

# Centennial Mills Framework Plan

Portland, Oregon  
Fall 2006



Accepted by the Portland City Council  
October 11, 2006  
Resolution No. 36443

Adopted by the PDC Board of Commissioners  
December 13, 2006  
Resolution No. 6422

This page intentionally left blank.

---

# Acknowledgements

## Project Team

Steven Shain, Portland Development Commission  
Art Hendricks, Portland Development Commission  
Joe Zehnder, Portland Bureau of Planning  
Mark Raggett, Portland Bureau of Planning  
Karl Lisle, Portland Bureau of Planning

## Citizen Advisory Group

Neilson Abeel  
Mary Enmeades  
Patricia Gardner  
Bill Hawkins  
Suenn Ho  
Steven Leflar  
Chet Orloff  
Thomas Robinson  
Al Solheim  
Ken Unkeles  
Carol Urbano

## Technical Advisory Group

Nicholas Starin, Portland Bureau of Planning  
Dave Obern, Portland Development Commission  
April Bertelson, Portland Office of Transportation  
Janet Bebb, Portland Parks and Recreation  
Henry Kunowski, Portland Parks and Recreation  
Linda Dobson, Portland Bureau of Environmental Services  
Emily Hawth, Portland Bureau of Environmental Services  
Jim Middaugh, Portland Bureau of Environmental Services

## Consultant Team

Tim Smith, SERA Architects  
Matthew Arnold, SERA Architects  
Allison Wildman, SERA Architects  
Carol Mayer-Reed, Mayer/Reed  
Carl Frushour, Mayer/Reed  
Jerry Abdie, KPFF Consulting Engineers  
Craig Totten, KPFF Consulting Engineers

This page intentionally left blank.

---

# Table of Contents



Centennial Mills as seen from the Broadway Bridge

- Executive Summary, 1
- Introduction & Purpose, 3
- The Opportunity..., 4
- Public Process 2006, 7
- Precedents, 9
- Site Opportunities & Constraints, 11
- Framework Plan, 16
  - Redevelopment Principles, 16
  - Redevelopment Issues to Consider, 23
- Appendices, 25*
  - Redevelopment Thumbnails, 27
  - City Council Resolution #36320, 39
  - Existing Conditions Report, 41
  - Policy Review, 43
  - Existing Structures - Opportunities & Constraints, 47
  - Precedent Case Studies, 49
  - Summary of Stakeholder Interviews, 55
  - Interested Parties, 59

This page intentionally left blank.

# Executive Summary

In its early twentieth-century heyday, Centennial Mills helped drive the development of what would become Portland River District. In the early twenty-first century, a derelict Centennial Mills is poised to become the pinnacle of a rejuvenated and burgeoning River District. This important and historic riverfront site demands a creative, unifying vision that exceeds the public's aspirations – one that recreates Centennial Mills as a compelling part of Portland and its future. Achieving this goal will require a delicate, economically feasible balance between the provision of open space and historic preservation.

This framework plan is the result of a six-month public process stemming from City Council Resolution #36320, which directed the Portland Development Commission (PDC) and the Bureau of Planning (BOP) to work with interested stakeholders to develop a 'comprehensive plan' for the Centennial Mills site. This plan clarifies and presents the public's interests in, and aspirations for, the site. It does not propose a specific redevelopment scheme for the property. Rather, it outlines the various opportunities and constraints on the site, lays out five Redevelopment Principles and associated objectives, and presents a series of images and text describing innovative treatments and ideas for the site.

The five Redevelopment Principles that will guide the site's redevelopment are:

- **Provide Open Space**
- **Capture History**
- **Define a Community Focal Point**
- **Strengthen Connections**
- **Embrace Sustainability**

Centennial Mills represents one of Portland's greatest chances to create a community-defining riverfront open space while preserving a unique piece of the City's history. It is anticipated that the site will be redeveloped through a strong public-private partnership, such that the City can take advantage of high-quality private development to help meet the public's goals for the site. The above Redevelopment Principles each contain more specific objectives that will aid in the construction of redevelopment proposals (that will be solicited by the Portland Development Commission in a subsequent process).



This page intentionally left blank.



## Introduction

Centennial Mills (renamed in 1955 from Crown Mills) is located on the Willamette River between the Fremont and Broadway bridges. The mill began operation in 1910 as a large merchant flour mill, capitalizing on expanding foreign markets for U.S. grain products between 1911 to 1948. The mill successfully adapted to changing market conditions to produce flour, feed, grain, starch, and gluten products for nearly 90 years. The mill's economic success spurred significant additions to the physical plant during the 1920s and 1940; a modern pneumatic system was installed in the 1960s. Centennial Mills remained in production until the Portland Development Commission (PDC) purchased the site in 2000 as a step towards implement the 1995 River District Plan.

City policy has long envisioned the Centennial Mills site as part of a significant riverfront open space and public attractor. Adopted plans since 1985 show the site as a public open space with some of the Centennial Mills buildings intact. The plans also show a public amenity/attractor (e.g., aviary, botanical conservatory, museum, or regional recreation center) on the site.

In 2004, PDC commissioned an engineering study to estimate the cost/benefits of rehabilitating the Centennial Mill structures. The report identified two options for consideration: demolish all buildings on the site (except for the MPU facilities) and return the site to grade for future open space, recreation, and environmental uses; or, retain the Mounted Patrol Unit (MPU) facilities and any other structures that are salvageable or have re-use potential. PDC recommended demolitions of the existing buildings based on previous planning work and a lack of funding to rehabilitate the structures. This decision was protested by local historic preservationists and neighborhood advocates, resulting in the issuance of Resolution #36320 by Portland City Council.

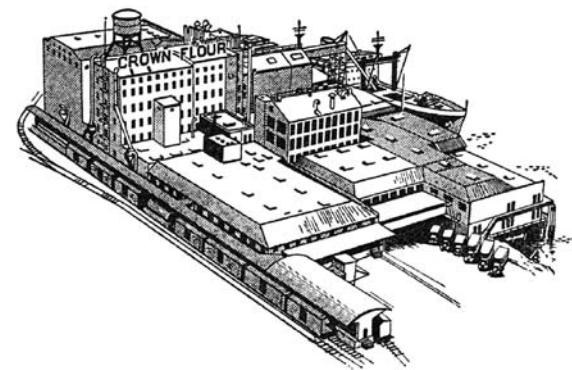
Resolution #36320 recognizes that the Centennial Mills property stands "as a symbol of Portland's rich history of maritime commerce and [as] a valuable artifact of the industrial working waterfront." The Resolution directed PDC and the Bureau of Planning to work with interested stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan for the Centennial Mills site. This Framework Plan document is the outcome of the planning process mandated by City Council.

## Framework Plan Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to clarify the public's interests and aspirations for the Centennial Mills site. This plan does not posit particular redevelopment schemes for the property. Rather, it outlines the various opportunities the site contains, as well as describes some of the challenges that will need to be overcome as it is redeveloped. It also sets five Redevelopment Principles that development teams will need to adhere to, as well as objectives that they will need to meet, in remaking the site. Throughout this document are collections of images and descriptive text that illustrate some of the more exciting and innovative ways in which the public's aspirations might be met.

PDC will initiate a subsequent process to solicit redevelopment proposals for the site from interested and qualified developer teams.

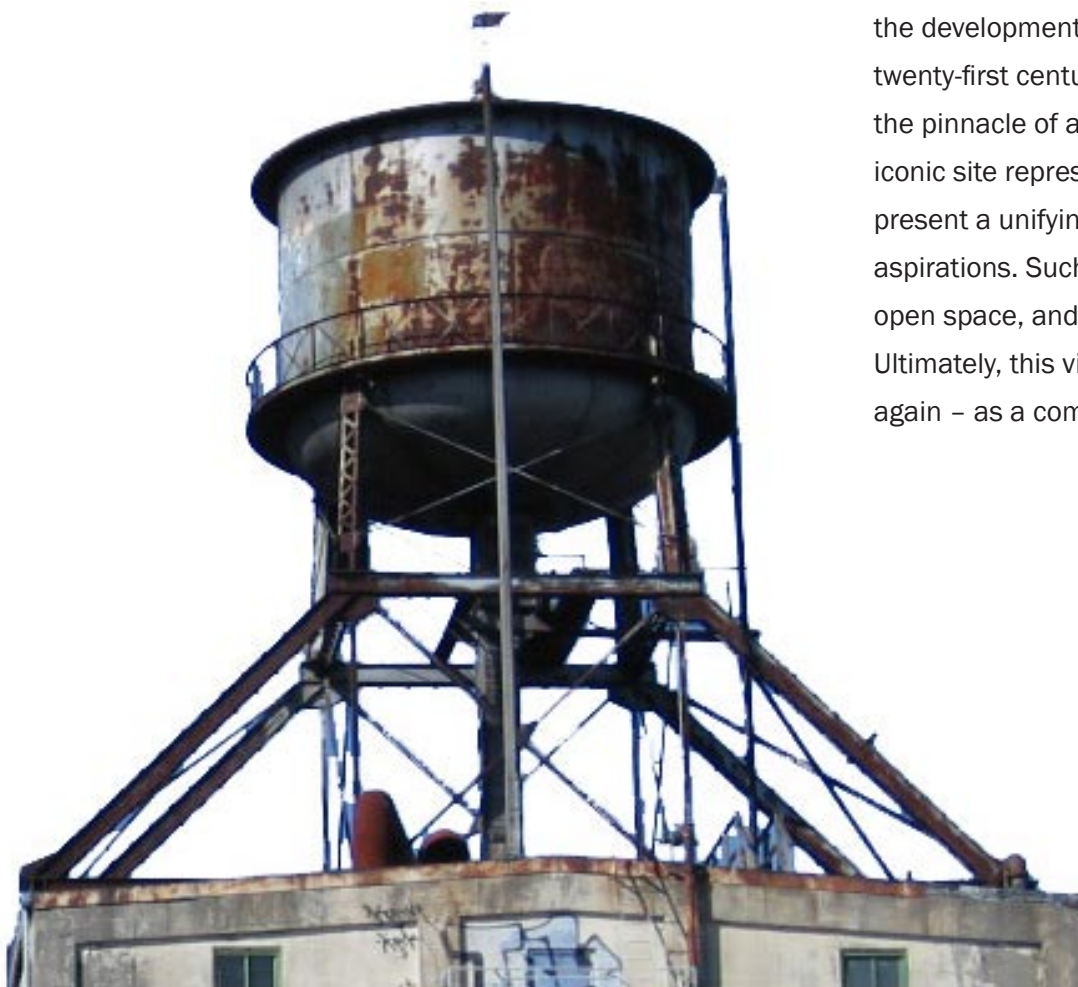
*How can the public's desires for both open space and historic preservation be balanced in an economically viable way?*



Drawing of Centennial Mills during its heyday

# The Opportunity...

In its early twentieth-century heyday, Centennial Mills helped drive the development of the industrial 'North Downtown.' In the early twenty-first century, a derelict Centennial Mills is poised to become the pinnacle of a rejuvenated and burgeoning River District. This iconic site represents a singular opportunity for developer teams to present a unifying vision for Centennial Mills that exceeds the public's aspirations. Such a vision will be sustainable, will provide high-quality open space, and will connect the City to the river and its history. Ultimately, this vision will present Centennial Mills as its own place again – as a compelling and thriving part of Portland and its future.

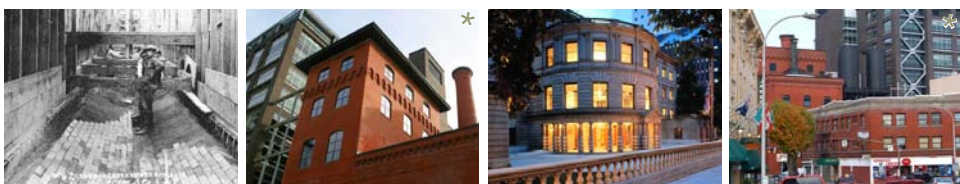


## Providing Open Space...



As a four-acre, riverfront site that lies at the intersection of the River District parks and the Willamette Greenway, Centennial Mills provides the prospect for building upon **Portland's waterfront / greenway open space system** and for complementing the strong series of signature parks and open spaces that define the Central City.

## Capturing History...



Because of its waterfront location and the fact that many of its structures, including its wharf, are largely intact, Centennial Mills offers a unique opportunity to creatively **re-use significant and iconic pieces of Portland's industrial and maritime history**. It also affords the chance to once again activate the river's edge with water-related uses.

## Defining Community Focal Points...



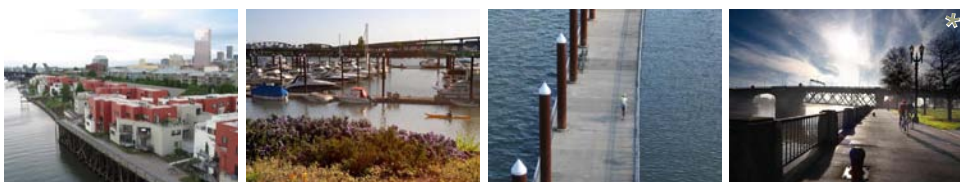
Centennial Mills offers the potential to blend historic structures and high-quality open spaces with **new uses and cultural amenities**. Given these attributes, and its relationship to the River District and the Willamette, Centennial Mills stands poised to become the type of high-quality urban place that will bolster Portland's identity as one of the most livable cities in the United States.

