040 Plan and the City of Portland (the goal breaks out to 2,500 units for the Eastside, 3800 units for downtown, 5,500 units for the River District, and 3,000 units for the North Macadam area). Both PDC and Metro data suggest that the central city gained approximately 300 housing units per year in the first half of the 1990s, a rate that would fall short of the annual increment of 750 units needed to meet the 2015 goal. However, housing production in 1996-98 has been approximately 600 units per year, a number that will likely be exceeded in 1999. These figures for the later 1990s make achievement of the 2015 goal look possible, although not assured.

It is also important to note that the central city housing market is supplemented and supported by strong markets for housing in immediately adjacent neighborhoods. Neighborhoods such as Corbett and Eliot are also attracting new infill housing, whose residents are natural customers for downtown businesses and are likely to be downtown workers.

3. Housing Location Patterns

Urban renewal projects of the 1950s and 1960s destroyed substantial amounts of low rent housing in the southern end of downtown through the South Auditorium and Portland State projects. Construction of the Memorial Coliseum and I-5 destroyed another concentration of low rent housing on the near east side that was largely occupied by African Americans. The 1970s and

1980s brought continued attrition of housing on fringe areas of the commercial core of the downtown. One report found housing losses for 1978-87 to be concentrated in the Lownsdale area (13 sites), Old Town (10 sites), and the area between Burnside, Morrison, Sixth, and I-405 (11 sites).

In contrast, housing has been added in the South Auditorium district in the 1970s and 1980s; south of Jefferson in Riverplace, the South Park Blocks, and west of Tenth in the 1980s and 1990s; and in the Pearl District, River District, and Lloyd District in the 1990s.

Currently 4,942 residential units are planned for the River District Urban Renewal Area, adding an estimated 8,401 people to the downtown area. Of the new housing expected to be built there, 15-25 percent is expected to fall in the extremely low- to low-income range, 20-30 percent in the moderate-income range, and 50-60 percent in the middle- to upper-income range.

Another area of growth for housing may be the University District. College Housing Northwest oversees 1,254 units of housing in this southwest corner of downtown. By Fall of 1999, they will be adding 212 new units affordable to students in the Goose Hollow neighborhood. Plans for the University District include both market rate and student housing.

4. Problems, Prospects, and Comparisons

Since the early twentieth century, local governments in Portland and elsewhere in the United States have used both regulatory powers and construction subsidies to improve the quality of housing. The impact has been especially marked in central districts, where housing and safety codes have caused the closure of large numbers of substandard buildings. These areas have also been the location of many major land clearance and redevelopment projects.

The result in Portland has been a decrease in the age of housing in the central city. We have replaced cheap “market rate” housing, such as flophouses, SROs, and cubicle hotels, with subsidized and physically superior housing in rehabilitated hotels, special needs housing, and supervised transition housing. As a consequence, what we have of affordable housing is newer and better in quality.

Middle class housing is also newer. Almost no housing was built downtown from 1930 to 1950, and only two large apartment buildings in the 1960s. The result was that most central city apartments were 40 years old or more at the time of the Downtown Plan. In 1998, in contrast, much of the central city’s housing is less than 20 years old.

Because of the costs of centrally located land and the difficulties of building in congested areas, middle-income as well as low-income downtown housing has usually required public subsidies to be competitive with housing in other parts of the metropolitan area. Subsidies have taken the form of public

“Most central city apartments were 40 years old or more at the time of the Downtown Plan, but by 1998 much of the central city’s housing is less than 20 years old.”

Central City Chronology 3.

Major Housing Projects

(number of units in parenthesis)

Downtown Core

1970s

Rosenbaum Plaza (76 rehab)
Taft Hotel (80 rehab)

1980s

1200 Building (89)
Henry Building (153 rehab)
Alder House (132)

1990s

Westshore (118)

Downtown South of Jefferson:

1970s

Grant (140), Madison (104) & Lincoln (93) Towers
Eaton Apartments (24 rehab)
Rose Friend Apartments (60 rehab)

Portland Plaza (147)

Parkside Plaza (208)

1980s

Riverplace (182, 144, 108)

Clay Tower (236)

South Park Square (191)

University Park (125)

Fountain Plaza (47)

West Hall, PSU (189)

1990s

Gallery Place (31)

Peter Paulson Apartments (92)

Twelfth Avenue Terrace (118)

Essex House (162)

West Park Place (30)

St. James Apartments (112)

Village at Lovejoy Fountain (198)*

12th and Clay (147)*

12th and Jefferson (50)*

PSU School/Housing (108)*

1230 S.W. Columbia (147)*

Goose Hollow

1970s

Glass Staircase Apartments (45 rehab)

Goose Hollow Apartments (22)

1980s

Goose Hollow Village (60)

1990s

Legends Condominiums (90)

Stadium Station (100)

Web Plaza (39)*

Arbor House (27)*

(* for planned/in progress)

North of Burnside

1970s

Estate Hotel (160 rehab)

1980s

Sally McCracken Building (Athens Hotel rehab)

McCormick Pier (301)

Honeyman Hardware Lofts (108)

Irving Street Lofts (84)

Everett Station Lofts (36)

1990s

Riverstone (123)

Chown-Pella Lofts (68)

Swindells Building (105 rehab)

Yards at Union Station (550)

Pearl Court (199)

McKenzie Lofts (75)

Pearl Lofts (28)

Hoyt Commons (53)

Irving Townhouses (14)

Pearl Townhouses (10)

Flanders Lofts (25)

321 Park (18)*

Fifth Avenue Commons (70)*

North Park Lofts (68)*

Fifth Avenue Court (96)*

McDonald Center (54)*

Lloyd District

1990s

Lloyd Place Apartments (202)

Irvington Place (50)

Cascadia Tower (255)*

Lloyd Lofts (116)*

Central Eastside

1980s

Grand-Oak Apartments (40 rehab)

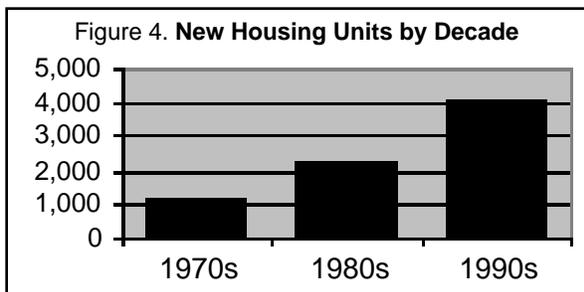
Wilshire Apartments (40 rehab)

1990s

Buckman Terrace (122)

Buckman Heights Apartments (144)*

REACH: 12th and Belmont (90)*



assembly and write-down of land costs (as in the South Auditorium Urban Renewal district), property tax freezes and rebates (as with McCormick Pier Apartments), or subsidization of low-rent apartments in mixed income developments.

Portland has clearly worked hard to meet the 1972 Plan goal of preserving and adding downtown housing. The community has an excellent record in providing new housing and rehabilitating low-rent downtown units. If the central city is to capture more of the expected metropolitan growth, however, it will want to attract a more diverse set of households. Indeed, one of the key recommendations in the Central City 2000 report was to “foster middle-income housing projects in the Central City.” In order to do this, the central city must include infrastructure and amenities that make it feel like a neighborhood. This might include schools, such as the proposed public elementary school on the Portland State University campus, and better connections between existing close-in neighborhoods through transportation and design improvements.

New housing has also met the 1972 goal of concentration in distinct residential districts with specific identities, such as Riverplace, Pearl District, River District, and South Park Blocks.

According to a recent report by the Fannie Mae Foundation, the population projected for downtown Portland by 2010/2015 is comparable to the populations expected in downtown Boston, Cleveland, San Antonio, and Seattle. It is higher than the totals expected in Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Columbus, Denver, or St. Louis.

Jobs and Economy

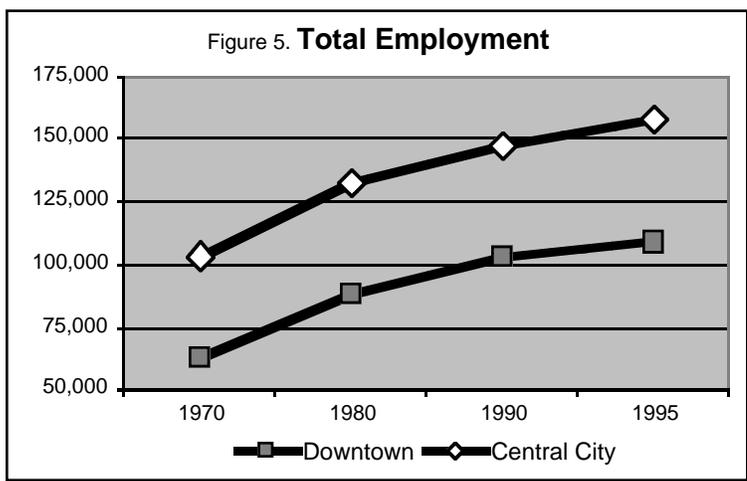
The 1972 Plan hoped to stabilize downtown as an employment and business center. The Region 2040 plan sees the larger central city as the focal point for the metropolitan region and the site of 75,000 additional jobs. Data show that downtown itself has remained a vital and diversified employment center, but with slower job growth in the 1990s than in the 1970s and 1980s. The broader central city, however, has continued to gain jobs in the 1990s.

