



EAST PORTLAND ACTION PLAN

The Riches

- Community spirit and pride
- Real, no-nonsense people
- Connection to nature and farming
- Growing and sustained diversity
- Location in the region
- Supportive of families
- Hardworking neighbors
- Walkable neighborhoods
- Passionate and involved residents
- Untapped potential

The Challenges

- Increasing poverty
- Lack of basic infrastructure and funding
- Lack of community wealth
- Negative perceptions
- Public safety threats

Principles for Improved Livability

Throughout the planning process the Committee and other citizens provided input into the Action Plan in a variety of ways — through dialogue, by identifying key assets and challenges facing the area, by developing specific criteria for the types of actions the Action Plan should include, and by the very Strategies and Actions that they identified for the Action Plan. Through this process, several key themes emerged which serve as the Action Plan's guiding principles. As such, these **Principles** can provide the context for future policy making and for measuring progress toward achieving greater livability in East Portland.

PRINCIPLE 1. MITIGATE NEGATIVE TRENDS

- **Stabilization.** A primary objective of the Action Plan is to begin to reverse negative trends affecting the area's quality of life, in both real and perceived ways. As demonstrated in the *East Portland Review* and echoed by the members of the Committee, the area is facing a number of issues and challenges, which if left unchecked, may become increasingly difficult to solve. Some of the more immediate challenges facing the area are increased graffiti, concerns about public safety and the need to improve communication among the area's diverse population. As a first step, the Action Plan seeks to implement visible and effective actions to address these concerns.
- **Livability.** Beyond the immediate goal of stabilizing East Portland, the Action Plan identifies strategies and actions to improve the quality of life, or livability. These Strategies and Actions address a variety of issues and include elements of livability such as improved housing design and development quality, the creation of a targeted economic development strategy and the increased provision of safety net services.

PRINCIPLE 2. ATTAIN AND SUSTAIN EQUITY

The Committee defined “**community building**” as activities that:

- Contribute to community ownership of East Portland and/or the Action Plan
- Aid in making community connections
- Bring people together, person-to-person
- Organize around and assist with the changing nature of East Portland
- Fully engage under-represented individuals and communities
- Offer a voice for and enhance community diversity
- Lead to trust-building between communities within East Portland that have different values and relationships
- Bring about political engagement
- Include a role for authentic, community-based organizers
- Strengthen the common bonds between East Portland stakeholders
- Build a community network of support

- **Equity.** A universal concern among Committee members is whether East Portland is receiving a fair share of resources and attention by policy makers. Some of these real and perceived inequities are the result of the past practices that guided the area’s development before annexation by the City. In addition, the Committee is concerned that East Portland is receiving a disproportionate share of new housing development without the commensurate level of infrastructure, services and amenities. Other dimensions of inequity in East Portland, such as lack of convenient access to grocery stores, are illustrated in the *Regional Equity Atlas* (Coalition for a Livable Future, 2007).
- **Sustainability of Effort.** The type and complexity of issues facing East Portland will not be solved with quick fixes or one-time efforts. An underlying principle in the Action Plan is to ensure that efforts to improve equity receive ongoing attention.

PRINCIPLE 3. BUILD ON COMMUNITY ASSETS AND CONNECTIONS

- **Community Assets.** East Portland has many assets including a wide array of housing, a range of employment opportunities, diverse school choices and distinct community pride. In particular, the area has a special focus on families and cultural diversity that other areas are trying to create. The Action Plan seeks to tap into these assets and promote them to the region.
- **Linkages and Connections.** The Action Plan recognizes linkages between issues, such as the impact of development on schools and the connection between workforce training and the ability for local businesses to attract qualified employees. The concept of connections between people and partners is another important aspect of the Action Plan. In support of this, an entire subcategory of the Action Plan is devoted to Community Building to improve interaction among communities, empower residents, strengthen East Portland’s identity and develop places where people can gather.



PRINCIPLE 4. CAPITALIZE ON EAST PORTLAND'S PLACE IN THE REGION

- **Place and Role in the Region.** East Portland is served by two light rail lines, two freeways and a network of streets and transit routes which provide exceptional connectivity in the Portland metropolitan region. Additionally, East Portland encompasses the Gateway Regional Center, the Lents Town Center, several MAX stations and community Main Streets such as NE Sandy Boulevard, SE Division Street, and SE 122nd Avenue. These places present opportunities to accommodate new jobs, retail, services and housing. Given that it is often less expensive to upgrade existing infrastructure than to build new at the region's edge, East Portland is a logical place for public and private investment and should be promoted as such through local, regional and state policy and funding decisions.
- **Gateway to Nature.** East Portland is both the home of and gateway to parks, open space and significant natural areas. Locally, it includes such assets as Powell Butte, Johnson Creek, Zenger Farm and the Columbia River. As a gateway, it provides access to Oxbow and Blue Lake Regional Parks, the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area and the Mt. Hood National Forest. These assets should be promoted within the region, making East Portland a destination as well as a point of departure.



Abbreviations

APNBA Alliance of Portland Neighborhood Business Associations	MFS Metropolitan Family Service
BC Bicyclists of Color	MHCC Mt. Hood Community College
BDS Portland Bureau of Development Services	MPAC Metro Policy Advisory Committee
BES Portland Bureau of Environmental Services	MultCo Multnomah County
BOEC Portland Office of Emergency Communications	NA Neighborhood Association
BP&S Portland Bureau of Planning & Sustainability	NAYA Native American Youth Family Center
BTA Bicycle Transportation Alliance	ODOT Oregon Department of Transportation
CCC Community Cycling Center	OECDD Oregon Economic & Community Development Depart.
CDC Community Development Corporations	OMF Portland Office of Management and Finance
CDC Centers for Disease Control	ONI Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement
CIO Center for Intercultural Organizing	PBOT Portland Bureau of Transportation
CSD Centennial School District	PCC Portland Community College
DDSD David Douglas School District	PDC Portland Development Commission
DHS Department of Human Services	PF&R Portland Fire and Rescue
EP East Precinct Portland Police Bureau	PPB Portland Police Bureau
EPAP East Portland Action Plan	PPSD Portland Public School District
EPN East Portland Neighbors	PSD Parkrose School District
EPNO East Portland Neighborhood Office	PSF Portland School Foundation
FHWA Federal Highway Administration	PWB Portland Water Bureau
HAP Housing Authority of Portland	RSD Reynolds School District
IRCO Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization	SBA Small Business Administration
JCWC Johnson Creek Watershed Council	SR2S Portland Safe Routes to School
JPAC Metro Joint Policy Advisory Committee	TPAC Metro Technical Policy Advisory Committee
MESD Multnomah Education Service District	WPC Willamette Pedestrian Coalition

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