## Embracing Sustainability...



Redevelopment on the site provides a chance to employ the type of innovative development features that have made Portland a national leader in **sustainability, green building, and progressive urban planning**.

## Strengthening Connections...



The site lies at the intersection of the Willamette River and the River District, offering the opportunity to develop the site as **a strong link between the two and as an important node along the Willamette Greenway Trail**.

\* photo: Portland Ground

This page intentionally left blank.

# Public Process 2006

## Process Purpose

The purpose of the Centennial Mills Framework Plan is to carry out the intent and desires established by City Council in Resolution #36320 (May 2005) which called for the Portland Development Commission and the Bureau of Planning to work with citizens and stakeholders to develop a 'comprehensive plan' for the Centennial Mills site.

## Role of Citizen Advisory Group

The Centennial Mills Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) was formed in March 2006 and consisted of local residents, architects, members of the Portland Parks Board and the Pearl District Neighborhood Association, and representatives from the historic preservation, development, business, and arts communities. The CAG assisted the project team by:

- Reviewing input from public meetings and stakeholder interviews;
- Providing advice and guidance to the project team on the range of potential uses for the Centennial Mills site;
- Evaluating the available research and making recommendations concerning site-specific assessments, issues, and conditions;
- Offering input and feedback to the project staff on the conceptual designs and potential uses within the final Framework Plan.

## Summary of CAG Meetings and Public Open Houses:

*Note: Both CAG Meetings and Public Open Houses were open and advertised to the general public.*

### First CAG Meeting, March, 2006

In March, 2006, PDC and Planning staff organized the first meeting of the CAG. The goal of the advisory group meeting was to kick off the project and provide the background, purpose, and objectives of the planning process and the Framework Plan.

### Second CAG Meeting, April, 2006

The second meeting included a tour of Centennial Mills for City staff and CAG members. After the tour, the CAG met at the Portland Police Bureau's Mounted Patrol Unit to discuss members' impressions of the buildings and to review the Existing Conditions assessments and stakeholder interviews.



public meeting # 2



site tour, at the top of the grain elevators



site tour, examining the sifters

**Public Meeting #1, May, 2006**

The first public meeting was held on May 3, 2006, in the Portland Development Commission Conference room. Over 50 people attended the event and nine people provided public testimony that focused on the development opportunities of the site and potential uses ranging from mixed use development, a cultural art center, a site for a maritime museum, and a perspective on the Mounted Patrol Unit needs.

**Third CAG Meeting, May, 2006**

The third CAG meeting was held in early May at the Pacific Northwest College of Art and focused on the review of public testimony and discussion of redevelopment principles for the site.

**Fourth CAG Meeting, June, 2006**

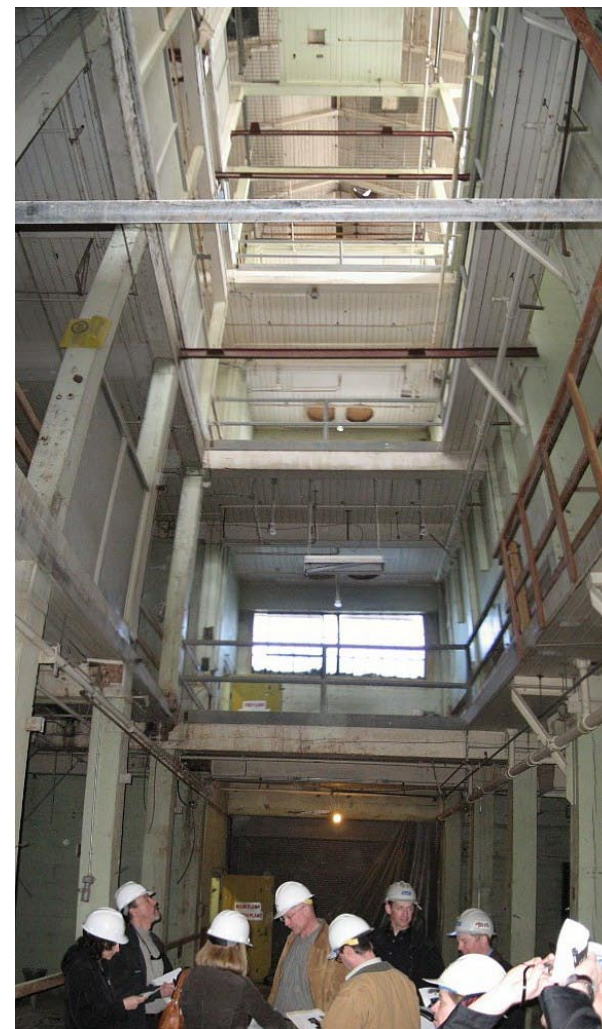
This meeting focused on a discussion of the preferred alternatives and options for the site. Members discussed several potential options for the site based on the Redevelopment Principles.

**Public Meeting #2, July 2006**

The second public meeting was held on July 13th, 2006 at the Pacific Northwest College of Art and was attended by approximately 50 community members and interested parties. Emerging principles and “critical elements” for the redevelopment of the Centennial Mills site were shared through a presentation and a series of displays. Twelve people shared their suggestions and opinions with the project team and consultants by providing public testimony.

**Fifth CAG Meeting, August 2006**

The final meeting of the Citizen Advisory Group was held in August and provided an opportunity for the group to review and respond to the draft Centennial Mills Framework Plan. The draft plan had been crafted to incorporate much of the feedback and direction received from earlier CAG meetings and the July public meeting. Members of the advisory group reacted positively to the draft document and offered numerous comments and suggestions for further improvements.



site tour, in the Feed Mill

# Precedents

In order to better understand the opportunities and constraints inherent in redeveloping an industrial property such as Centennial Mills, the project team examined a wide array of other industrial redevelopments from around the nation and the world. Some of these projects were completed entirely by the private sector as commercial or residential buildings – including Flanders Lofts (Portland, OR), Albers Mill (both in Portland, OR and Seattle, WA), Flour Mill Lofts (Denver, CO) and the Can Company (Baltimore, MD), among others. Many, such as the Jean Vollum Natural Capital Center (Portland, OR), have become showcases for green building and sustainable redevelopment.

Other sites were reconfigured as fully public parks and open spaces. The parks include a variety of programs, integrating common and unusual elements. Some examples of these include:

- **Gas Works Park** (Seattle, WA): former gas refinery site
  - *Features:* waterfront location, trails, play barn, playground, sundial, picnic shelter
- **BP Site Parkland** (North Sydney, Australia): former oil storage and transfer facility on Sydney Harbor
  - *Features:* waterfront location, trails, viewing platforms, constructed wetlands, native plants revegetation, sustainability center
- **Duisburg-Nord Country Park** (Duisburg, Germany): former metalworks
  - *Features:* rock climbing on storage tanks, trails, greenspace, high-wire tour, diving tank, historic interpretation, viewing platforms, event center
- **Scenic Hudson Park** (Irvington, NY): former lumberyard and bus depot
  - *Features:* waterfront location, ballfields/soccer field, playgrounds, trails, viewing platforms, green space, senior center, boat launch
- **Gantry Plaza State Park** (Long Island City, NY): former loading dock facility
  - *Features:* waterfront location, views of Manhattan, historic Long Island Rail Road gantries, four piers/boardwalks, playground, picnic area, fountain/water feature

A third category includes projects completed as public-private partnerships, with the end result being a mix of private uses and quasi-public / community spaces funded by a combination of private investment and public funding (incentives, low-interest loans, etc.). One such partnership resulted in the Westergasfabriek (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), a cultural park in Amsterdam created on the brownfield site of a former gas works. Industrial monuments and the surrounding park form a multifunctional space and a modern city park that contains: trees, meadows, and streams; innovative stormwater management systems; dozens of offices; spaces for large and small events; bars, restaurants, a cinema, a theatre, and museums.

Similarly, Orange County (CA) is currently in the process of master planning one of the largest urban parks in the United States on the former site of the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station. The Navy recently sold the property to a private developer who will develop 10% of the seven square mile property and contribute



Albers Mill Lofts (Seattle, WA)



Gas Works Park (Seattle, WA)

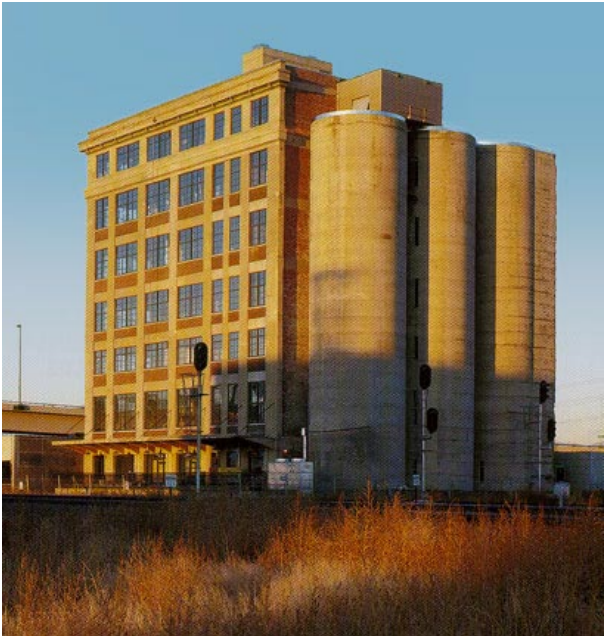


Mill City Museum (Minneapolis, MN)

money towards the development and maintenance of the “Great Park.” In Germany, a former coal mining and processing facility has been transformed into a “landschaftspark” (“landscape park”) that features a kids adventure park, amphitheater, graffiti wall, mining tunnel, rock climbing facility, trails, goat farm, boat rides, food vendors, concerts, and other events. (Admission to the park is free.)

Collectively, these projects represent a wide variety of ways in which historic sites can be re-imagined, redeveloped, and reintegrated into their communities. These projects also indicate that, while the private sector can be extremely successful in delivering high-quality redevelopments, great public benefits and amenities can be garnered when the public sector is involved. Specifically, public-private partnerships can be highly advantageous when and where the public has a strong interest in maintaining a strong historic presence, and in juxtaposing that sense of history with open space or community uses.

(There are six detailed case studies – including Mass MoCA (North Adams, MA), Flour Mill Lofts (Denver, CO), Mill City Museum (Minneapolis, MN), Gas Works Park (Seattle, WA), The Can Company (Baltimore, MD), and Albers Mill (Portland, OR) – located in the Appendix to this document.)



Flour Mill Lofts (Denver, CO)



Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (Portland, OR)



Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (North Adams, MA)



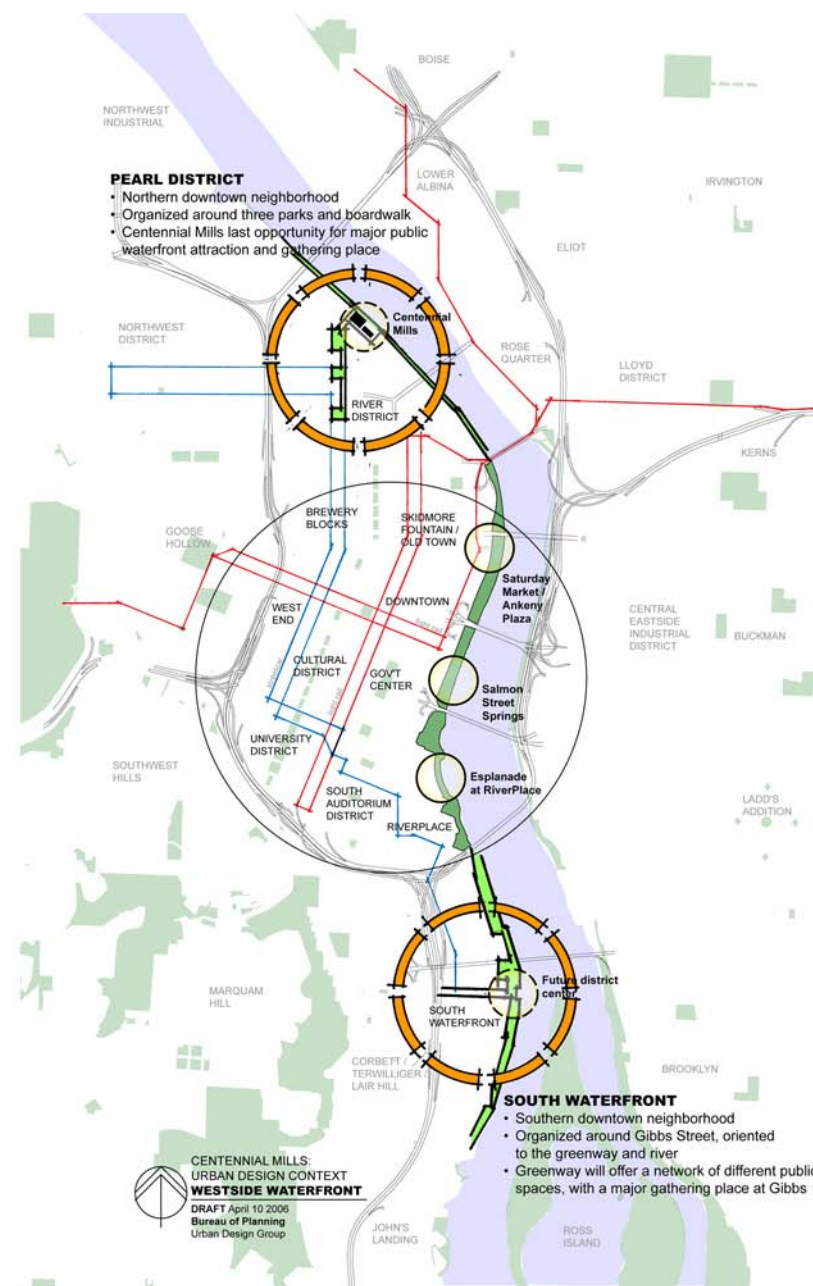
# Site Opportunities & Constraints

The Centennial Mills site contains unique opportunities within the city limits of Portland, and it is this collection of opportunities that have captured the public's imagination in recent years. Significant redevelopment opportunities along Portland's waterfront are rare. South Waterfront is largely planned out, the Central Eastside is segregated from the Willamette by a freeway, and areas to the north are largely industrial. Centennial Mills is a four-acre parcel in public ownership on the Willamette River, and as such demands special consideration. Its sprawling mill buildings and iconic water tower are hallmarks of an industrial heritage that has all but faded from the city's memory. Its **riverfront location** and distinctive wharf structure present amazing potential to provide public access to the Willamette River. And its location at the northern end of the River District and adjacency to Downtown mean that it could support any number of public amenities. In short, Centennial Mills is a site like no other, and its redevelopment must benefit the city's residents immensely.