1. Employment

Employment growth in the central city slowed in the 1990s after showing gains from 1980 to 1990. The central city captured 8 percent of metropolitan job growth from 1990 to 1995. By the latter date the central city accounted for approximately 17 percent of all jobs in the six-county Portland-Vancouver PMSA.

		Downtown	Central City
Total Employment	1970	62,700	103,000
	1980	88,900	132,200
	1990	103,900	147,500
	1995	108,400	158,100
Percentage Increase	1970-95	73 %	43 %
	1990-95	4 %	7 %
Average Yearly New Jobs	1970-95	1800	2200
	1990-95	900	2100

* Central city figures include downtown.



Source: Portland Development Commission (based on Metro's data)

According to plans based on Metro's 2040 Framework, 75,000 jobs need to be added in the central city by 2015 to meet the needs of the growing region. Given past trends, this forecast and the expectations it brings may be too ambitious. Straight extrapolation of central city employment trends during the 1990s would project 18,000 new downtown jobs and 42,000 new jobs for the entire central city. An earlier Metro population and employment forecast from the mid-1980s estimated 117,990 jobs in downtown by 2005. With the 1995 downtown employment at 108,300, this earlier forecast is on target if current growth is maintained.

2. Characteristics of Central City Jobs

Central city jobs are good jobs. The central city concentrates much of the area's high value, high wage activity. On average, central city workers earn 13 percent more than their suburban counterparts for comparable jobs, a differential that extends to clerical and entry-level positions.

“The central city concentrates much of the area's high value, high wage activity.”

Employment in the central city is concentrated in information and service industries. The industrial categories with the highest employment totals (1994 figures) were services (45,900); finance, insurance and real estate (27,500); government (26,100); retailing (16,800); and transportation, communication and utilities (8,400). This last category was the only one to show a substantial loss (1000 or more jobs) from 1990 to 1994, probably because of shifting employment locations for U.S. West.

At the level of two-digit SIC codes, the central city has disproportionate concentrations of workers in security brokerage, legal services, communications, real estate, insurance, museums, banking, hotels, engineering and management services, printing, water transportation, apparel, and business services.

A conceptual grouping of information industries by Patricia Scruggs and Joe Cortwright shows three high-paying clusters in the central city. The first, employing 9,400 workers, is “content producing” activities such as software, multi-media, printing, broadcasting, film and video, and advertising. The second, with 25,800 central city workers, is “financial and transaction services.” The third is “management, legal and engineering services,” with 14,300 central city workers.

Many of these activities can also be described as “business services.” One of the driving forces of the contemporary economy, business services are high value information services utilized by corporate and business management. In this category Portland's central city retains its traditional prominence:

- 10 of 10 largest law firms
- 9 of 10 largest accounting firms
- 9 of 10 largest architecture firms
- 9 of 11 largest public relations firms
- 8 of 10 largest advertising firms
- 4 of 10 largest environmental consulting firms
- 3 of 10 largest software developers

3. Office Space:

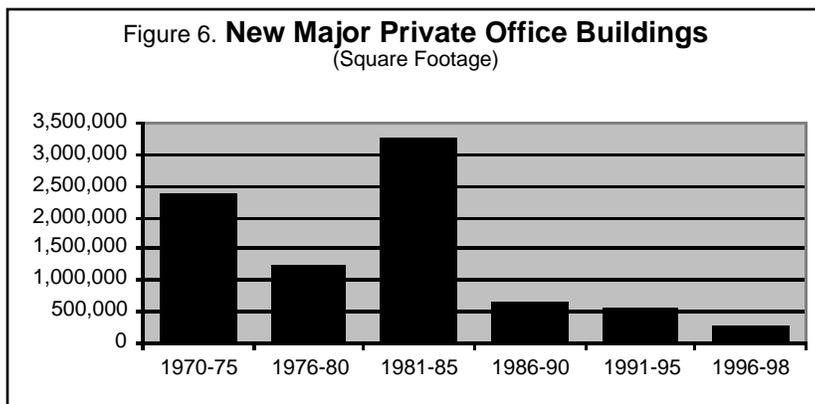
Office space inventories sometimes count only Class A space, while other inventories may also include Class B and Class C. Commonly used counts may include only leased and leasable office space, omitting owner-occupied buildings and government office buildings.

The best basic estimate of growth in leasable downtown office space (Association for Portland Progress) is:

- 1972: 5,706,000 square feet
- 1998: 11,791,000 square feet

The Central City 2000 Strategy (July 1996) reported 9,000,000 square feet of Class A space and 6,000,000 square feet of Class B and C. The difference between 15 million and 11.8 million may be an approximate measure of owner-occupied space.

A chronological list of major new office buildings (200,000 square feet or more) built since 1970 shows very substantial additions to inventory in the early 1970s and early 1980s, with slowed expansion in the late 1970s and since 1986. The peak of new construction in the early 1980s represents a response to the rapid economic and population growth in the metropolitan area in the 1970s.



Despite the approximate doubling of space, the central city share of metropolitan office space has steadily decreased in the face of rapid growth of suburban office buildings. At a rough estimate, downtown was the site for 80-

Central City Chronology 4.	
Portland Central City: Major Office Buildings	
[square footage in 1000s]	
1970	Georgia Pacific (now Standard Insurance) [428] Lloyd Building [233]
1971	Crown Plaza [221]
1972	First Interstate [695]
1973	200 Market [353]
1974	Benjamin Franklin Plaza [203]
1975	Lloyd 500 (Kaiser Permanente) [224] Green-Wyatt Federal Building [301]
...	
1977	Willamette Center (World Trade Center) [330]
...	
1979	Columbia Square [255]
1980	One Main Place [310] Orbanco (now 1001 Fifth Avenue) [340]
1981	Lloyd Tower Three [393] Pacific First Federal (now Pacific First Center) [228]
1982	Portland Building [412] Parkside Center [235]
1983	U.S. Bancorp [752] Justice Center [472] One Pacific Square [214]
1984	KOIN Center [270] PacWest [491]
1985	Bonneville Power Administration Building [417]
...	
1987	One Financial Center (Bank of America Center) [328]
...	
...	
1990	State Office Building, Lloyd District [259] Pioneer Place [284]
1991	Robert Duncan Plaza [293] 1000 Broadway [240]
...	
...	
...	
...	
...	
1998	Liberty Center [270] Federal Courthouse [500]
1999	ODS Morrison Tower Fox Tower

90 percent of office space in 1970. In 1989, the central business core contained 66 percent of Class A space in the metropolitan area. The slow pace of new downtown construction in the 1990s and continued suburban development has further reduced the central city share to 52 percent at the start of 1998. By best estimates, downtown accounted for 21 percent of new Class A space built 1991-97. During this same period, however, the vacancy rate in Class A space declined from 12 percent in 1991 to 3-4 percent in 1997.

“By any comparisons with comparable metropolitan areas, central Portland remains extremely strong as an office center.”

It should also be noted that six major public office buildings with 2,361,000 square feet of space have been added to the central city since 1975 (Green-Wyatt Building, Portland Building, Justice Center, Bonneville Power Administration Building, State Office Building, Federal Courthouse).

By any comparisons with comparable metropolitan areas, central Portland remains extremely strong as an office center. The 66 percent share of metropolitan office space in 1989 was second only to downtown Pittsburgh among large metropolitan areas and substantially above the 40 percent average for such areas.

4. Corporate/Organizational Headquarters

The central city is the location of choice for **federal, state, and local government agencies**. It houses the majority of City of Portland and Multnomah County offices and the central offices for Metro, the Port of Portland, and School District 1. It is the location of state and federal courts, the Bonneville Power Administration, and a number of state and federal agencies.

Major public office buildings include Portland City Hall, Multnomah County Courthouse, Portland Building, Justice Center, Green-Wyatt Federal Building, Bonneville Power Administration Buildings, State Office Building (Lloyd District), old and new Federal Courthouses, the old Customs House, Metro headquarters, Portland Public Schools headquarters, Oregon Department of Transportation building, Port of Portland Building (under construction), and Portland State University offices.

