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Work Program Downtown Portland Planning Study

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Objective

This is the beginning step in a process of continuing planning for Downtown Portland. The objective of this first step is a "guideline plan" which can provide a frame of reference for the consideration of specific projects. The guideline plan will be comprehensive in the sense that it deals with land use, traffic routing, and the physical form of the downtown area.

The guideline plan will include statements of goals and policies. These will indicate the intentions of the planning commission and city council with respect to the development of Downtown Portland.

The plan will recommend locations for different categories of land use—retail, service, office, entertainment, housing, governmental, and other public uses including open space uses. Related to these use patterns, the plan will indicate the basic traffic circulation system. It will deal with automobile traffic, automobile parking, mass transit, pedestrian movement, and service access to individual properties. The specific use of downtown streets will be designated in terms of function. The plan will deal with the physical form of Downtown Portland in terms of design objectives that relate to both function and amenity.

The guideline plan will not design specific projects—malls, public squares, building clusters—but will indicate their location and general character.

Implementation will be a concern from the outset. The various ways in which a plan can be implemented will be identified in the beginning phases of the program so that recommendations will be practical and workable.
Study Area

The study area is indicated on the attached map. A "comprehensive plan" will be prepared for all of the area within the inner freeway loop, plus contiguous areas outside the freeway loop as warranted. This area is referred to in the work program as the "central area." A more detailed plan will be prepared for the "core area." The "core area," defined here, extends from Burnside to Market and from the river to the Stadium Freeway. The "core area" will also deal specifically with the entire stretch of waterfront between the Marquam and Steel bridges.

Organization

The organization of the program is shown in the enclosed chart.

The City Council is in charge. The plan will become city policy only after it has been adopted by the council.

Advice and approval will also be sought from Multnomah County, the Oregon State Highway Department, the Port of Portland, and the Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District. These agencies will be responsible for carrying out various parts of the plan.

The City Planning Commission will advise and counsel throughout the course of the study and will have responsibility for acting on the plan in its advisory role to the City Council.

A coordinator will be responsible to the Planning Commission for the conduct of the study. His role is to coordinate the various members of the planning team, to assure adequate reporting to all participants in the study as appropriate, and otherwise to keep the work on schedule.
The organization chart indicates five separate advisory groups in addition to the general public. The public will participate mainly through an advisory council, which is intended to have an "open" membership. Any interested person may participate. The advisory council will meet regularly with members of the planning team during the course of the study.

The Downtown Committee will help to represent downtown business and property interests and will participate in financing the planning study. The Downtown Committee will be available to the planning team for advice and will receive regular reports on the progress of the study from the planning team.

The Waterfront Task Force will continue to concern itself with waterfront and related aspects of the study in accordance with its charge by the Governor.

A Technical Group, consisting of selected public agency technical personnel, will be available to assist the planning team as necessary.

Finally, the organization may include participation by other private consultants who may be added as advisors during the course of the study.

The basic elements of the plan will be worked out by a "working group" consisting of the planning commission staff, assigned to the program, the consultants, and other public agency officials and staff members as may from time to time be added to the team in connection with specific aspects of the plan. The city planning director will serve as principal advisor to the working group and will be responsible for reporting on the study to the Planning Commission.
Compilation and Analysis of Data

The planners will be able to take advantage of a large amount of information already available from both public and private sources. To the extent that additional data is needed, the planning commission staff and the consultants will work jointly to assemble the necessary information and to put it into usable form.

Scope of Work

The following scope of work will be undertaken.

1. Organize the Program

   1. Formulate preliminary study goals. Develop a set of goals and objectives as a basis for setting public policy with respect to core area development. What kind of a core area do we want? Citizen participation is especially important at this stage. Those governmental agencies and private groups who will be concerned with the implementation of the plan should be able to concur with the goals that are adopted.

   2. Prepare a final work outline and schedule. This can be completed concurrent with early work on the program. Coordinate with mass transit and other studies now under way.

   3. Examine extent and status of available data. Organize the data for use in the program. Update existing information and develop additional data as required.

   4. Develop a program for citizen participation. Determine the interest groups concerned and arrange for their participation. Determine appropriate stages in the planning process for effective citizen participation.
II. Establish Regional Framework

There is currently no regional plan as a frame of reference for planning specific areas of the metropolitan community. Therefore the following steps will be undertaken to the extent necessary to establish a basis for planning in Downtown Portland.

1. Identify and analyze existing and projected population and economic trends and patterns, based on existing studies by public and private agencies.

2. Examine land use patterns and trends in the metropolitan area and determine their significance with relation to Downtown Portland.

3. Examine current plans for the metropolitan transportation system. Make preliminary assumptions concerning mass transit and revise as possible by coordination with the on-going mass transit study.

4. Analyze existing zoning and other public regulations as they relate to Downtown Portland.

5. Prepare a brief summary report.

III. Prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the Central Area

The Central Area is all of the area within the inner freeway loop. The following work will be undertaken.

1. Examine existing land use and vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns.

2. Determine trends and analyze potential for future uses by land use category--residential (by density), commercial (retail, service, wholesale, office, etc.), industrial, and public.
3. Develop and test alternative plans for land use and transportation.

4. Based on Step 3 above, establish a preliminary comprehensive plan as a frame of reference for planning in the Core Area. Indicate the land use patterns to be achieved in the Central Area by functional category, the density and intensity of land uses, the physical form and environmental character to be achieved, and the plan of traffic movement through and within the Central Area.

IV. Prepare a Development Plan and Program for the Core Area and Waterfront

The Core Area is bounded by Burnside Street, the Willamette River, Market Street, and the Stadium Freeway.

The level of detail will depend in some degree on the problems encountered and the degree to which solutions can be agreed to in the time frame available. As a minimum, a guideline plan will be prepared indicating the arrangement of land uses, by category, the transportation system, including mass transit, vehicle parking, and pedestrian movement, and a physical form element that deals with building mass, open space, and movement and the relationships between them.

1. Determine trends and evaluate potential for various uses and activities. This step is in large part a matter of determining objectives with respect to the future function and character of Downtown Portland, as limited by physical and economic restraints, including the capacity of the transportation system.

2. Establish final design goals.
3. Develop realistic alternative arrangements for land use, vehicle access and circulation, mass transit, pedestrian movement, and parking. Relate these to form, function, density, building mass, space, movement, appearance and other urban design considerations.

4. Analyze and test alternatives. Evaluate alternatives in terms of the design goals agreed to in 2. above. The extent of this analysis will be limited by the number of alternatives that appear in an initial examination to be worthwhile for further consideration.

5. Select and present final plan and program. By this time the plan should have been subject to thorough review and consideration by all the various public agencies concerned and by interested private groups. Formal hearings should now be held. The presentation at these hearings should indicate the alternatives that were studied and the reasons for the selection of the final plan.

6. Describe the next stages of the on-going program that will be needed to further refine and implement the plan. Indicate areas for more detailed study and planning and a distribution of responsibility between the public and private sectors with respect to implementation.