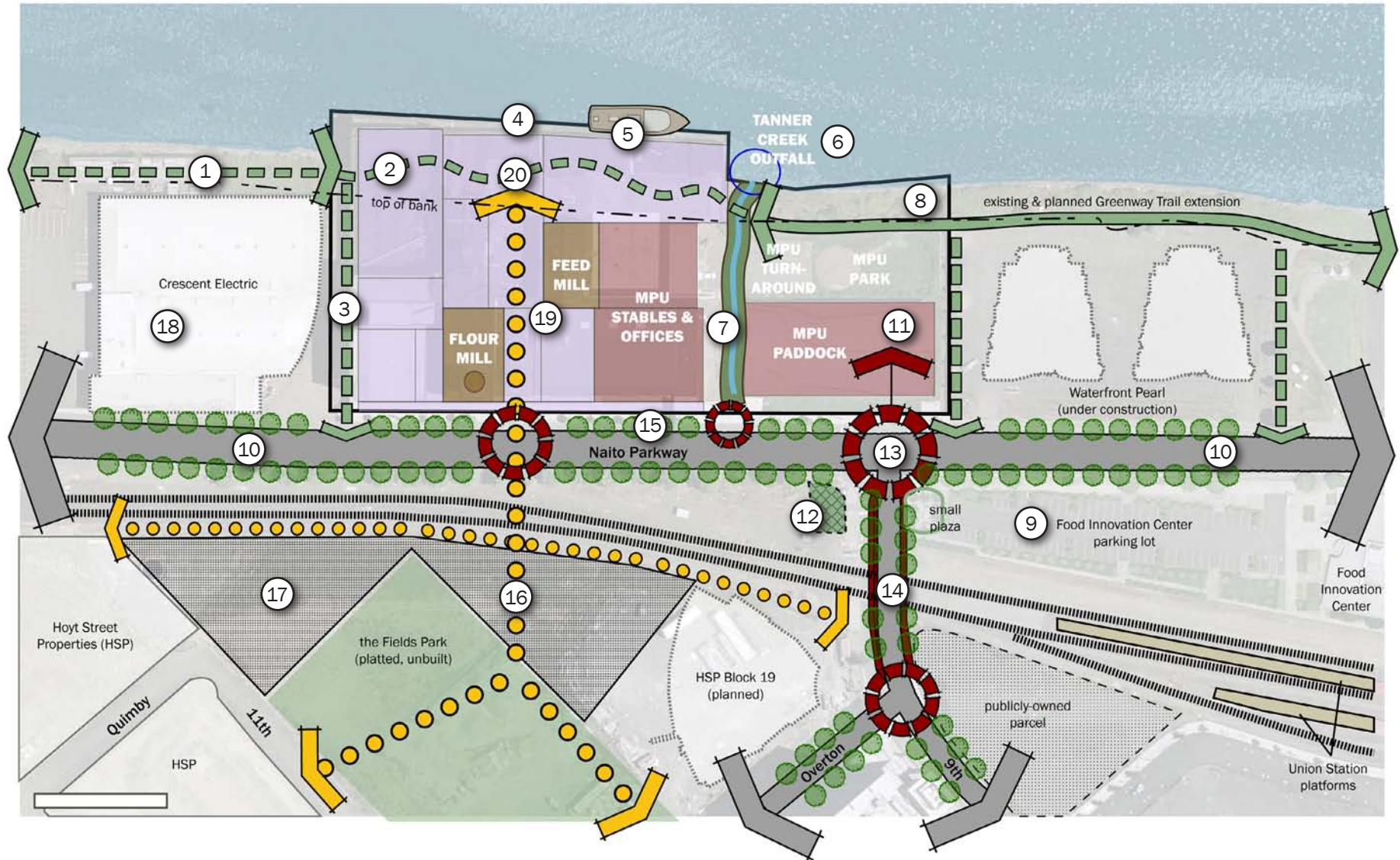
The collection of buildings at Centennial Mills represents the city's history with the grain milling industry. Some of the structures may be ripe for another of Portland's successful adaptive re-uses, while others may not, in the end, be salvageable. Perhaps entire buildings will be saved, perhaps just an occasional façade or piece of machinery or palette of materials. Regardless of what the final development may look like, though, this motley collection of concrete and wood-frame buildings, mills and warehouses, docks and wharf structures present a special opportunity for Portland to celebrate its **industrial heritage** – and to explore interesting combinations of both old and new architecture.

Centennial Mills stands to be the next great development in a growing string of westside **riverfront attractions** that begins at South Waterfront and marches north through RiverPlace, Waterfront Park, Salmon Street Springs, and Saturday Market. Centennial Mills has the further distinction of containing both a major wharf system and the outfall for Tanner Creek, the oft-imagined but seldom seen tributary of the Willamette. Centennial Mills, then, offers the possibility to improve an important stretch of the Willamette River for fish and wildlife, to celebrate Tanner Creek, to emphasize stormwater as a resource, and to provide high-quality access to Portland's waterfront. Centennial Mills is also envisioned to be the northern terminus of the River District's parks (Jamison Square, Tanner Springs, and The Fields (proposed)).

Potential **development programs** for the site must be considered in this context – as complementing the various districts and uses that surround them. But, as with most former industrial sites, there are significant constraints. Above all, the site and its buildings may be limited by the financial realities of rehabilitation. (Nothing is impossible; it simply becomes a question of expense.) More specific opportunities and constraints are illustrated and annotated on the following pages.



Urban Design Context



Centennial Mills Framework Plan  
**SITE OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS**



**Opportunities**

**Constraints**

**Open Space**

2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creatively integrate Greenway Trail into the site</li> <li>Reuse existing wharf and pier system to promote river access and views</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires removing, reconfiguring, and/ or stabilizing buildings</li> <li>May require repairing or replacing pilings</li> </ul>
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connect the planned Fields Park to Centennial Mills with a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks and Naito Parkway</li> <li>Extend the Pearl District “boardwalk” concept</li> <li>Connect the Pearl District to the Willamette River through the site via the pedestrian bridge alignment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connection the Fields to the River via a bridge would necessitate the removal of some buildings</li> <li>Cost of construction will be high, and there are uncertainties in terms of technical feasibility and to whom the responsibility for paying for and/or constructing the bridge would fall</li> </ul>
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the size of the Fields Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These two triangular parcels are in private ownership and their future use has yet to be determined</li> </ul>

**History**

4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain historic wharf system as a piece of Portland’s maritime history</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May require repairing or replacing pilings</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer mooring for boats or watercraft, including ferries or water taxis to continue maritime tradition on site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May require repairing or replacing pilings</li> <li>Could restrict or limit public access to the dock system over the river</li> </ul>
19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain historic or iconic structures and / or machinery</li> <li>Designate some or all existing buildings as Historic; capture historic tax credits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retaining specific buildings may be structurally or economically difficult</li> <li>Historic designation will constrain the degree to which the buildings may be altered</li> </ul>

**Community Focal Points**

11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gateway opportunity into Centennial Mills site; end of 9th Avenue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently the location of the MPU horse paddock</li> <li>New structures could obstruct views to the Willamette</li> </ul>
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinated gateway or redevelopment opportunity with existing gateway plaza across 9th Avenue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land ownership / right-of-way issues need to be resolved at this location</li> </ul>
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redevelop key riverfront site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redevelopment of Crescent Electric site is uncertain</li> </ul>
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity for community gathering spot at intersection between Greenway Trail and River District boardwalk / Fields Park connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May require alteration or demolition of existing structures</li> </ul>



view of riverbank, southern edge of Warehouse C



Tanner Creek outfall (photo: Flowing Solutions)



Feed Mill viewed from the Flour Mill (looking southeast)



existing pilings (photo: Flowing Solutions)



existing machinery in sifting room



tack room in the Mounted Patrol Unit



Naito Parkway streetscape (looking north)



intersection at 9th Avenue and Naito Parkway (looking east)



Greenway Trail

**Opportunities**

**Constraints**

**Connectivity & Access**

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future Greenway Trail connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redevelopment of Crescent Electric site is uncertain</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect new Greenway Trail to Naito Parkway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May require removing / reconfiguring buildings depending on location</li> </ul>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devise shared parking arrangement with Food Innovation Center and other nearby parking facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will require formal agreement</li> <li>• May require pedestrian improvements at 9th / Naito intersection to improve access to Centennial Mills site</li> </ul>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance Naito Parkway streetscape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naito is a <i>de facto</i> truck route, and large vehicles may need to be accommodated, especially at the intersection with 9th</li> </ul>
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve key intersection for pedestrian and bike access between the Pearl District, Centennial Mills, the Willamette Greenway Trail, and Naito Parkway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflicts with the needs of multi-axle trucks that access the Main Post Office and other Pearl District delivery areas from 9th Avenue and Naito Parkway</li> </ul>
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to enhance the 9th Avenue and Overton streetscapes to provide a consistent, safe, direct, and convenient pathway between Centennial Mills and the Pearl District</li> <li>• Opportunity to provide an extended gateway between Centennial Mills and the Pearl District</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active railroad tracks are a significant barrier and pose a potential safety hazard</li> <li>• 9th Avenue needs to accommodate multi-axle trucks serving the Main Post Office and other delivery areas in the Pearl District</li> </ul>
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure high-quality transit access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May require creation of a bus pull-out and/or the placement of a transit shelter</li> </ul>

**Sustainability**

6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance/ celebrate the Tanner Creek outfall</li> <li>• Emphasize stormwater as a resource</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May require removing / reconfiguring the adjacent structure(s)</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daylight Tanner Creek</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BES easement along driveway currently provides only vehicle access to site and MPU from Naito</li> <li>• A potential barrier that could divide the site</li> <li>• May impact MPU parking / loading / turn-around area</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creatively enhance and restore riverbank to provide habitat for salmon fingerlings and other small fish</li> <li>• Integrate Greenway Trail into restoration project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River currents, the overflow from Tanner Creek, and the presence of dock structures may impinge upon fish habitat</li> <li>• May impact MPU Park or parking / loading / turn-around area</li> </ul>

# Redevelopment Principles

The Redevelopment Principles embody the public's aspirations for Centennial Mills and are meant to establish a direction for the site's redevelopment. They provide guidance for redevelopment proposals based on the site's riverfront location, its rich history, and its relationship to the surrounding community. There are five Redevelopment Principles that will form the basis for the great design this site demands. These Principles are: *Provide Open Space*, *Capture History*, *Define a Community Focal Point*, *Strengthen Connections*, and *Embrace Sustainability*. At a minimum, redevelopment proposals for the site will need to meet these Principles. The following pages include specific objectives for meeting each Principle.



**Provide Open Space**

Develop a signature riverfront open space.

**Capture History**

Capture and represent the historic significance, character, and/or function of Centennial Mills.