The central city plays a less prominent role as **headquarters location for large private employers**.

- In 1975, four of the *Fortune* 500 manufacturing companies had downtown Portland headquarters (Evans Products, Georgia Pacific, Willamette Industries and Louisiana Pacific). In 1998 the number was two (Willamette Industries, Louisiana Pacific).
- Since 1984, the Portland *Business Journal* has listed the fifty largest employers in the Portland area. In 1984, eleven of these employers had

their **national headquarters** in the central city. In 1996, the number had fallen to eight.

- In contrast to this trend, several private employers have recently located in the central city. Examples include PG&E Gas Transmission–Northwest, CFI-ProServes, and Kindercare.

5. Retailing

The preservation of downtown retailing was a major goal of the 1972 plan. Large investments in parking and bus transit in the 1970s and light rail transit in the 1980s and 1990s have been designed, in part, to support and enhance downtown retailing.

One response was major investment in new retail facilities opening in the 1970s (a new Nordstrom store; conversion of the Olds and King department store into the Galleria), the 1980s (Yamhill Marketplace; Riverplace) and the start of the 1990s (Pioneer Place).

“Investment in parking, bus transit, and light rail transit have been designed, in part, to support downtown retail.”

The most prominent retailing investment in the larger central city area was the renovation and restructuring of the Lloyd Center superregional mall.

Other changes in downtown retailing can be described as a general upscaling of market niche. These changes can be seen in the downtown retail core (Brookstone replaces Penney’s); in the development of the Pearl District as an arts/entertainment district; the upscaling of N.E. Broadway and the construction of substantial new retail space; and the incipient upscaling of S.E. Grand Avenue.

Long term trends are difficult to document more precisely because of the absence of sales tax data for Oregon retailers and the decision of the U.S. Bureau of the Census to stop reporting business data for central business districts after 1982.

6. Tourism

Portland’s central city has seen a substantial 57 percent increase in hotel rooms for daily rental by business travelers, tourists, and convention goers. The 1972 figures reported here are derived by taking the 1998 inventory and subtracting construction since 1972; they do not account for the possible demolition of hotel rooms since 1972. Four new hotels are under construction in the Lloyd District and downtown and one major expansion has been announced.

Table 4. Hotel Rooms		
	Downtown	Other Central City
1972	1712	1054
1998	3090	1742

Central Portland has clearly benefitted from an expanding convention business. No data are available on smaller conventions and meetings that utilize hotel meeting spaces and other small venues in the central city. Data are available on use and attendance at the Oregon Convention Center since its completion in 1990. *The Economic Impact of the Oregon Convention Center On The Tri-County Region* (CIC Research and Dean Runyan Associates, 1998) evaluates the total economic activity generated by the Oregon Convention Center (spending by type of event and by type of purchase), as well as annual Convention Center attendance by type of event. They point out that convention and trade show delegates are the driving force for economic impacts. These delegates represent only one-third of total attendance, but generate 96 percent of the economic impact”. The Portland Oregon Visitor’s Association’s *List of Booked Meetings 1989-1998* provides more detailed data per event but has slightly different annual attendance figures. Both the number of events and attendance for the years 1991 through 1998 have been flat. This probably reflects a capacity limit for the facility rather than a measure of demand for convention space in the central city.

Table 5. Attendance at Conventions and Community Events

Year	POVA		Convention Attendance	CIC/Runyan Community Events Attendance	Total Attendance
	Events	Attendance			
1989	19	2,778			
1990	116	46,775	8,555	301,988	310,541
1991	213	258,755	228,918	347,385	576,303
1992	196	189,758	223,192	394,788	617,980
1993	194	250,849	236,467	396,313	632,780
1994	222	298,972	273,427	427,367	745,794
1995	218	301,290	266,745	518,068	784,813
1996	241	251,403	226,821	401,953	628,774
1997	227	283,954	234,546	398,571	633,117
1998	222	260,721			
Total	1868	2,145,255			

7. Industrial Employment

The central city includes several historic industrial districts. The Central Eastside and Northwest Triangle developed in the early twentieth century as railroad based warehouse and light manufacturing zones. Lower Albina developed in the nineteenth century with the Union Pacific rail yards and waterfront industry, as did the South Macadam area. Close by is the larger Northwest Industrial District, which has developed from the 1860s through most of the twentieth century.

Industrial activity in the South Macadam and Northwest Triangle has essentially disappeared, as outmoded facilities have given way to redevelopment and redevelopment plans. The Lower Albina area has shown relatively few changes, although current industries feel the need for better truck access. The Central Eastside has benefitted from the city's industrial sanctuary zoning, which has helped the district maintain 18,000 close-in jobs. The types of firms represented in the Central Eastside Industrial District have remained essentially the same since 1970, despite turnover of individual companies.

8. Comparisons to 1972 Plan

By and large, downtown office expansion has followed the expectations of the 1972 Plan. Large new buildings have appeared along the transit spine (5th, 6th, Broadway) and in blocks closer to the river. In addition, the Lloyd District has continued to develop as an office center.

The Plan called for maintenance of a compact retail core in the blocks surrounding Sixth and Morrison. Both transit investment and investment in new retail space such as Pioneer Square has matched this goal. In addition, the 1972 plan hoped that restaurants and specialty shops would fill in between the retail core and river, as has occurred largely between Burnside and Stark.

More broadly, the understanding that employment in the central city will not follow the same path as in the rest of the region will be an important part of keeping central Portland prosperous. Keying in on the kinds of employment that will work in the central city and finding ways to encourage it might be a better task than aiming at a numerical goal.

Analysis of central city industries for the Portland Development Commission by Patricia Scruggs and Joe Cortwright (February 1998) grouped industries according to growth rate in the metropolitan area and penchant for central city locations. The greatest opportunities lie in fast-growth activities that are already attracted to the central city: engineering, business and management services, real estate, printing, apparel retailing, and security brokerage. Other opportunities lie in supporting moderate growth industries that have historically preferred central city locations: insurance, utilities, banking, legal services, communications, and transportation services.

“Industrial activity in the South Macadam and Northwest Triangle has essentially disappeared, while the types of firms represented in the Central Eastside Industrial District have remained essentially the same since 1970.”

“Employment in the central city will not follow the same path as in the rest of the region.”

Urban Design

Downtown Portland has a national reputation for community attention to urban design. Portland makes frequent “best practice” appearances in newspapers, national magazines, and professional journals. Although design is essentially a qualitative phenomenon, it is possible to describe the expansion of public programs intended to enhance the quality of the downtown cityscape.

1. Design Review

The function of design review began in 1964 under a committee of the Planning Commission. The area of concern was the South Park Blocks.

From 1972 on, the area covered by the Downtown Plan required design review. A Planning Commission subcommittee, comprised primarily of architects, provided initial design review. The subcommittee relied on the somewhat open-ended goals and guidelines about height, bulk, and set-backs found in the 1972 Plan. The three-block Willamette Center project was approved under this system and the design-defeat Cadillac-Fairview proposal for the retail core came forth during the same period.

Concern about lack of clear design guidelines led to establishment of a Design Review Commission in 1979 and adoption of Downtown Design Guidelines in 1980. New district plans have been added in the subsequent years with mixed use and design overlay zoning designations:

Table 6. Central City Design Plans

Year	Plan	Plan Type
1973	Downtown	Central Business District
1980	Downtown	Goals/Guidelines
1983	Downtown	Design Guidelines
1985	Macadam Corridor	Design Guidelines
1985	The Northwest Triangle	District
1988	Central City	District
1991	Scenic Resources Protection	
1991	Lloyd Center	District
1991	Central Eastside	District
1992	North Macadam	Design Guidelines
1993	Albina	Neighborhood
1995	University	District
1996	Goose Hollow Station	District, Design Guidelines
1996	Downtown	Community Residential
1996	River District	District, Design Guidelines

2. Historic Preservation

Portland has had an active historic preservation program since the 1960s. Attention expanded from individual buildings to districts in the 1970s, as indicated in the following list of historic districts designated by the city and/or placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Table 7. Historic Districts		
	City	National Register of Historic Places
Within Central City		
Skidmore-Old Town	1975	1975
Yamhill	1975	1976
Northwest Thirteenth Ave	1996	1987
New Chinatown/Japantown		1991
Adjacent to Central City		
Lair Hill	1980	1998
Ladds Addition	1980	1988
King's Hill		1991