**Define a Community Focal Point**

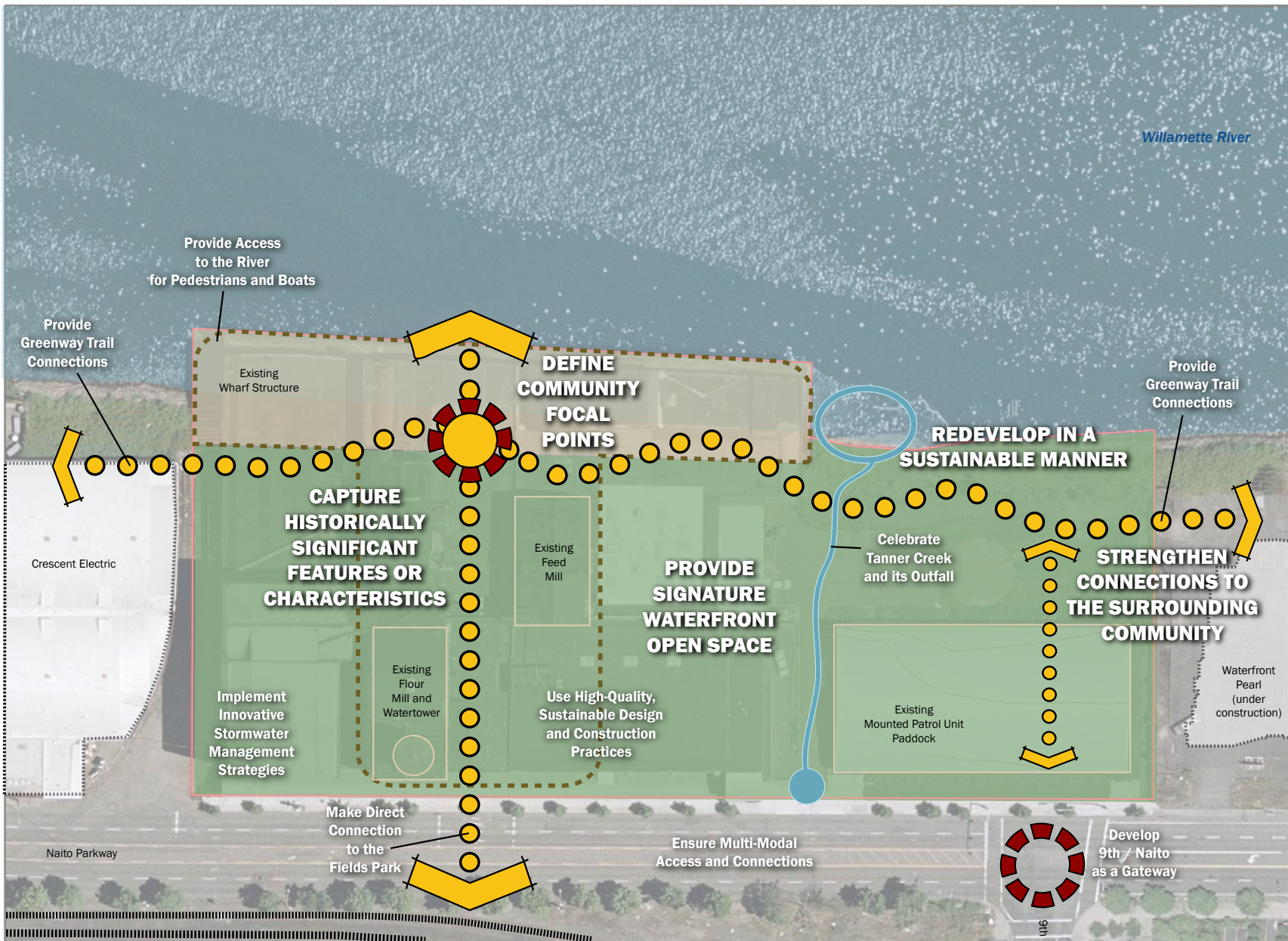
Create a dynamic, lasting, and unique waterfront destination for people of all ages.

**Strengthen Connections**

Connect Centennial Mills to the River District, surrounding city, and region.

**Embrace Sustainability**

Redevelop Centennial Mills in an ecologically, economically, and culturally sustainable manner.



Centennial Mills Framework Plan **CRITICAL COMPONENTS**



## Provide Open Space

Great cities have great open spaces. Centennial Mills is poised to be a significant gateway to the River District and can act as the northern bookend for a string of public open spaces along the Willamette River. The Centennial Mills site contains an opportunity to provide a place for Portland residents and visitors to relax and gather, experience nature in an urban area, and interact with the Willamette River.

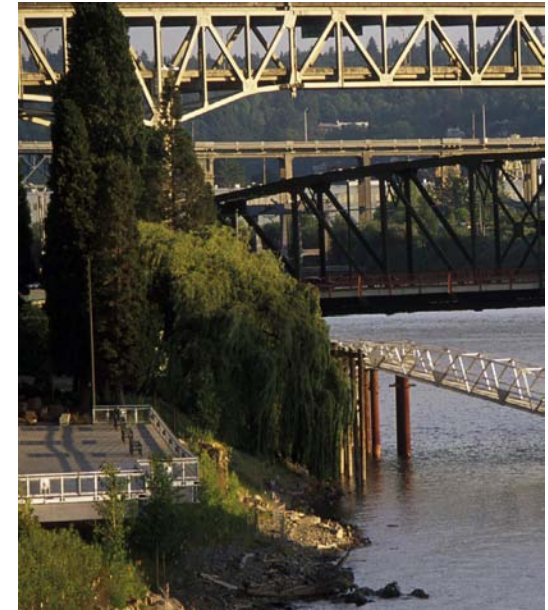
## *Develop a signature riverfront open space.*

### OBJECTIVES

- develop a significant, high-quality public park and/or plaza
- connect people to the river
- provide a north-south connection to the Willamette Greenway
- ensure that adjacent development enhances the open space and Greenway
- provide a direct connection to The Fields Park, other River District Parks, and the Boardwalk



South Park Blocks farmers market  
(Portland, OR)



Eastbank Esplanade (Portland, OR)



Salmon Street Springs (Portland, OR)



Stanley Park (Vancouver, British Columbia)



Gas Works Park (Seattle, WA)



## Capture History

Centennial Mills represents one of the last vestiges of early 20th-century riverfront industry in Portland. The buildings and mechanisms within them tell the tumultuous story of the industry's boom-bust cycles, its prosperity and evolution, and its historic reliance on the Willamette River. This history must be captured and kept alive for future generations of Portlanders.

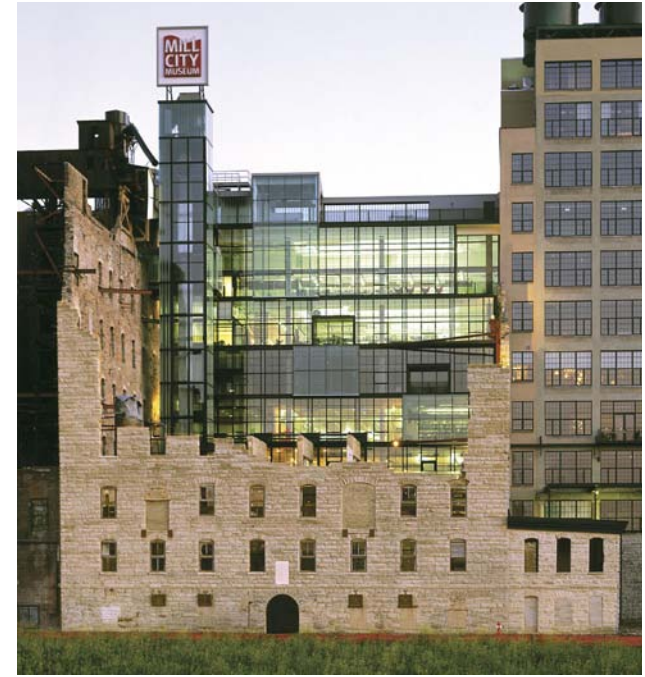
## Capture and represent the historic significance, character, and/or function of Centennial Mills.

### OBJECTIVES

- adaptively reuse important historic or iconographic structures (e.g. Feed Mill, Flour Mill, watertower, wharf)
- reuse existing materials and equipment
- symbolically demonstrate the quintessential mechanisms of maritime commerce, flour milling, and the grain industry
- encourage development that reflects the site's history as a "working waterfront"



blending of old and new buildings  
(North Park Lofts, Portland, OR)



historic elements integrated into new design  
(Mill City Museum, Minneapolis, MN)



history on display (Maritime Aquarium, Norwalk, CT)



historic elements adaptively reused  
(Duisburg-Nord Country Park, Duisburg, Germany)



historic building made new  
(Jean Vollum Natural Capital Center, Portland, OR)

## Define a Community Focal Point

Centennial Mills stands in the heart of the Portland metropolitan region, prominently situated on the Willamette River and flanked by one of the city's most dynamic urban neighborhoods. Centennial Mills has an opportunity to become the symbolic gateway for the River District to engage residents and visitors of all ages. The possibilities for Centennial Mills are limited only by one's imagination, but certainly include a chance to mix old and new, to take advantage of a unique riverfront location, and to showcase design excellence as steps towards creating a new focal point for the community. An eventual plan for the site must be cohesive, communicate permanence, and reflect a level of public good that contributes to community place-making.

## Create a dynamic, lasting, and unique waterfront destination for people of all ages.

### OBJECTIVES:

- develop a distinctive design and program that reflects the site's riverfront location, as well as its overall place, fit, and importance within the City and the region
- incorporate a public attraction or amenity
- activate the site's edges with active uses along the waterfront and the street
- encourage development that supports the inclusion of artisans or craftspeople



USS Blueback, Oregon Museum of Science & Industry (Portland, OR)



Torpedo Factory (Baltimore, MD)



Oregon Maritime Museum (Portland, OR)



Victoria Harbor (Victoria, British Columbia)



Eastbank Esplanade, OMSI (Portland, OR)



Granville Island (Vancouver, British Columbia)

## Strengthen Connections

Centennial Mills' location on the Willamette River (along the Greenway Trail) lends itself to being truly multi-modal, with potential for access by foot, bicycle, motor vehicle, transit, and possibly watercraft. The site's proximity to the Willamette River, River District, and location within the Central City, demands that careful attention be paid to who will access the site and how they will do so.

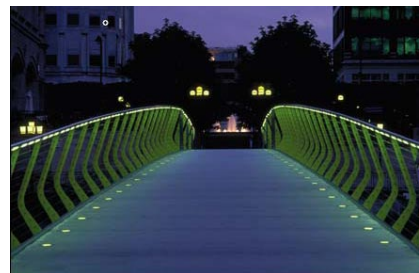
## Connect Centennial Mills to the River District, surrounding city, and region.

### OBJECTIVES:

- create public access to, from, and along the river
- provide strong, multi-modal connections to the River District and Central City
- emphasize the 9th and Naito intersection as a gateway to both the River District and the Willamette River
- place uses along Naito that will activate the street
- connect to the River District's Boardwalk and series of neighborhood parks



floating concrete walkway (Brisbane, Australia)



lighted pedestrian bridge (Derby, UK)



boat access (Victoria, British Columbia)



pedestrian bridge (Denver, CO)



Eastbank Esplanade (Portland, OR)

## Embrace Sustainability

Portland is known nationally as a “green” city that strives to exceed the *status quo* for sustainable policies, design, and infrastructure. Centennial Mills presents a highly visible opportunity to exhibit the latest sustainable development practices, integrating everything from green building techniques and innovative stormwater management to the creative reuse of materials and an enhanced riverbank for fish and wildlife.

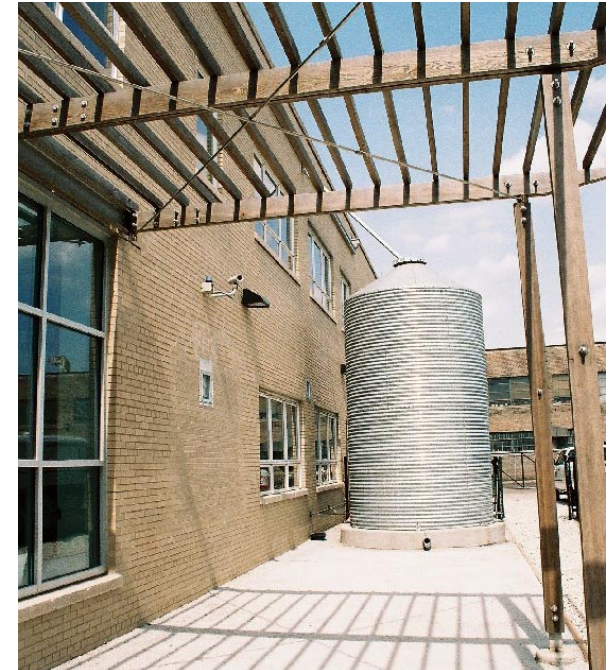
*Redevelop Centennial Mills in an ecologically, economically, and culturally sustainable manner.*

### OBJECTIVES

- (re)develop buildings to achieve a high LEED rating
- use best practices in green building and site layout
- reuse materials creatively
- employ innovative, on-site stormwater management
- target locally-owned businesses and products
- integrate and celebrate Tanner Creek
- enhance the riverbank for fish and wildlife
- ensure the economic viability of development programs



stormwater swale



water catchment system (Chicago, IL)



stormwater swale / urban waterway



Amy Joslin Eco Roof, Multnomah Building (Portland, OR)

# Redevelopment Issues to Consider

While the Centennial Mills site has the very strong potential to be a remarkable waterfront jewel, there are also a variety of issues that will need to be addressed prior to its redevelopment. The ways in which some of these issues are addressed will no doubt be key topics of conversation as redevelopment proposals for the site are discussed and evaluated. These issues are introduced below; additional information may be found in the appendices to this document.

## Historic Buildings and Program Maximization

The condition and layout of the existing Centennial Mills buildings vary significantly. Some of the buildings are on spread footings, several share walls, and the site as a whole has soil issues. Programming new uses within these buildings may be difficult. Given their current structural status, the cost of rehabilitating specific structures also may be limiting. The degree to which historic structures are maintained on the site may limit the amount of public open space as well as the views to the river that could be achieved from Naito Parkway and The Fields Park. The issue then becomes how to balance historic preservation and the need to accommodate a specific program.

## Mounted Patrol Unit

The Mounted Patrol Unit (MPU) is expected to be accommodated on the Centennial Mills site unless a viable alternative site can be secured. The MPU has a specific program that requires special design considerations and accommodations. It also must be located so as to allow for quick and easy access to Downtown Portland. The general considerations for moving, reconfiguring, or keeping the MPU are as follows:

- If the MPU is proposed to be moved off-site, there will be more room on the site for other uses. The trade-off is that a viable site must be secured that is proximate to Downtown, can accommodate the MPU program, and meets any additional criteria established by the Police Bureau.
- If the MPU is kept in its existing configuration, previous public investments in the MPU facility are preserved. The trade-off is that the redevelopable area will be greatly reduced and that the current access restrictions will be maintained. Additionally, the gateway / focal point at the 9th and Naito intersection cannot be thoroughly developed due to the location of the exterior pad-dock.
- If the MPU is reconfigured elsewhere on the site, there is greater opportunity for consolidating its program and accommodating new uses on the former location. The trade-off is that previous public investments in the existing facility are ostensibly lost and reconfiguring the facility would likely require additional public costs.

## Open Space and Development

Currently, the City is considering various public-private partnership possibilities to finance the site's redevelopment. While this may be an economical way to redevelop the site, the trade-off is that the site is not likely to redevelop wholly as a public waterfront park. Rather, if such a redevelopment partnership is pursued, the site may contain some combination of public and private features.



top of Grain Elevator C



Mounted Patrol Unit stables



Feed Mill interior

### The Wharf and Riverbank Enhancement

The site's location on the Willamette River is one of its strongest assets. The wharf is an historic component of the site's "working waterfront" heritage and one of the last such structures along Portland's waterfront. The wharf is anchored by a 20-foot high seawall/retaining wall; a small gravel beach is located at the base of the seawall. Current state regulations make building a new wharf structure difficult; the existing wharf must either be reinforced / upgraded and reused or removed.

One of the objectives of the Redevelopment Principles is to enhance the riverbank to improve fish and wildlife habitat. Treatments to achieve this end could potentially include laying back the bank, removing riprap and establishing new vegetation, and creating shallows for fish and wildlife. Since large wharf structures typically contribute to very poor fish habitat (particularly for fingerling salmon), the ideas of retaining the wharf and improving fish habitat are seemingly in conflict with one another.

- If the wharf is removed and the riverbank is aggressively enhanced, fish habitat and the natural aesthetic of the riverbank will be greatly enhanced. The trade-off is the loss of developable area and unique access over the water currently offered by the wharf structure.
- If the wharf is removed but the seawall is retained, fish habitat will be improved and public access can be provided at river's edge along the seawall. The trade-off is that the riverbank cannot be enhanced along the seawall and some developable area is lost.
- If the wharf is retained, a significant component of the site's maritime heritage will be retained, as will a unique way to engage with the river. The trade-off is that there may be limited opportunity to enhance the riverbank beneath, and fish habitat may not be markedly improved.

### Parking

The provision of parking on the Centennial Mills site will be a component of many redevelopment proposals. As the site is more intensely developed, the need for on-site parking will become greater. If the site is redeveloped as a major waterfront park or greenspace, there will be less need for significant amounts of on-site parking. (Under this scenario, parking possibly could be accommodated on-street and/or in nearby, off-site parking structures.) If the site is redeveloped more intensely as a major public attractor with an employment center, more on-site parking will be necessary. The challenge will be to accommodate any on-site parking in a context-sensitive manner.



deteriorating wharf structure (photo: Flowing Solutions)



parking garage (Vancouver, BC)



parking garage, Portland International Airport (Portland, OR)

---

## Appendices

This page intentionally left blank.



## Appendix: Redevelopment Thumbnails

The following section contains various redevelopment thumbnails of schemes that potentially could occur on the Centennial Mills site. These thumbnails were used to test development schemes against the Redevelopment Principles during the framework planning process. They are provided here because they illustrate some of the various ways in which the principles could be satisfied, as well as to represent the gamut of possibility for the site – from redeveloping the site as a major waterfront park to building out the site with an assortment of new and rehabilitated buildings. In no way do the nine thumbnails illustrated here represent a selection from which developer teams should choose. Rather, it is hoped that this range of treatments and combinations, in conjunction with the sample images included in and preceding this section, will help inspire future development proposals.

It is important to note that the following development thumbnails do not demonstrate all of the possible plans for the site, nor do they individually try to maximize all of the objectives of the Redevelopment Principles. Rather, the goal of the exercise was to illustrate a plausible variety of treatments based on the level of public-private partnering. For example, a waterfront park scheme likely has limited private involvement or financing, while a fuller build-out of the site would be expected to provide a significant public or quasi-public feature financed primarily by private development on the remainder of the site.

Each development thumbnail has a unique set of pros and cons, or trade-offs in terms of how the Redevelopment Principles are met. For example, as the size of open space is increased, the developable area is decreased (and vice-versa).



Centennial Mills as seen from the west



#1: Park & MPU



#2: Restoration & Preservation



#3: Privately-Funded Park



#4: Festival Marketplace



#5: Destination/Attraction



#6: Working Waterfront



#7: Arts Incubator



#8: Employment Center



#9: Live/Work

#1: Park & MPU

This scheme provides a significant greenspace/park where the majority of the existing Centennial Mills buildings stand today. The major feature of the scheme is the visual and physical linkage of the Fields Park and Centennial Mills. Together, the parks would read as one large greenspace at the northern end of the River District. The Feed Mill is adaptively reused for a community use, perhaps a community center, boat house, or museum. The wharf structure is retained to provide waterfront access and opportunities for boat access and moorage. The MPU facilities are kept in their current configuration. (With the exception of the Willamette Greenway Trail, the MPU portion of the site would be restricted to police and service access.)



#1: Park & MPU



existing MPU paddock

Major Features

Considerations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signature riverfront park</li> <li>• Willamette Greenway Trail crosses site</li> <li>• Very wide pedestrian bridge to Fields Park</li> <li>• Enhanced riverbank south of the wharf structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size of open space limits opportunities for advantageous public/private partnerships</li> <li>• Greenspace, riverbank restoration, and Fields Park connection would most likely be financed by the City</li> <li>• Limits opportunities for on-site parking</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPU remains in original location / building</li> <li>• Strong Portland Police presence on site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limits opportunities to celebrate Tanner Creek, enhance the riverbank, and develop 9th/Naito as gateway</li> <li>• Limits opportunities for on-site parking</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feed Mill adaptively re-used for community space</li> <li>• Wharf structure retained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only two iconic structures (one building) are retained, although some elements / functions of the existing complex can be integrated into the open space</li> </ul>



Gas Works Park (Seattle, WA)

#2: Restoration & Preservation

This scheme provides a significant greenspace/park with a daylit Tanner Creek as its central feature. This feature is further enhanced by aggressively cutting back and rehabilitating the riverbank, and modifying the existing wharf to improve fish and wildlife habitat. The Flour Mill and Feed Mill are rehabilitated for community uses, including housing the MPU functions (Flour Mill). (Other uses might include a community center, arts center, or museum.) A small amount of parking is provided under the Flour Mill in the existing basement. A water feature or other focal element provides a gateway to the site from 9th Street and the Pearl District.

Major Features

Considerations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant riverfront park</li> <li>• Public plaza oriented to river</li> <li>• Focal plaza at intersection of 9th and Naito</li> <li>• Willamette Greenway Trail crosses site</li> <li>• Medium-wide pedestrian bridge to Fields Park</li> <li>• Significant riverbank restoration and habitat enhancement</li> <li>• Daylit Tanner Creek</li> <li>• Innovative stormwater management techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size of open space and waterway restoration limits opportunities for advantageous public/private partnerships</li> <li>• Greenspace, plazas, riverbank restoration, and Fields Park connection, and Tanner Creek daylighting would most likely be financed by the City</li> <li>• Limits opportunities for on-site parking</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPU relocated to the north side of the site, utilizing existing Flour Mill for offices and stables</li> <li>• Strong Portland Police presence on site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limits opportunities to celebrate Tanner Creek, enhance the riverbank, and develop 9th/Naito as gateway</li> <li>• New MPU facility would most likely be developed by the City</li> <li>• Limits opportunities for on-site parking</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feed and Flour Mills adaptively re-used for community or public uses</li> <li>• Portions of the wharf structure retained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four iconic structures (two buildings) are retained, although some elements / functions of the complex can be integrated into the park and/or plaza</li> </ul>



#2: Restoration & Preservation



MPU paddock



Urban Creek (Manitoba)

#3: Privately-Funded Park

This development thumbnail attempts to satisfy the desire for a large public greenspace and community-oriented historic preservation by utilizing privately-financed development to help fund it. This scheme provides a significant greenspace/park with a daylit Tanner Creek as its central feature. Aggressive riverbank enhancement improves fish and wildlife habitat. The wharf is removed to improve fish habitat, but the seawall is retained to create a Willamette Greenway promenade similar to that currently found in Tom McCall Waterfront Park.

The Feed Mill is renovated for either a community function, private use, or some combination of both. A relatively large, privately-developed building on the site's north side houses a mix of uses (including residential) and integrates many of the features/materials of the existing Centennial Mills buildings. Parking is accommodated under the new building. The new building and the Feed Mill frame a large public plaza that links directly to the Fields Park via a wide pedestrian bridge. The MPU is relocated off-site.



#3: Privately-Funded Park

Major Features

Considerations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant riverfront park</li> <li>• Major public plaza oriented to river</li> <li>• Focal plaza at intersection of 9th and Naito</li> <li>• Willamette Greenway promenade; seawall or retaining wall replaces wharf</li> <li>• Very-wide pedestrian bridge to Fields Park continues River District Boardwalk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on the structure of the public/private partnership, the final design of park, promenade, plazas, pedestrian bridge, and restoration features may be constrained by the amount of private development on-site</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New, privately-developed building(s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current zoning requires residential uses with new development</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant riverbank restoration and habitat enhancement</li> <li>• Daylit Tanner Creek</li> <li>• Innovative stormwater management techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In conjunction with the new development on the north side of the site, these improvements would necessitate the relocation of the MPU (with some public cost associated), which would eliminate the police presence on-site</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feed Mill adaptively re-used</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only one iconic structure is retained, although some elements / functions of the complex can be integrated into the new development and park</li> </ul>



Willamette River seawall with adjacent development (photo: Flowing Solutions)



River District Boardwalk

#4: Festival Marketplace

This scheme presents a large, year-round festival marketplace (similar to Boston’s Quincy Market or Vancouver’s Granville Island), community space, and live/work space for local artists and craftspeople. Specifically, it shows how an attraction or destination might be realized through the adaptive re-use of existing Centennial Mills buildings. It also presents natural and greenspace benefits including river-bank enhancement and the daylighting of Tanner Creek. The basements of the existing buildings are reconfigured for below-grade parking. A large public plaza is framed by the Feed Mill, Flour Mill, and a portion of the grain elevator. This plaza is connected to the Fields Park via a narrow pedestrian bridge. A prominent, linear plaza is situated between the two new buildings and the Feed Mill, offering views and access from Naito Parkway to the river. The MPU is relocated off-site in this scheme.

The public amenities in this scheme include significant public open spaces, preservation of major portions of the existing Centennial Mills complex, views to the Willamette River from Naito Parkway, daylighting of Tanner Creek and enhancing a portion of the riverbank, dramatic riverfront access along a Willamette Greenway promenade, and employment opportunities that focus on local, hand-made goods.