Table 8. Individual Properties listed on National Register of Historic Places			
	Downtown	Other	Central City
1970s	27		4
1980s	44		21*
1990s	32		5

*East Portland multiple property nomination

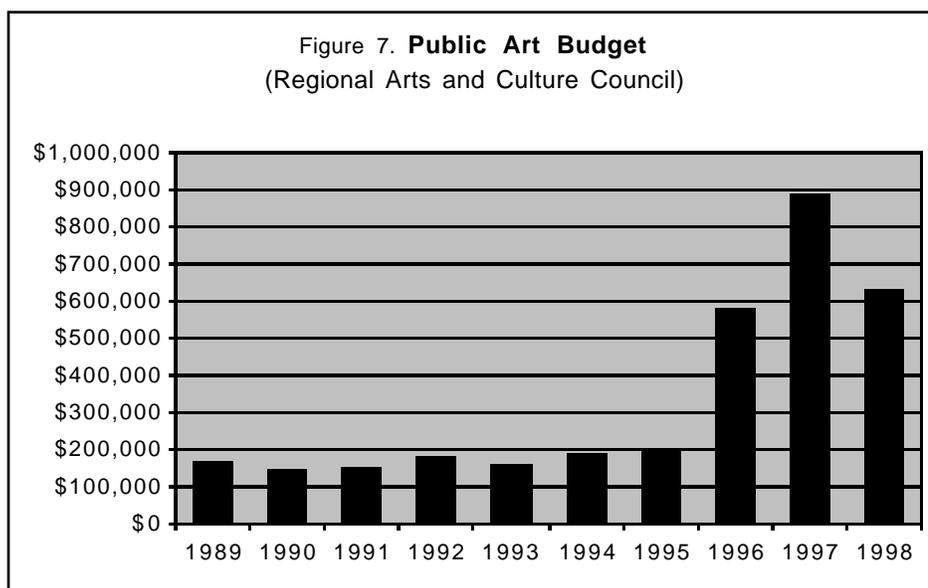
3. Public Art

The Portland City Council adopted a 1 percent for art ordinance in 1980, to which .33 percent was added in January of 1989, dedicating 1.33 percent of the total costs of all improvement projects to the selection, acquisition, maintenance, and administration of public art. In June of 1990, the Board of County Commissioners did the same, and the Metropolitan Arts Commission (MAC) was charged with administering the program. In 1995, the Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC) became the non-profit successor to the Metropolitan Arts Commission. This was a recommendation of Arts Plan 2000+, a citizen driven cultural plan completed in 1992. RACC was established in an agreement between Metro, the City of Portland, and Clackamas, Washington, and Multnomah Counties, and continues to administer the city and county “percent for art” programs and a number of related services.

- 1980 Multnomah County and City of Portland passed 1 percent for art ordinances

- 1985 Multnomah County added .33 percent for maintenance, administration and public education
- 1988 **Following A River**, a plan for public art in Portland, was adopted as part of the Central City Plan.
- 1988 Bonus Program for Private Developers adopted for Central City Plan. Provides bonus floor area ratio in return for public art contributions.
- 1989 City of Portland added .33 percent for above; expanded scope to include more capital improvement projects and instituted a Public Art Trust Fund.
- 1990 Multnomah County expanded scope to include purchase price of exposition buildings, EXPO center, and new parks fund.
- 1994 Blank Wall Guidelines adopted for developers to consider public art as an alternative to meeting the City of Portland Building Code's ground floor window requirements when undertaking new construction and major renovations.
- 1994 City of Portland adopted public art policy for the Bureaus of Environmental Services and Water Works.
- 1995 Metropolitan Arts Commission became the Regional Arts & Culture Council, a non-profit regional arts agency.

The public art budget of the Regional Arts and Culture Council provides another measure of design-related activity. Budget formats have changed since 1980. From 1988 until MAC changed to RACC in 1995, the City Budget broke out public art program amounts which do not include staff salaries or expenses. The figures since 1995, as reported by RACC, are specific to artist fees and professional contracts for art maintenance, etc. The significant increase in public art program expenditures in the past three years may reflect different accounting methods. But it is also true that public art programs have grown in recent years. The first Floor Area Ratio Bonus



program projects occurred in 1997/98-- ODS Tower for \$390,000 and College Housing Northwest for \$110,000. Other large projects have been City Hall renovation (\$200,000) and Central Library (\$165,000 plus a private donation of \$100,000 for art in the children's library).

4. Comparisons to 1972 Plan

Tom McCall Waterfront Park and Pioneer Courthouse Square, created since the 1972 Plan as part of its recommendations, are the most imageable parts of downtown according to a background study for the Central City Plan.

“The central city waterfront has been substantially reclaimed.”

The central city waterfront has been substantially reclaimed with Tom McCall Waterfront Park, actual and proposed housing along the west bank, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, and the planned Eastbank Riverfront Park.

The extensive retail area sky bridge system suggested in 1972 has not been built, nor have Park, Ninth, and Ankeny streets been closed to vehicles. The sense of a good pedestrian environment has evolved, emphasizing ground floor retailing, street level activity, and visual interest (all of which were also 1972 goals) rather than the radical separation of pedestrians and vehicles.

Negative reactions to the design qualities of the proposed Cadillac-Fairview Project of 1978-79 led to a revised process and guidelines for soliciting developer proposals for important projects. The city held key design competitions in the 1980s for the Portland Building, Pioneer Place, Pioneer Courthouse Square, and Riverplace. The results were both better project designs and heightened public awareness of design issues.

Arts, Culture, and Education

The Portland central city remains the focus of artistic and cultural activity in Portland. In the 1980s the community developed the Portland Center for the Performing Arts in the downtown core and Portland State University grouped its departments of art, music, and theater as a School of Fine and Performing Arts. The 1990s have brought a new building and site for the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, a new building and site for the Pacific Northwest College of Art, an expanded Oregon History Center, a renovated Central Library, and expanded facilities for the Portland Art Museum. In addition to the Performing Arts Center and Civic Auditorium, live theater and music series are available at Portland State University and at a number of small venues within the central city. The strong tourism/hotel sector that has developed in central Portland is supportive of restaurants and cultural facilities, making downtown Portland a tourist **destination** in ways not anticipated in 1972.

“The 1990s have brought a new building and site for the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, a new building and site for the Pacific Northwest College of Art, an expanded Oregon History Center, a renovated Central Library, and expanded facilities for the Portland Art Museum.”

1. Cinema

The downtown and Lloyd District have become major centers for movie goers. The number of movie screens in the central city has tripled since 1972, with two additional multiplex cinemas with seventeen screens in planning and construction downtown:

	Downtown	Other	Central City
1972	11		1
1998	14		19

[17 additional screens at two sites are planned for downtown]

2. Art Galleries

Based on the listings in the *Oregonian* “Arts and Entertainment” section, the number of private art galleries in the downtown has grown from three in 1972 to 35 in 1998. Sixteen of that total are located south of Burnside Street and 19 north of Burnside. The “First Thursday” opening of gallery displays has become a significant cultural and entertainment event during the 1990s.

3. Metropolitan Media

The central city is the location for the editorial offices of the major metropolitan newspapers and the news and production facilities of the major

television stations. Found downtown are the *Business Journal*, *Willamette Week*, the *Oregonian*, and KOIN. Within the larger central city are KGW and KPTV, with KATU located in close proximity.

4. Museums and Musical Organizations

Attendance data for major museums and musical organizations is unfortunately limited. Few cultural organizations appear to maintain systematic records over long periods. It seems that computerization came late to this sector, and apparently there had been no previous need to keep or use attendance records by these institutions. Attendance fluctuates substantially from year to year with the varying popularity of special exhibits and season programs.

Portland Art Museum attendance has grown in recent years, from 207,000 in 1994 and 240,000 in 1995 to 355,000 in 1997.

Oregon History Center attendance has grown from an estimated 40,000 annual visitors in the 1970s (when no admission was charged) to 61,000 for 1997/98.

Long term comparisons for the **Oregon Museum of Science and Industry** are inappropriate because of the museum's relocation from Washington Park to the Willamette waterfront in 1995. Attendance has also fluctuated because of flood damage in 1996. The museum recorded 360,000 visitors in 1995, 873,000 visitors in 1997, and estimates approximately 800,000 for 1998.

Oregon Ballet Theater annual attendance has been between 86,000 and 91,000 since 1995.

Portland Opera attendance has grown from an estimated 21,000 in the early 1970s to 78,000 in 1995, 46,000 in 1997, and an estimated 58,000 for 1998.

Oregon Symphony officials were unable to supply current attendance data, although the Association for Portland Progress reports a total audience of 245,000 in 1995 and 173,000 in 1997.

5. Enrollment in Educational Institutions

The following enrollments are reported in terms of headcount (rather than full time equivalent students). Records of enrollment are uneven. Four of the eight institutions listed below existed in the early 1970s. The data show level or slightly increasing enrollments over the 25 year period for Lincoln High School, Portland State University, and Pacific Northwest College of Art. Several colleges or college branches have opened since 1980, adding to the range of educational opportunities in central Portland. In addition to Lincoln High School, Benson High School lies just outside the official central city boundaries and Portland State University and the Portland School District are

pursuing the possibility of a new downtown elementary school on the northwest corner of the campus.

The following table compares enrollment at Portland State University, Pacific Northwest College of Art, and the Linfield College nursing program, established in conjunction with Good Samaritan Hospital in 1983.

	Portland State University	Pacific Northwest College of Art	Linfield College Nursing Program
1975	15,038	191	
1980	16,730	182	
1985	14,768	197	389
1990	14,758	174	279
1995	14,348	225	370
1997	14,863	210	352

The University of Oregon Portland Center opened in 1984. It now offers a variety of credit and noncredit courses, including architecture, taken by roughly 1,500 individuals in a given academic term.

Portland Community College’s Central Workforce Training Center has been open in southeast Portland since 1996. Enrollment has grown from 4,590 in 1996 to 6,574 in 1998.

Western Business College has operated since 1955. Its offerings include an Associate of Applied Science Degree, 18 months, 90 credits (since 1990); paralegal, medical, advanced computer applications, executive assistant, travel and hospitality management. Enrollment in 1998 was 400.

Since 1996, **Heald College** has offered associate degrees in computer technology and trained Microsoft Certified Systems Engineers, enrolling 300 students in 1998.

Enrollment at **Lincoln High School** has increased from 1,274 in 1970 to 1,338 in 1997.

6. Community Events

The central city is the preferred location for community events, rallies, and festivals. In 1997-98, the Central Precinct of the Police Bureau counted 190 distinct events that required extra patrol or supplemental staffing. These events ranged from one-time political demonstrations to athletic events to multi-day activities associated with the Rose Festival.

Portland Central City Entertainment, Arts, Culture, and Design	
1966	Civic Stadium acquired by city
...	
...	
1969	Portland State College becomes Portland State University
...	
...	
1972	Pioneer Courthouse restored
...	
...	
1975	Skidmore-Old Town Historic District
1976	Yamhill Historic District
...	
...	
...	
1980	Downtown design guidelines adopted
...	
1982	First gallery in Pearl District
1983	New Market Theater restored
...	
1985	“Portlandia” installed on Portland Building
...	
1987	Portland Center for Performing Arts opens Thirteenth Avenue Historic District
...	
1989	New Chinatown/Japantown Historic District
1990	Oregon Convention Center opens Japanese-American Historical Plaza completed
1991	East Portland/Grand Avenue Historic District
1992	Arts Plan 2000+
...	
...	
1995	Rose Garden Arena opens OMSI opens new museum
...	
...	
1998	Art Museum expansion plans finalized RFP process for Civic Stadium renovation

7. Comparisons to 1972 Plan

As anticipated in 1972, the South Park Blocks have continued to function and develop as a concentration of cultural institutions and offerings. This role has been enhanced by the Performing Arts Center, which meets the 1972 recommendation for a new mid-sized theater and for public spending to promote entertainment. The Performing Arts Center and the development of new movie venues are partial realization of the 1972 goal to maintain and reinforce Broadway as an entertainment corridor.

The Plan suggested that a cluster of design businesses might develop around the North Park Blocks. The Pearl District now houses a number of interior

design/home furnishing firms, and another diversified cluster of design businesses is appearing along and around S.E. Grand in the Central Eastside.

The proposed “community exhibition center” near the west side waterfront has not been built. The Oregon Convention Center provides an alternative venue for local exhibitions.

The emergence of the Pearl District was unanticipated in 1972. At the same time, the Old Town area has not flourished as an arts/entertainment district to the extent expected in the Plan. In part, the thriving Pearl District is a substitute for a less lively Old Town.

“As anticipated in 1972, the South Park Blocks have continued to function and develop as a concentration of cultural institutions and offerings . . . the emergence of the Pearl District was unanticipated in 1972, and in part is a substitute for a less lively Old Town.”

Downtown from Oak Street northward has developed as primary district for a trend-setting art, music, and theater scene; the near eastside plays a secondary or supporting role. For example, 14 of 23 venues for the 1998 NxNW music festival were located in downtown north of Oak. This district is more extensive and better integrated with the larger downtown than the compact Old Town-Union Station entertainment district anticipated in 1972.

Social Issues

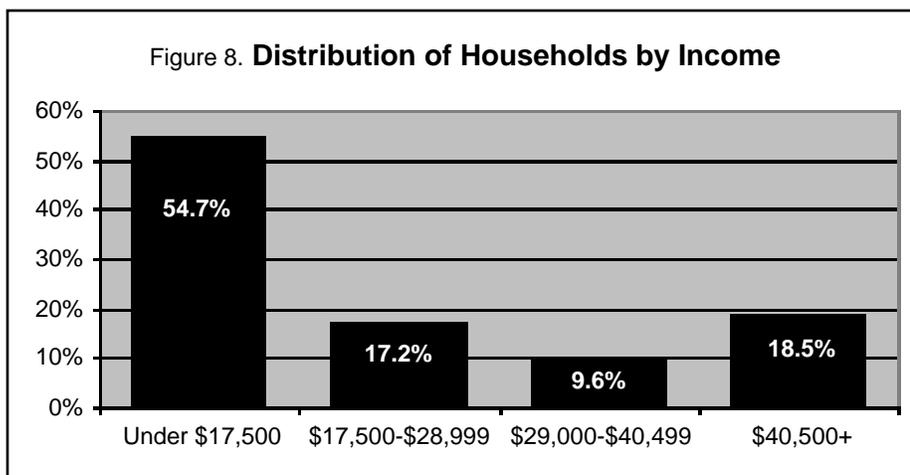
Downtown has historically been a location for low-income and transient housing, particularly in the twentieth century as streetcars and automobiles allowed middle class families to move to new neighborhoods on the edge of the city. In turn, the housing mix has attracted a population of single persons, economically marginal individuals, and persons with physical and psychological problems including alcohol and drug abuse. As a consequence, the central city remains a focal point for many social services.

1. Demographic Patterns and Populations in Need

In both 1970 and 1990, 60 percent of the residents of the downtown core were male, reflecting the area’s historic role as the home for marginal single men. Comparative figures on education levels and poverty show the polarization of the downtown population between the affluent and/or upwardly mobile and persons in poverty. Census data show that the number of individuals falling below the poverty level in the core downtown tracts increased from 2,836 to 3,377 from 1970 to 1990. Over the same period, the count of downtown residents who had completed at least four years of college more than tripled from 700 to 2,363.

“Figures on education levels and poverty show the polarization of the downtown population between the affluent and/or upwardly mobile and persons in poverty.”

A recent study that Hobson Johnson & Associates prepared for the Portland Development Commission used estimates based on Metro’s Transportation Analysis Zones to put the number of households in the central city at 11,333, 70.1 percent in one-person households and 23.7 percent in two-person households. The income distribution of these households is illustrated in the following chart, showing the expected polarization between poorer and more affluent households and an under representation of middle-income households.



According to the same report, the age distribution of households showing the most amount of growth is the 65 and over category, which accounted for 34.4 percent of the growth. By income category, the \$17,500 and under category lead the way with 52.1 percent of household growth.

The Housing Authority of Portland estimated the incidence of disability among homeless unaccompanied adults in downtown Portland for 1988-89. The two categories of substance abuse and mental illness overlap.

<p>Table 11.</p> <p>Disability among Homeless Unaccompanied Adults 1988-89</p> <p>Substance abuse: 70 percent Alcohol 40 percent, Other 10 percent Alcohol+other 20 percent</p> <p>Mental illness: 70 percent Chronically or severely mentally ill: 30 percent Lesser personality disorders that may seriously impair functioning: 40 percent</p>

2. Social Service Providers

The central city remains the focus of many social services, although city and county policy in the 1990s has been to disperse shelter and transitional housing and associated services more widely throughout the city.

A number of central city agencies provide a wide variety of housing services, ranging from student housing to alcohol-free transitional housing (Metro Crisis Intervention Service, Human Services Directory for Multnomah County):

“The central city remains the focus of many social services, although city and county policy in the 1990s has been to disperse shelter and transitional housing and associated services more widely through the city.”