#4: Festival Marketplace



Quincy Market (Boston, MA)



Granville Island (Vancouver, BC)

Major Features

Considerations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate riverfront park</li> <li>Public plazas</li> <li>Willamette Greenway promenade; seawall or retaining wall replaces wharf</li> <li>Narrow pedestrian bridge to Fields Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The degree of (re)development limits the amount of public open space</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant portions of the existing Centennial Mills complex adaptively re-used</li> <li>New buildings house some marketplace functions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The intensity of uses necessitates the provision of a significant amount of on-site parking</li> <li>Current zoning requires residential uses with new development</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daylit Tanner Creek</li> <li>Enhanced riverbank south of the wharf structure</li> <li>Innovative stormwater management techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In conjunction with the park space and redevelopment, these improvements would necessitate the relocation of the MPU (with some public cost associated), which would eliminate the police presence on-site</li> </ul>

#5: Destination/Attraction

This Redevelopment Thumbnail attempts to accommodate a public destination / attraction and the Mounted Patrol Unit on-site. In order to achieve this, the MPU has been slightly reconfigured: its stables and offices are housed in a new building adjacent to the existing paddock. (Access to the MPU would be limited to police personnel and service vehicles.) The Tanner Creek outlet is enhanced and a new boardwalk system (Willamette Greenway Trail) skirts the outlet to provide interpretation and views of the outfall from the river. A new courtyard and plaza provide public gathering spaces, as well as river interaction along the wharf. A narrow pedestrian bridge links The Fields Park to the plaza and courtyards. Flexible development space (and thus new employment opportunities) is provided by adaptive re-use of the Flour Mill and its adjacent buildings, as well as by two modest, new buildings. On-site parking is provided below grade.



#5: Destination/Attraction

Major Features

Considerations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major public plaza oriented to the river</li> <li>• Narrow pedestrian bridge to Fields Park</li> <li>• Willamette Greenway Trail and Boardwalk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very little public greenspace is provided due to the intensity of development on the site</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebration of Tanner Creek outfall</li> <li>• Innovative stormwater management techniques (including eco-roofs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tanner Creek enhancement may hinder or reduce access and/or parking for police</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant portions of the existing Centennial Mills complex adaptively re-used</li> <li>• Wharf structure retained</li> <li>• MPU consolidated; paddock in original location; police presence maintained on site</li> <li>• New buildings provide new, flexible space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is limited access through the site due to the security needs of the MPU</li> <li>• The MPU blocks views to the river from the 9th and Naito intersection</li> <li>• Current zoning requires residential uses with new development</li> </ul>



Mill City Museum (Minneapolis, MN)



Oregon Maritime Museum (Portland, OR)

#6: Working Waterfront

This scenario emphasizes the site’s history as a working waterfront by developing opportunities for water-dependent commerce along the wharf. A collection of new buildings can accommodate complementary employment, commercial, institutional, and residential spaces. The MPU facilities are kept in their current location. (With the exception of the Willamette Greenway Trail, the MPU portion of the site would be restricted to police and service access.)

The public good in this scheme is provided through the creation of new jobs, the potential for public attractions and amenities to be provided on site (i.e., museum, community center, etc.), prominent access to the waterfront via the pedestrian bridge and the Willamette Greenway Trail, and the presence of the Portland Police. Its major focal point is the central plaza, which is framed on two sides by historic buildings and has open views to the river.



#6: Working Waterfront

Major Features

Considerations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major public plaza oriented to river</li> <li>• Willamette Greenway Trail crosses site</li> <li>• Interstitial open spaces</li> <li>• Very wide pedestrian bridge to Fields Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success of relatively small public spaces may be hindered due to adjacency of private development and the perception that they belong to the ‘private realm’</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPU retained in original location/building</li> <li>• Strong Portland Police presence on site</li> <li>• Flour Mill and Feed Mill adaptively re-used</li> <li>• Wharf structure retained</li> <li>• New buildings on north side of property and wharf</li> <li>• Parking in underground structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The retention of the MPU in its current facilities (and with its current access configuration) limits opportunities to celebrate Tanner Creek, as well as to develop 9th/Naito as a gateway</li> <li>• The retention of the MPU facilities and the wharf limit the amount of riverbank enhancement that can be achieved</li> <li>• Overall development intensity (including building retention) limits the amount of dedicated green and open space</li> <li>• Current zoning requires residential uses with new development</li> </ul>



Pier 59 (Seattle, WA)



Astoria's working waterfront with trolley line and boardwalk trail/promenade (Astoria, OR)



#7: Arts Incubator

Development Thumbnail #7 intensifies the level of development by mixing new structures with the old. Three new buildings are built among and around the Feed Mill, Flour Mill, Grain Elevator, Blending Bins, and Warehouse E. Within the mix of new and renovated spaces are a variety of flexible spaces for commercial, office, and residential uses. The Willamette Greenway Trail travels through the site largely on the wharf, which offers vast views of the river and opportunities for mooring boats. A plaza stretching from the river's edge to the pedestrian bridge is bordered by the Grain Elevator, Blending Bins, and Feed Mill. The MPU's paddock is left in its existing location, but its other program components are consolidated into either Warehouse E or the new adjacent building. (Access through this section of the site is restricted due to MPU security needs.)

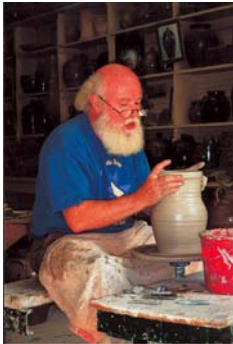


#7: Arts Incubator

Major Features

Considerations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major public plaza oriented to river</li> <li>• Willamette Greenway Trail</li> <li>• Narrow pedestrian bridge to Fields Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public open space is limited to the Willamette Greenway, the public plaza provided between the historic buildings, and the dock structure</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPU retained primarily in current location</li> <li>• Strong Portland Police presence on site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By keeping the MPU in its current location, there are limited opportunities to celebrate Tanner Creek, enhance the riverbank, and develop the 9th and Naito intersection as a gateway</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flour Mill, Grain Elevator, Blending Bins, and Feed Mill adaptively re-used</li> <li>• Wharf structure retained and augmented</li> <li>• New buildings on north side of property and adjacent to the Feed Mill</li> <li>• Parking in robotic above-ground structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The massing and spacing of buildings restricts views to the river from Naito Parkway</li> <li>• Current zoning requires residential uses with new development</li> <li>• Because of the development density and lack of open space, special consideration should be given to the provision of a public attraction</li> </ul>



clockwise from top: Mattress Factory (Pittsburgh, PA), small watercraft building, Rock Neck Arts Colony (Gloucester, MA), potter at work

#8: Employment Center

This Redevelopment Thumbnail attempts to maximize the FAR and height limits on the site with two taller buildings to augment the rehabilitation of the Flour Mill and Feed Mill. These buildings would likely accommodate office and residential uses with ground floor commercial. The building at the terminus of 9th and Naito acts as an important landmark for the site. Parking is provided beneath the new buildings. The MPU is relocated to the north side of the property, and its facilities are housed in the Flour Mill, with access provided on the site’s northern boundary.

The wharf is removed to improve fish habitat, but the seawall is retained for a Willamette Greenway promenade similar to that found in Waterfront Park. Tanner Creek is daylit and flanked by a narrow service road on the north side that provides access to parking and loading. A small greenspace provides room to lay back the Tanner Creek bank. A public plaza is oriented to the river and links to The Fields Park via a 20-foot wide pedestrian bridge. The plaza is framed by the two historic buildings and the MPU paddock. This arrangement presents an opportunity for a platform from which visitors could safely view the horses.



#8: Employment Center

Major Features

Considerations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major public plaza oriented to river</li> <li>• Willamette Greenway promenade; seawall or retaining wall replaces wharf</li> <li>• Medium-wide pedestrian bridge to Fields Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public greenspace is limited by the intensity of development</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daylit Tanner Creek</li> <li>• Innovative stormwater management techniques (including eco-roofs)</li> <li>• Significant riverbank restoration and habitat enhancement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The daylighting of Tanner Creek and the degree to which the riverbank can be restored may be limited by the need for automobile access to the site and by the retention of a seawall</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPU relocated to north side of property</li> <li>• Flour Mill and Feed Mill adaptively re-used</li> <li>• Two significant new buildings</li> <li>• Parking in underground structures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somewhat restricted views from Naito Parkway due to the massing and spacing of buildings</li> <li>• Current zoning requires residential uses with new development</li> </ul>



Albers Mill (Portland, OR)

#9: Live / Work

Thumbnail #9 depicts a high-intensity redevelopment of the site. This scheme assumes that the majority of the development on site is for private use (office, commercial, residential) and jobs creation, and that public access is limited to interstitial open spaces, the Willamette Greenway, and a plaza that leads from the pedestrian bridge to the wharf. Tanner Creek is daylit, and, with significant modifications to the wharf structure, the riverbank is greatly enhanced. The Mounted Patrol Unit is relocated to the northern end of the site, while the Feed and Flour Mills are retained for adaptive re-use.

Major Features	Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major public plaza oriented to river</li> <li>Willamette Greenway crosses site on reconfigured wharf structure</li> <li>Very wide pedestrian bridge to Fields Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intensity of development greatly limits public open space</li> <li>General public access is limited primarily to the Willamette Greenway Trail and the Fields Park connection</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daylit Tanner Creek</li> <li>Innovative stormwater management techniques (including eco-roofs)</li> <li>Significant riverbank restoration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intensity of development may limit the types of stormwater management techniques or extent of their use</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MPU relocated to north side of property</li> <li>Flour Mill and Feed Mill adaptively re-used</li> <li>Two significant new buildings</li> <li>Structured parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The intensity of development requires significant amounts of structured parking</li> <li>Current zoning requires residential uses with new development</li> </ul>



#9: Live / Work



The Center for Wooden Boats (Seattle, WA)



Amy Joslin Eco Roof, Multnomah Building (Portland, OR)

This page intentionally left blank.

# Appendix: City Council Resolution # 36320

RESOLUTION NO. 36320

Direct the Portland Development Commission to halt the plan to demolish Centennial Mill and work with the Bureau of Planning, citizens and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan for the site (Resolution).

WHEREAS, the Centennial Mill property located on Northwest Naito Parkway between the Broadway and Fremont bridges spanning approximately 200,000 square feet is considered a City landmark by many citizens of Portland; and

WHEREAS, the City of Portland recognizes Centennial Mill as a symbol of Portland's rich history of maritime commerce and a valuable artifact of the industrial working waterfront; and

WHEREAS, the Portland Development Commission purchased the Centennial Mill property in 2000 with the intent of converting the property into a public open space; and

WHEREAS, the Portland Development Commission has allocated \$8 to \$10 million for demolition and for open space improvements on the Centennial Mill property; and

WHEREAS, the community supports the redevelopment of the Centennial Mill property and opposes demolition.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that Portland City Council urges the Portland Development Commission to halt the plan to demolish the Centennial Mill property; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Portland Development Commission work with the Bureau of Planning, citizens and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan for the site taking into consideration future development plans for the surrounding area.

Adopted by the Council, May 25, 2005

Mayor Tom Potter  
Commissioner Sam Adams  
Commissioner Randy Leonard  
Commissioner Dan Saltzman  
Commissioner Erik Sten  
Stacy J. Chamberlain  
May 19, 2005

GARY BLACKMER  
Auditor of the City of Portland

By /S/ Susan Parsons

Deputy

### Backing Sheet Information

Agenda No. 523-2005

Ordinance/ Resolution/ Council Document No. 36320

### Commissioners Voted as Follows:

	Yeas	Nays
Adams	===	===
Leonard	X	
Saltzman	X	
Sten	X	
Potter	X	

This page intentionally left blank.

# Appendix: Existing Conditions Report

## Centennial Mills Framework Plan:

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

September 2006



The Existing Conditions report was prepared by various City of Portland agencies (including the Bureau of Planning, the Portland Development Commission, the Office of Transportation, the Bureau of Development Services, and the Bureau of Environmental Services). It covers the following topics:

- Urban Design Context
- Historic Significance / Merit
- Parks / Greenway
- Permitting / Review
- Stormwater / Tanner Creek
- Transportation
- Conditions of Structures
- Site Conditions
- Mounted Patrol Unit Facilities

The Existing Conditions Report is available under separate cover from:

City of Portland Bureau of Planning  
1900 SW Fourth Avenue, Suite 4100  
Portland, OR 97201  
[www.portlandonline.com/planning](http://www.portlandonline.com/planning)  
503.823.7700

This page intentionally left blank.



# Appendix: Policy Review

## Brief History of Policies, Plans, and Studies Affecting The Centennial Mills Site

### Downtown Plan, 1972

The scope of the Downtown Plan effectively extended to the Broadway Bridge. The planning district that included Centennial Mills was called the “Railyard-Post Office District” and was then expected to remain as an industrial area as the Hoyt Street railyard was still active. “Transportation terminal facilities” were identified as appropriate land uses and new pedestrian and bicycle connections were restricted in the area to better support the transfer of goods between trucks and trains.