- Central City Concern, 2 NW 2nd Avenue
- College Housing Northwest, on PSU campus
- Fair Housing Council of Oregon, 520 SE 6th Avenue
- Housing Authority of Portland, 135 SW Ash
- Northwest Pilot Project, 1137 SW Broadway
- Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement, 917 SW Oak
- Transition Projects, 435 NW Glisan

Several agencies offer emergency shelter:

- Portland Rescue Mission, 111 W. Burnside
- Harbor Light Center, 30 SW 2nd
- Peniel Mission Shelter, 526 SE Grand
- Salvation Army Adult Rehab Center, 139 SE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
- Singles Homeless Assessment Center, 1212 NW 9th
- Street Light Youth Shelter, 1318 SW Washington
- Union Gospel Mission, 222 NW Couch
- YWCA Downtown, 1111 SW 10th

Several agencies focus on homeless and street youth:

- Bridge School, 1231 SW Morrison
- Greenhouse Drop-in Center, 820 SW Oak
- Outside In, 1236 SW Salmon
- New Avenues for Youth, 812 SW 10th
- Street Light Youth Shelter

Many agencies offer meals:

- Greenhouse Drop-in Center
- Harbor Light Center
- Sisters of the Road Cafe, 133 NW 6th
- Northwest Pilot Project
- Peniel Mission
- Portland Rescue Mission
- Blanchet House of Hospitality, 340 NW Glisan
- Loaves & Fishes

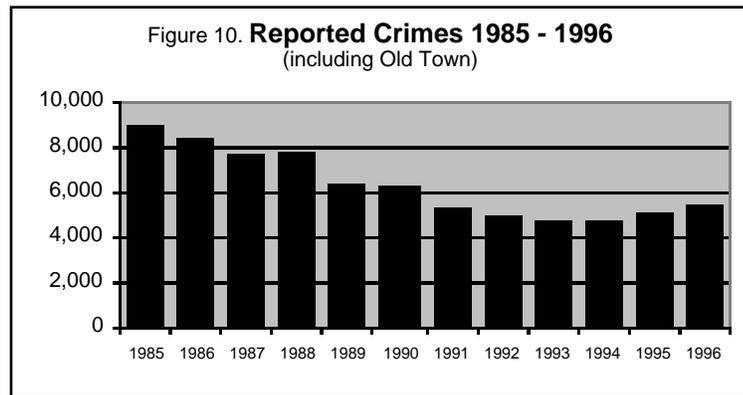
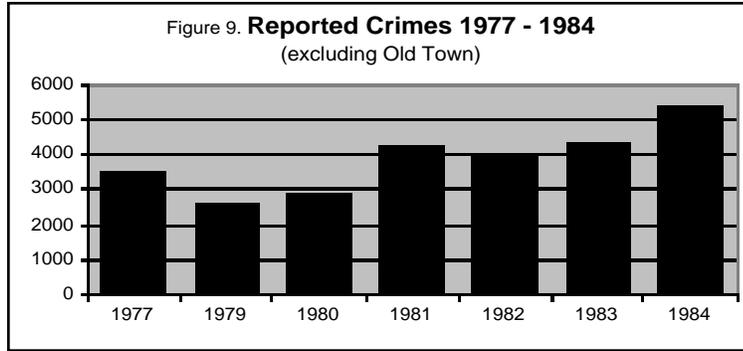
3. Crime and safety

Central city crime rates are always high in relation to neighborhood rates because of the low population base in relation to property crimes. Special programs that try to increase downtown safety have included the Police Bureau mounted patrol and the Association for Portland Progress Clean and Safe program.

Attached are data on crime totals and crime rates. The sharp fluctuations in recorded crime rates make the data problematic, suggesting unexplained differences in reporting area or population used in the calculations. In contrast, the data on total number of crimes suggest a downtrend in crime since 1985. The data on perceptions of safety in the 1990s also give a positive impression of downtown safety. Because data are reported by neighborhood association area, data on the peripheral sections of the central city are effectively unavailable.

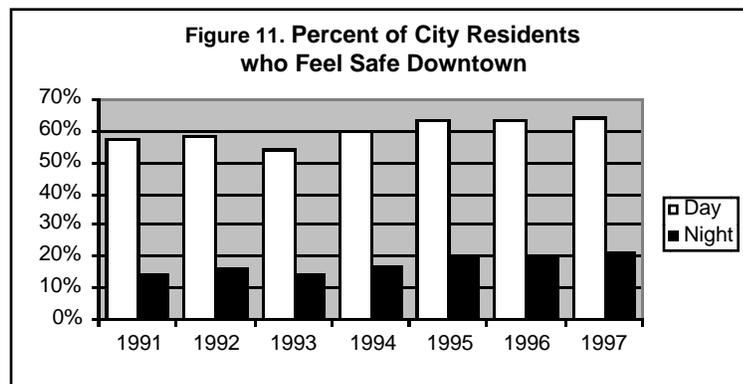
“The data on total number of crimes suggest a downtrend in crime since 1985.”

The reporting of crimes for downtown changed between 1984 and 1985. Up to 1984, crimes were recorded by districts selected by the Police Bureau. In 1985, they switched to recording crimes by Neighborhood Association. The first chart is based on districts that compose most of the downtown core south of Burnside. The second chart includes data from Old Town.



Compiled from Police Bureau Annual Reports

According to these statistics, the number of reported crimes has been drastically reduced, although they are slightly increasing within the past few years. This follows well with public perceptions about safety downtown, which have gotten better over the past few years, as the table below shows.



City of Portland Auditor's office, 1998

4. Comparisons to 1972 Plan

The 1972 Plan was largely silent on social services and issues of poverty. However, it did call for housing and support services for individuals with special needs, such as the elderly, retired persons, and itinerant workers.

Open Space and Environment

The central city of Portland has become a physically more attractive and inviting area since the 1970s. The acreage of public open space has nearly tripled with new parks and plazas. Air quality has improved markedly, although pollution in the Willamette River remains a problem after improvements in the 1960s and 1970s.

“Since the 1970s, the acreage of public open space has nearly tripled with new parks and plazas.”

1. Public open spaces

The following figures are derived from the November 1997 Portland Parks and Facilities Inventory. Currently, 74.38 acres of city-owned park land exist in the central city, representing a 167 percent increase over 25 years. The majority of this increase is attributable to Tom McCall Waterfront Park. Park projects on the drawing board include PSU Urban Plaza, Rivergate North Park Blocks, and the Eastbank Riverfront Park. In addition to city parks, central city residents have access to Terry Schunk Plaza in the downtown and to River Overlook Park near the east end of the Steel Bridge.

Table 12. Central City Parks: 1973 and 1998

Year	Number	Acreage
1973	9	27.63
1998	15	74.38

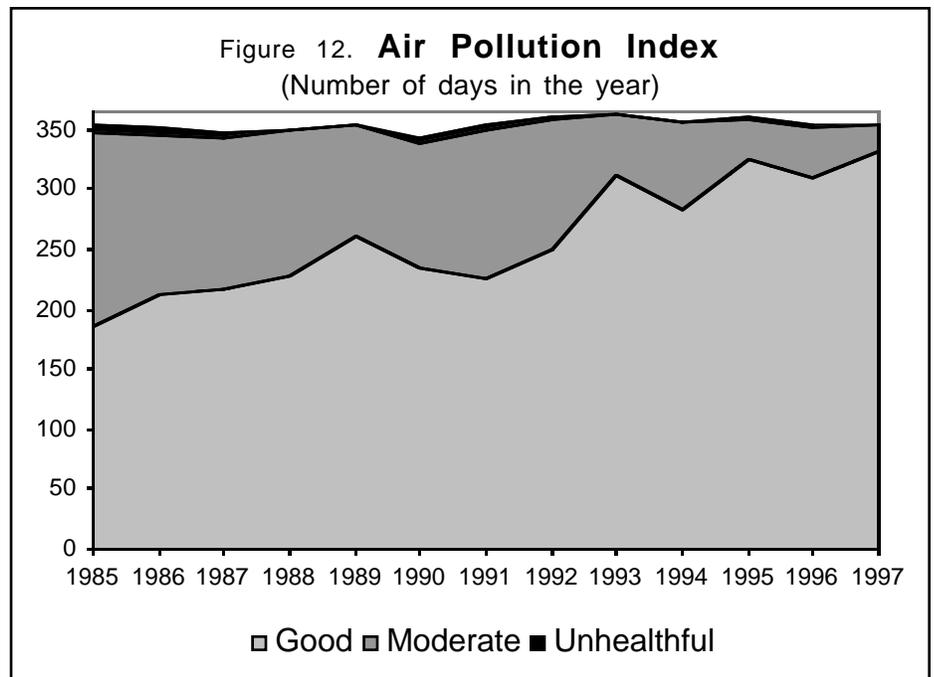
Table 13. City of Portland Parks in the Central City

Site	Acreage	Year Acquired
Ankeny Plaza	.26	
South Park Blocks	3.72	1869
Plaza Blocks	1.84	1869
North Park Blocks	3.52	1869
Holliday Park	5.04	1870
Lovejoy Fountain	1.13	1963
Portland Center Park	10.20	1963
Pettygrove Park	.93	1966
Ira Keller Fountain	.92	1968
Acres before 1973	27.63	
Transit Mall	3.10	
Tom McCall Waterfront Park	36.59	1977
Pioneer Courthouse Square	1.56	1979
O'Bryant Square	.50	
Moyer Block	.50	1998
South Waterfront	4.50	1998
Acres added since 1973	46.75	
Total acres	74.38	

2. Air quality

“Portland’s downtown air is substantially cleaner in 1998 than in the 1970s.”