### R/UDAT Study, 1983

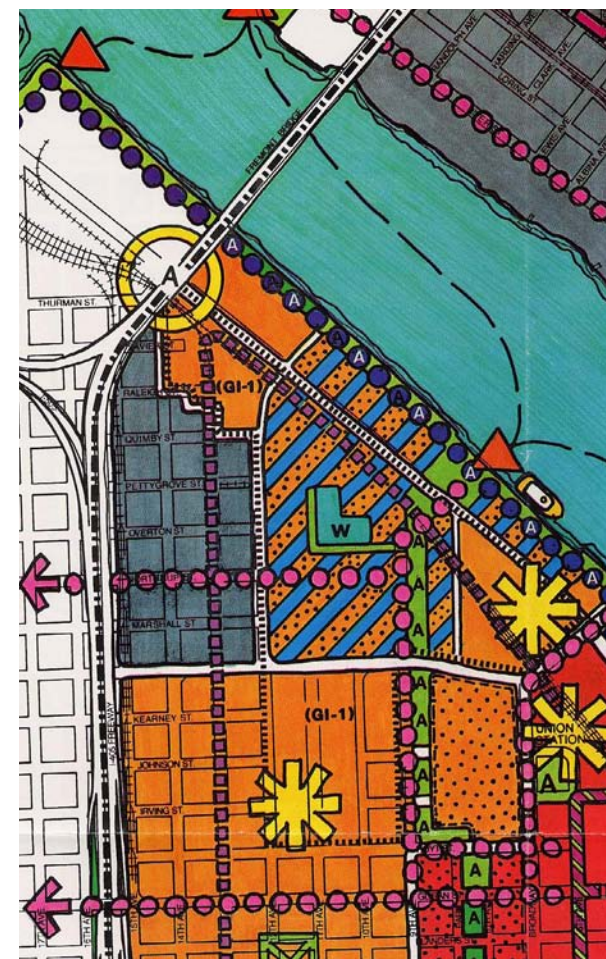
The study initiated by the Portland Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and developed by the Regional / Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) was the first look by a group of design, development, transportation, and economics professionals at the “last place in the Downtown Plan.” The study outlined five alternative development scenarios for what would become the River District, and recommended two of them for further study: “Make it Work Better” and the “Northwest Triangle.” The R/UDAT Study called for the extension of the North Park Blocks along 9th Avenue and new connections of the Willamette Greenway Trail system along the waterfront, intersecting at a new “gateway park,” where the Mounted Patrol Unit’s exterior paddock currently exists.

### Northwest Triangle Report, 1985

The Northwest Triangle Report was the City’s response to the R/UDAT Study. It proposed a new series of open spaces and pedestrian connections, including a “river plaza” near Centennial Mills, a new North Park Block adjacent to the Federal 511 Building, and a boulevard treatment along 9th Avenue to link them. The report determined that the waterfront area was obsolete for maritime industrial uses, and recommended its redevelopment to new office and other commercial uses. The Report also included specific zoning regulations to implement the open space objectives by encouraging the preservation of existing open spaces, fostering the creation of new open spaces, and ensuring that new development would provide visual and physical access to the river.

### Central City Plan, 1988

The Central City Plan built upon the work of the Downtown Plan and the Northwest Triangle Study. It re-named and reformatted the zone that covered the Centennial Mills site from the Downtown Manufacturing Zone (MX) to the Commercial Employment Zone (CE) that allowed new commercial and residential uses, in addition to the existing industrial activities. Several new density and height incentives, as well as new regulations (including the Required Residential Area and the Residential Bonus Target Area) were identified to encourage new residential development at and around the Centennial Mills site. The site’s current Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 2:1 and the maximum building height of 100 feet were also established with adoption of the plan. The Urban Design Plan for the Northwest Triangle illustrated a northward extension of the North Park Blocks along 9th Avenue to the river, culminating in a proposed “major public open space” on what is now the site of the Mounted Patrol Unit’s exterior paddock. A water taxi stop was also identified for this location.



from the Central City Plan, 1988

### River District Vision, 1992

In the early 1990s, citizens and landowners in the area then known as “North Downtown” addressed the opportunities and challenges presented by the evolving character of the area by crafting a vision for the transitioning district. The vision for the newly-christened “River District” described the new community as “unique because of its image, its diversity, and, most importantly, its embrace of the Willamette River.” More specifically, the vision called for the removal of Centennial Mills, and the creation of a significant riverfront open space that stretched almost the entire distance between the Fremont and Broadway Bridges. It also identified a new “River Basin” and “Public Attractor” on the Centennial Mills site.

### River District Development Plan, 1994

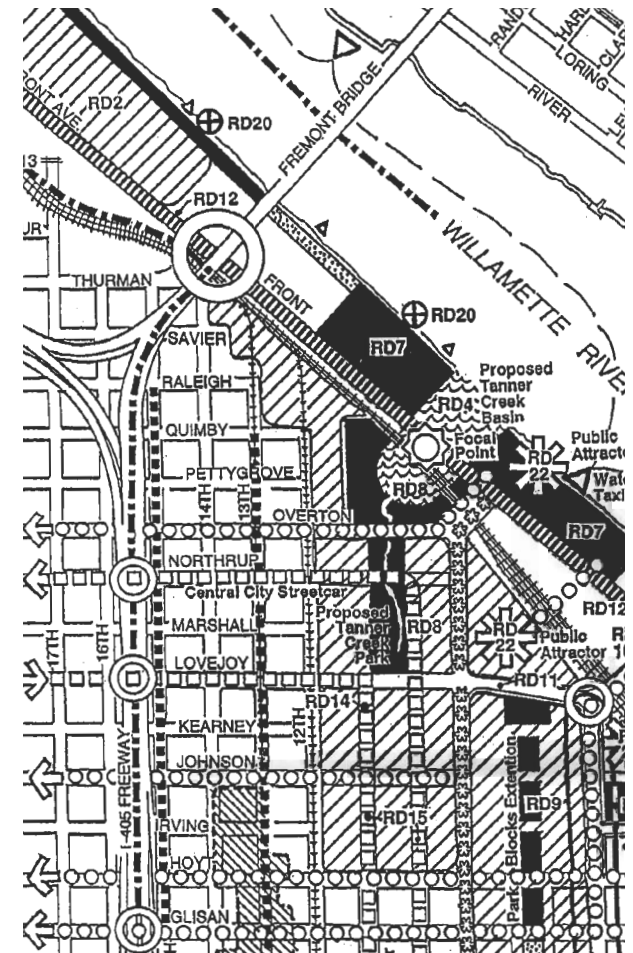
Upon acknowledgement of the River District Vision in 1992, Portland City Council directed city staff to work with the community to develop strategies for the vision’s implementation. The River District Development Plan was endorsed by City Council in 1994, and renamed the River Basin (identified in the vision after Centennial Mills was acquired and removed) to “Tanner Basin.” It was envisioned that the basin, in concert with a “Tanner Creek Park,” would bring the river into the heart of the district, underneath both the railroad tracks and Naito Parkway (then Front Avenue). The development plan flanked the basin on both sides with additional riverfront park sites (roughly two and a half acres each). This open space system was linked by new greenway trail connections, and was activated by a public attractor on the south side of the basin that could be a conservatory or aviary.

### River District Plan, 1995

The River District Plan was the update of the Central City Plan that implemented the ideas from the River District Vision and the strategies outlined in the River District Development Plan. It created a new River District subdistrict, the combination of the former North of Burnside and Northwest Triangle subdistricts. It had a series of specific actions that addressed Centennial Mills, most notably action RD 4, which called for the Port of Portland to negotiate with the owners of Centennial Mills to acquire the property for development of the Tanner Creek Basin. The River District Plan also reflected the vision and development plan’s objectives of developing a significant riverfront park on and around the Centennial Mills site, and creating a unique public attractor on the site as stated in action RD 22: a “butterfly, aviary, botanical conservatory, railroad museum and/or aquarium.” The Portland Development Commission also was directed to “negotiate agreements and acquire or trade properties to gain critical property locations for public open space” along the Willamette riverfront between Centennial and Albers Mills.

### River District Design Guidelines, 1996

The River District Design Guidelines were developed following adoption of the River District Plan to provide more specific design guidance for development teams implementing the plan on a project-by-project basis. In conjunction with the Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines, the River District Design Guidelines highlight special areas within the River District, such as the “Waterfront Area.” Multiple guidelines addressed the waterfront, including Link the River to the Community (A1-1), Reinforce the Identity of the Waterfront Area (A5-1-8), and Recognize the River Basin and its Bridges as Prominent Landmarks (B5-2). They called for the River District’s waterfront to become a gateway or “face” for the district, and for associated or



from the River District Plan, 1995

adjacent development to acknowledge and/or celebrate the waterfront's industrial and transportation-related heritage. Currently, there is interest in updating this set of guidelines to reflect changes in the district, including the Tanner Basin concept.

#### **Tanner Creek Park and Water Features Steering Committee Report, 1998**

This report was a result of the 1997 Development Agreement between the City of Portland and Hoyt Street Properties, LLC. The report focused on three key features: the Park Blocks and Creek Daylighting Feature, the Water Feature, and the Riverfront. It provided a technical evaluation of the "Tanner Basin" concept conceived in the early '90s, and suggested that the cost(s) of engineering such a basin under Front Avenue and the railroad tracks could be prohibitively expensive. The report identified the consideration of Centennial Mills in the parks planning as a "key objective," and had findings that emphasized the value presented by the wharf structures as an "in-water place holder." Additional findings and memos included in the report and related studies also recommended the development of open space schematic options that retained some or all of the mill complex, possibly "with public plazas, canals and/or basins around it."

#### **River District Urban Renewal Plan, 1998**

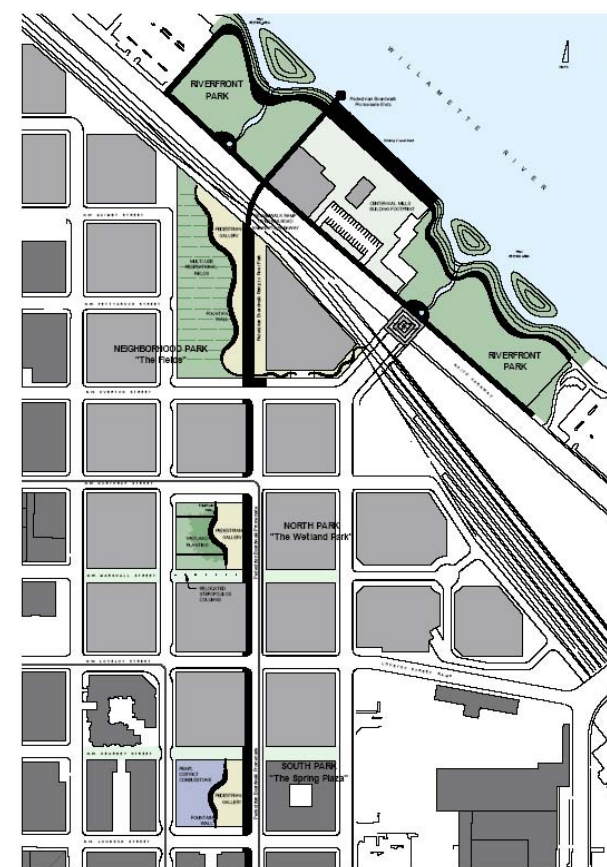
The River District Urban Renewal Plan implements the objectives of the River District Urban Renewal Area using public capital created by tax-increment financing. Open space and public amenity objectives of the plan included the reclamation and enhancement of the Willamette Riverfront between the Steel Bridge and Terminal One, and the creation of a public attractor (possibly an aviary or conservatory, as suggested in previous plans) near the Tanner Creek outfall. The River District Urban Renewal Area is projected to reach maximum indebtedness (the point at which it will no longer be able to finance projects) in 2020.

#### **Portland River District Park System Urban Design Framework Study, 2001**

Developed by Peter Walker and Partners Landscape Architects, this study identifies the locations, goals, and preliminary programs for the River District's open space system. The study elaborated on the recommendations of the Tanner Creek Park and Water Feature Steering Committee, and sited the three primary parks: "The Spring Plaza" (Jamison Square), "The Wetland Park" (Tanner Springs Park), and "The Fields" or "Neighborhood Park" (planned for completion in 2008-9). Also envisioned (but not officially a part of the parks system) was a "Riverfront Park" that had large waterfront open spaces surrounding a partially-retained Centennial Mills facility. This riverfront park was connected to the district and the Fields by a 10th Avenue boardwalk extension over Naito Parkway and the railroad tracks. Retention of some Centennial Mills buildings was deemed important to provide elevator and stair access from the bridge to the riverfront park.