Portland’s downtown air is substantially cleaner in 1998 than in the 1970s, although measurement methods, allowable thresholds, standards, and reporting formats for air quality have varied over time. The most consistent data set, the Air Pollution Index (API), covers the twelve year period between 1985 and 1997. The API is a composite index of five pollutants including suspended particulates, carbon monoxide, ozone, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide. The API is reported as a number, the highest level pollutant responsible for that number, and a rating for the air quality (good, moderate, unhealthful, and hazardous). The data below summarize the API for 1985 and for 1997 measured at the downtown Portland site at SW Fourth and Alder.



“In 1970, it was possible to see Mount Hood from downtown only 35 percent of the time. The figure improved to 40 percent in 1980, 72 percent in 1990, and 75 percent in 1998.”

For the period prior to 1969 to 1985, DEQ reports show decreasing levels of carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide at Portland’s downtown monitoring sites (variously at West Burnside and Broadway and at S.W. Fourth and Alder). SO₂ and NO₂ standards were last violated in Portland in 1977. CO standards were last violated in 1985. Downtown had the highest CO levels of any Portland monitoring site, but all Portland sites showed declines. The explanations for CO decreases include more effective pollution control equipment of automobiles, the Portland area motor vehicle permit program, and specific efforts to shift

downtown travel from individual automobiles to transit. (**Oregon Annual Air Quality Reports**, DEQ, 1984 and 1986; **Air Quality Trends in Oregon**, DEQ, Nov 1978).

Portland air also looks cleaner. Visibility, which is degraded by the presence of light-scattering particulates in the air, has improved substantially. In 1970, it was possible to see Mount Hood from downtown only 35 percent of the time. The figure improved to 40 percent in 1980, 72 percent in 1990, and 75 percent in 1998. However, projections suggest that visibility will begin to deteriorate at some point during the next decade.

Table 14. Air Quality Measurements at Downtown Portland Sites

	Fine Particulates ¹	Total Suspended Particulates ²	Carbon Monoxide ³	Light Scattering ⁴
1985	35	66.9	2.17	1.14
1986	32	54.9	2.17	.95
1987	36	58.6	2.07	.94
1988	32	52.2	2.03	.98
1989	30	51.6	2.04	.94
1990	27	46.9	1.77	.77
1991	29	53.6	1.97	.81
1992	26	43.6	1.76	.65
1993	29	*	1.73	.79
1994	26	*	1.59	.68

¹Fine particulates: arithmetic mean of micrograms/cubic meter

²Total suspended particulates: geometric mean of micrograms/cubic meter

³CO: October-April average in parts per million

⁴Light Scattering: arithmetic mean of scattering coefficient

3. Water quality

The inclusive measure of Willamette River water quality is the Mean Water Quality Index Value (MV). This measure was used from 1973-84, unused from 1984 to 1994, and put into use again after revisions in 1994/95.

Revisions at that time added phosphorus and temperature variables to those already in the index (dissolved oxygen concentration and percent saturation, biochemical oxygen demand, pH, total solids, ammonia, nitrates, fecal coliform bacteria). The index ranges from 10 to 100, with 90-100 being excellent, 85-89 good, and 80-84 fair. The MV is used as a Benchmark by the Oregon Progress Board, the Oregon State of the Environment Report, and is available on the DEQ web page for general public use.

A Quarter Century of Change

The 1972 Plan included a list of seventeen priority action items to be implemented in the 1970s. Twenty years later, we have in fact accomplished nine items in full and four in part. We have failed or declined to act on four other items because of increasing sophistication on issues of urban design.

The Plan was strongest in its vision of downtown as everybody's neighborhood, as a special place--and set of places--to house the functions and activities that serve the entire metropolitan community.

Portlanders in 1972 wanted to preserve and enhance the economic function of downtown as a shopping and employment center.

By and large, downtown office expansion has followed expectations. Large new buildings have appeared along the transit spine (5th, 6th, Broadway) and in blocks closer to the river. In addition, the Lloyd District has continued to develop as an office center. The central city has been especially important for business headquarters and for such information industries as business and management services, legal services, transportation services, communication, real estate, finance, insurance, and software.

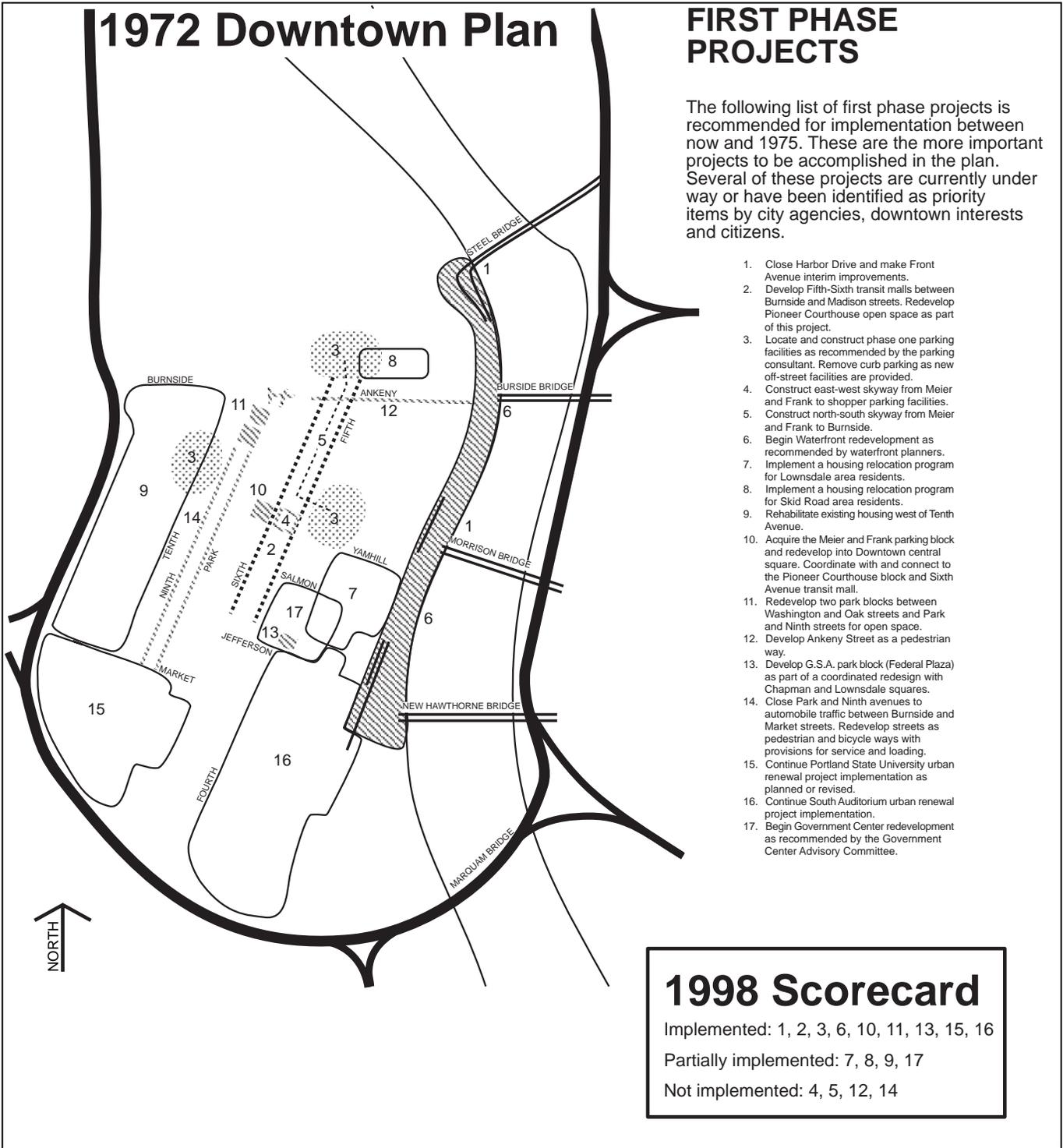
The Plan called for maintenance of a compact retail core in the blocks surrounding Sixth and Morrison. Both transit investment and investment in new retail space such as Pioneer Square has supported this goal. However, the goal of carrying 65-75 percent of all downtown trips by public transit is far more ambitious than the reality of 1998 and is not likely to be achievable.

Planners in 1972 hoped that restaurants and specialty shops would fill in between the retail core and river, as has occurred largely between Burnside and Stark. As proposed, these activities have been supported by development of a system of short-term parking facilities, including several new garages.

Community leaders in 1972 expected that the central city would remain the focus of cultural activities and institutions.

As anticipated, the South Park Blocks have continued to function and develop as a concentration of cultural institutions and offerings. This role has been enhanced by the Performing Arts Center, which meets the 1972 recommendation for a new mid-sized theater and for public spending to promote entertainment. The Performing Arts Center and the development of new movie venues are partial realization of the 1972 goal to maintain and reinforce Broadway as an entertainment corridor.

The emergence of the Pearl District was unanticipated in 1972. At the same time, the Old Town area has not flourished as an arts/entertainment district to



the extent expected in the Plan. In part, the thriving Pearl District is a substitute for a less lively Old Town.

Downtown from Oak Street northward has developed as the primary district for a trend-setting art, music, and theater scene; the near eastside plays a secondary or supporting role. This district is more extensive and better

integrated with the larger downtown than the compact Old Town-Union Station entertainment district anticipated in 1972.

The proposed "community exhibition center" near the west side waterfront has not been built. The Oregon Convention Center provides an alternative venue for local exhibitions.

Portland has clearly worked hard to meet the 1972 Plan goal of preserving and adding downtown housing. The community has an excellent record in providing new housing and rehabilitating low-rent downtown units, acting as a leader in national trends toward downtown living. Residential development has accelerated in the 1990s, including middle-income projects. The current need is to provide the infrastructure and amenities that make subdistricts feel like neighborhoods, such as the proposed public elementary school on the Portland State University campus. Also important for housing development are improved connections between downtown and existing close-in neighborhoods through light rail lines, streetcars, and design improvements.

New housing has met the 1972 goal of concentration in distinct residential districts with specific identities, such as Riverplace, Pearl District, River District, and South Park Blocks.

The 1972 Plan was largely silent on social services and issues of poverty. However, it did call for housing and support services for individuals with special needs, such as the elderly, retired persons, and itinerant workers. The central city has retained and developed an extensive array of services for young people and for economically marginal individuals.

Portland in the last quarter century has earned a national reputation for the quality of urban design in its core districts, an issue that was prominent in the deliberations of the early 1970s.

The 1972 Plan suggested the recovery and reuse of the downtown waterfront as a magnet for activity, the exclusion of hotels and tall office buildings from waterfront sites, and the development of smaller open spaces linked to downtown residential areas. The city has accomplished the first goal by reclaiming the waterfront with Tom McCall Waterfront Park, actual and proposed housing along the west bank, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, and the planned Eastbank Riverfront Park. It has failed to exclude tall buildings from the waterfront. Among residential areas, Riverplace benefits from its linkage to the waterfront and neighborhood open spaces are planned for the River District. Other residential clusters have developed without new open space.

Negative reactions to the design qualities of the proposed Cadillac-Fairview Project of 1978-79 led to a revised process and guidelines for soliciting developer proposals for important projects.

The city held key design competitions in the 1980s for the Portland Building, Pioneer Place, Pioneer Courthouse Square, and Riverplace. The result was both better project designs and heightened public awareness of design issues.

The 1972 Plan called for the city to encourage pedestrians and bicycling. The extensive retail area sky bridge system suggested in 1972 has not been built, nor have Park, Ninth, and Ankeny streets been closed to vehicles. The sense of a good pedestrian environment has evolved, emphasizing ground floor retailing, street level activity, and visual interest (all of which were also 1972 goals) rather than the radical separation of pedestrians and vehicles. There is little question that Portland has one of the most pedestrian friendly downtowns in the United States.

Portland's central city is a success by the expectations of 1972 and by comparison with other metropolitan areas of similar size. This report has identified solid accomplishment in retaining and enhancing the economic and cultural roles of downtown, the payoff for hard work to develop residential districts linked to public transit, and unusual success in creating an environment that is attractive to residents of the larger metropolitan area.

The challenge for the coming decades is to maintain the central city's careful balance--between employment clusters and neighborhoods, between high-end professionals and minimum wage workers, between social services and exclusive retailing, between automobiles and public transit, between residents and tourists, between office towers and open space.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the assistance of staff from the following agencies and organizations, who provided documents and data on which this report is based. We also want to recognize the assistance of the several educational and cultural institutions discussed in the report.

City of Portland

- Planning Bureau
- Police Bureau
- Parks Bureau
- Office of Neighborhood Involvement
- Bureau of Transportation
- Bureau of Environmental Services
- Archives and Records Center

Housing Authority of Portland

Portland Development Commission

Port of Portland

Regional Arts and Culture Council

Tri-Met

Metro

- Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission

Oregon

- Department of Transportation
- Department of Environmental Quality
- State Historic Preservation Office

Center for Population Research and Census, P.S.U.

Association for Portland Progress

Portland Oregon Visitors Association

Historic Preservation League of Oregon

We have also drawn on coverage of downtown issues in the *Oregonian*, *Willamette Week*, and *Portland Business Journal* and on reports prepared by a number of organizations, agencies, and consulting firms. A partial list includes Northwest Pilot Project; Downtown Community Association; Hobson Johnson and Associates; Patricia Scruggs and Joe Cortright; Portland Office of Neighborhood Associations; and Multnomah County Office for Community Action and Development.

This report was produced by Livable Oregon with assistance from the Association for Portland Progress and funding from Summit sponsors (inside front cover). Research and writing were done by Professor Carl Abbott and graduate students Gerhard Pagenstecher and Britt Parrott from Portland State University's School of Urban and Public Affairs.

Additional copies are available from the Association for Portland Progress (503/224-8684) or the office of Mayor Vera Katz (503/823-4120).



The Downtown Plan Silver Anniversary Celebration

Celebrating the **people, places and policies** that created the downtown Portland of today and will shape it in the future. Our thanks to the following volunteers and sponsors:

Volunteers:

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 Downtown Plan Walking Tour Chair: Felicia Trader
 Heart of Portland Award Dinner Chair: Cheryl Gibson
 Central City Summit Chairs: Brian Scott, Ethan Seltzer
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US Bank	Bank of America
Wells Fargo	City Center Parking
Louis Dreyfus Property Group	Zimmer Gunsul Frasca
Oregonian (in kind)	

Heart of Portland Award Dinner: Celebrating the People

KeyBank of Oregon	OHSU
Portland General Electric	Ball Janik
H. Naito Corporation	Norris Beggs & Simpson
Kalberer Company	Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon
Melvin Mark Companies	PacifiCorp
SRG Partnership	Shiels Obletz Johnson
Zimmer Gunsul Frasca	kpff Consulting Engineers
Ashforth Pacific, Inc.	Standard Insurance Company
Greenbrier Companies	City Center Parking
Nordstrom	Baugh Construction
ODS	Hoyt Street Properties
PG&E Gas Transmission - Northwest	Bank of America - Oregon
Portland Development Commission	US Bank
Louis Dreyfus Property Group	Oregonian
Portland Art Museum	Oregon Pacific Investment Development Company
Rose Quarter	Schnitzer Group
US West Communications	Good Samaritan Foundation
Pioneer Courthouse Square	Tonkin Torp
NW Natural	Deloitte & Touche
Wells Fargo	SOLV (in kind)
KPTV (in kind)	

Central City Summit: Celebrating the Policies

Ashforth Pacific, Inc.	Oregon Economic Development Department
Association for Portland Progress	Oregon Transportation Growth Management Program
CFI ProServices	PacifiCorp Foundation
City Center Parking	Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon
City of Portland	Schnitzer Group
Legacy Health Systems	Tri-Met
Louis Dreyfus Property Group	Wells Fargo Bank
Melvin Mark Companies	US West Communications
Metro	Zimmer Gunsul Frasca
Multnomah County	