#### **Pearl District Development Plan, 2001**

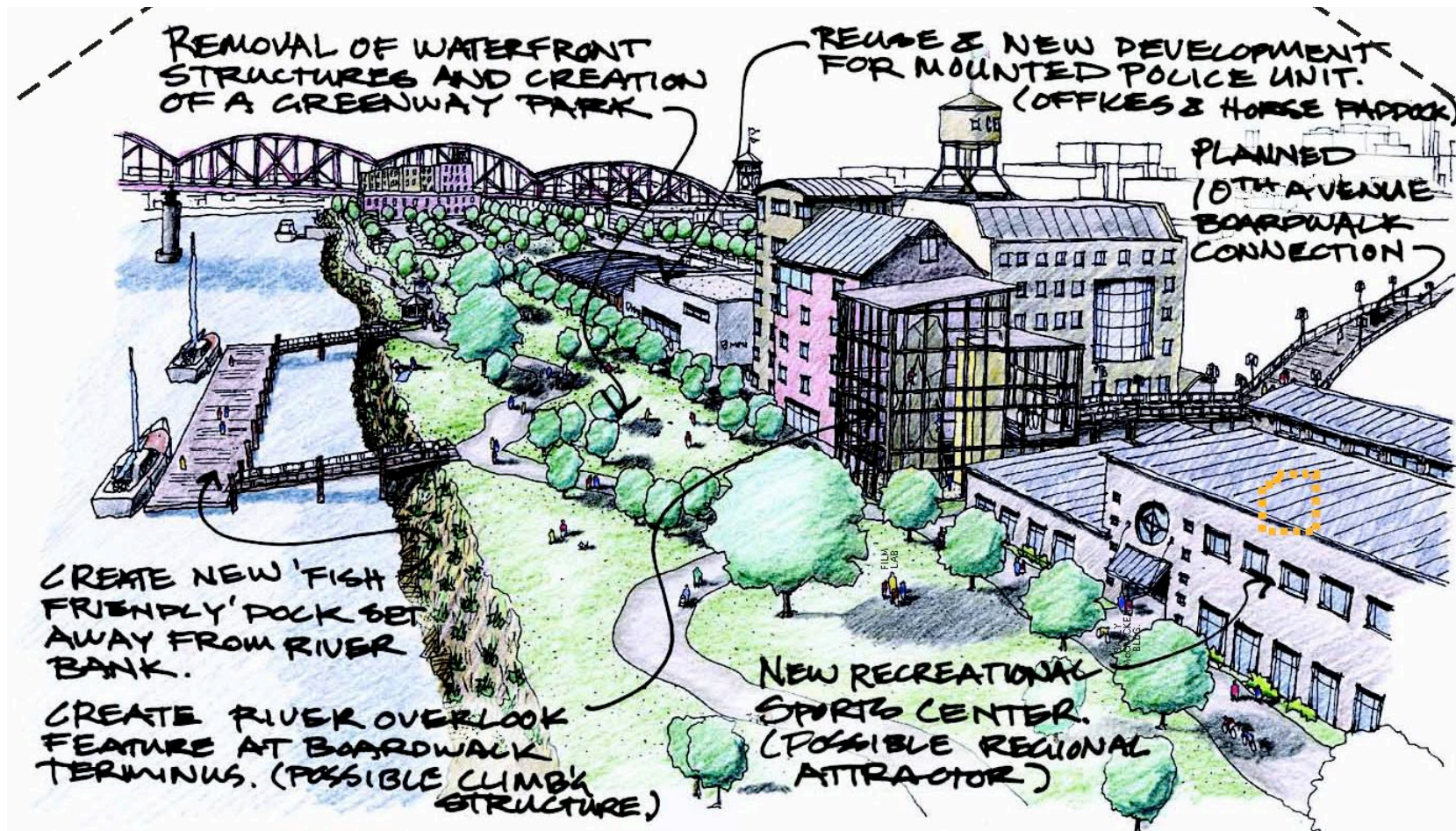
The Pearl District Development Plan reflects a set of priorities for the Pearl District Neighborhood Association and the Portland Development Commission to help guide public investments as the neighborhood continues to evolve. In the "Neighborhood Amenities" section, open space objectives include implementing the boardwalk connection to the riverfront as outlined in Peter Walker's framework study of the same year. The plan also calls for the public acquisition of waterfront property between the Broadway Bridge and Terminal 1 South, and illustrates a possible re-use of a portion of the Centennial Mills site as a regional recreation center. In the "Edges and Gateways" section, the Centennial Mills site is also identified as a gateway opportunity for the River District, and as a possible future water taxi stop.



from the Portland River District Park System Urban Design Framework Study, 2001

### Report of the Centennial Mills Review Committee on Future Options for the Property, 2004

The purpose of this report was to evaluate the issues, options, and costs surrounding different redevelopment options for the Centennial Mills property. The review committee included representatives from City bureaus with a stake in the site, local neighborhood associations, development companies, and those interested in historic preservation. The report identified two options for consideration: demolish all buildings on the site save for the MPU facilities and return the site to grade for future open space, recreation and environmental uses; or, retain the MPU facilities and any other structures that are salvageable or have re-use potential.



from the Pearl District Development Plan, 2001

# Appendix: Existing Structures - Opportunities & Constraints

## 1 WAREHOUSE E (1921, 1928)

### Opportunities

- Built by L.H. Hoffman precursor to the Hoffman Construction Company
- Helps define the edge along Naito Parkway

### Constraints

- Costly to upgrade seismic and mechanical / electrical systems
- Currently houses MPU facility; structure has not been seismically upgraded

## 2 WAREHOUSE C (1940)

### Opportunities

- Building is in very good condition and has a large open area for flexible / creative use opportunities

### Constraints

- MPU uses west end; structure not seismically upgraded
- Accommodating smaller program elements in the building by dividing the floor area into smaller spaces would change the historic character and use
- Fitting a new architectural program into the lower level would be challenging, especially with the close column spacing and lack of windows
- Water infiltration / flooding problems

## 3 WAREHOUSE A (1910)

### Opportunities

- Structure in generally good condition
- Part of the original core of buildings constructed
- Opens to Naito Parkway

### Constraints

- Accommodating smaller program elements in the building by dividing the floor area into smaller spaces would change the historic character and use
- Costly to upgrade seismic and mechanical/electrical systems

## 4 FEED MILL (1928)

### Opportunities

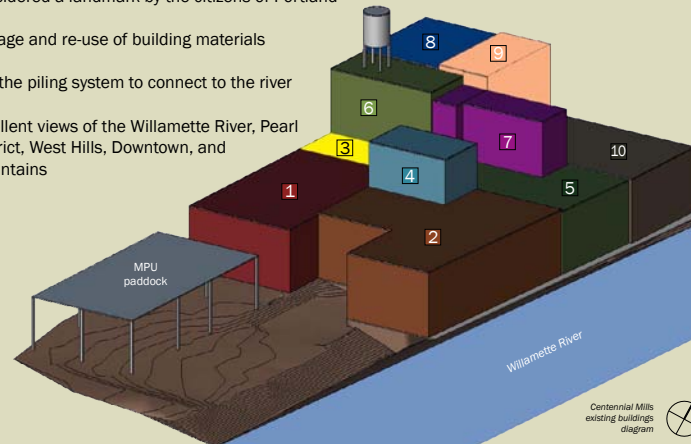
- One of the taller, more iconic buildings on the site
- Represents the lucrative feed production aspect of the business and the switch in later years to starch and gluten production
- Built by L.H. Hoffman, precursor to the Hoffman Construction Company
- Large industrial sash windows; Atrium allows bottom floors to be day-lit
- Historic designation could provide tax credits

### Constraints

- Structure will require certain upgrades
- Costly to upgrade seismic and mechanical/electrical systems
- Atrium reduces programmable floor area

## CENTENNIAL MILLS GENERAL OPPORTUNITIES

- One of the last mill complexes along the Willamette River
- Potential for architectural and program creativity
- Save and showcase a piece of history of the “Golden Age” of industry in Portland
- Considered a landmark by the citizens of Portland
- Salvage and re-use of building materials
- Use the piling system to connect to the river
- Excellent views of the Willamette River, Pearl District, West Hills, Downtown, and mountains



## 5 WAREHOUSE B (1910)

### Opportunities

- Part of the original core of buildings constructed
- Adjacent to the blending bins
- Opens to the river; good example of how the grain was stored & shipped
- Open floor plan on upper levels

### Constraints

- Structure in fair condition; will require extensive repairs to the piers
- Fitting a new architectural program into the lower level will be challenging, especially with the close column spacing and lack of windows
- Water infiltration / flooding problems

## 6 FLOUR MILL (1910)

### Opportunities

- Structure in good condition
- Part of the original core of buildings constructed
- Taller and more iconic of the buildings
- Water tower a focal point for the site and the waterfront
- Houses control room, man-lift, and sifters, and other interesting relics
- Represents the history of the mill and its technological changes
- Historic designation could provide tax credits

### Constraints

- Costly to upgrade seismic and mechanical/electrical systems
- Limited floor area; challenging to fit commercial or residential programs

## 7 GRAIN ELEVATOR A (1910) / BLENDING BINS (1918)

### Opportunities

- Part of the original core of buildings
- Opportunity to creatively reconfigure space
- The extensive use of wood, true 2x6s, displays the historic abundance of wood available for building

### Constraints

- Challenging to fit a new architectural program into a highly specialized existing building type; full-height grain storage bins make fitting a new use into the building difficult
- Costly to upgrade seismic and mechanical / electrical systems

## 8 GRAIN ELEVATOR C (1929)

### Opportunities

- Good example of grain storage & distribution facility

### Constraints

- Challenging to fit a new architectural program into existing structure due to the highly specialized building type
- Costly to upgrade seismic and mechanical/electrical systems
- Subsidence between Grain Elevators B and C is worsening
- Floor area limits uses

## 9 GRAIN ELEVATOR B (1925)

### Opportunities

- Good example of grain storage & distribution facility

### Constraints

- Challenging to fit a new architectural program into existing structure due to the highly specialized building type
- Costly to upgrade seismic and mechanical/electrical systems
- Subsidence between Grain Elevators B and C is getting worse

## 10 WAREHOUSE D (1919, 1920)

### Opportunities

- Example of architect Whitehouse's industrial design

### Constraints

- Building in fair condition above basement level
- Accommodating smaller program elements in the building by dividing the floor area into smaller spaces would change the historic character and use
- Fitting a new architectural program into the lower level would be challenging, especially with the close column spacing and lack of windows
- Costly to upgrade seismic and mechanical/electrical systems
- Water infiltration / flooding problems

## Centennial Mills Framework Plan

# EXISTING STRUCTURES: OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

This page intentionally left blank.

# Appendix: Precedent Case Studies

## Mass MoCA

### North Adams, Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA) opened as the largest center for contemporary arts in the United States in May 1999. The institution is dedicated to the creation and presentation of provocative visual and performing arts pieces, and of works that blur conventional distinctions between artistic disciplines. In addition, MASS MoCA functions as a laboratory for the contemporary arts, fostering experimentation by artists, encouraging collaborations among institutions, and allowing visitors a behind-the-scenes look at the creative process. MASS MoCA was a public/private partnership that has been evolving since the mid 1980's when the Sprague Complex was closed. The 13 acres of grounds encompass a vast complex of 19th-century factory buildings and occupy nearly one-third of the North Adams' downtown business district.

Listed in the National Historic Register, the site's 26 buildings form an elaborate system of interlocking courtyards and passageways rich with historical association. Bridges, viaducts, elevated walkways, and red brick facades lend a distinct architectural ambiance to the complex, which throughout its history has been a place for innovation and fabrication using the most advanced knowledge and technologies of the day.

Facilities include 19 light-filled galleries with more than 100,000 SF of exhibition space, including a single gallery as long as a football field; 10,000 SF black box theatre with a clearspan 30-foot ceiling, which can accommodate up to 850 seats; 3,500 SF lab theater; outdoor cinema with a 50-foot-wide movie screen and a 70 mm projector; two performance courtyards, one of which spans 22,500 SF; workshop and art fabrication facilities; 5,000 SF of rehearsal and production support space; 60,000 SF of office and retail space for commercial tenants in the communications, high tech, and new media industries.



photo credits: Bruner/ Cott & Associates



exterior of Mass MoCA



interior before renovation

## Site Information

**Site Program:** Art Museum, Theatre, Cinema, Workshops, Outdoor Performance Space, Administration Offices, Commercial Offices and Retail.

**Site Area:** 13 Acres

**Building area:** 200,000 sf

**On-site parking spaces:** 200+

**Development Cost:** \$31.4 Million



Mass MoCA gallery space

**Flour Mill Lofts**  
**Denver, Colorado**

Flour Mill Lofts are high-end, residential units located in the former Pride of the Rockies flour mill in the Central Platte Valley. The site is close to the recently revitalized Lower Downtown Denver (LoDo), Cuernavaca Park, and the new Riverfront Park development to the south. The Pride of the Rockies flour mill is the last remnant of an industry that flourished in the Central Platte Valley in the early 20th century. Although only the mill building and three storage bins survive from the large grain processing complex, the 1920 mill is the last surviving structure of its type representing this aspect of Denver's early 20th century milling industry; the building is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Lofts were a private development project with some public funding from the Colorado Historical Society. The contribution by the state required that the building owner grant a perpetual easement for the building's facade, which prevents it from being altered without consent from the Historical Society.



Flour Mill Lofts: before and after

50

SITE INFORMATION

**Site Program:** High-End Residential Lofts  
**Construction Type:** Concrete  
**Year Converted:** 1998, 2000  
**Development Cost:** Not Available  
**Number of Unites:** 47



Flour Mill Lofts exterior



Flour Mill Lofts interior



**Mill City Museum  
Minneapolis, Minnesota**

The Mill City Museum, which opened in September 2003, is an architectural showpiece, rising eight stories within the limestone ruins of the Washburn A Mill, a National Historic Landmark that was once the largest flour mill in the world and one of two dozen Minneapolis mills that lined the banks of the Mississippi River.

After the Washburn A Mill was nearly destroyed by fire in 1991, the Minneapolis Community Development Agency (City of Minneapolis) cleaned up the rubble and stabilized the charred walls of the mill. Cleanup included the removal and disposal of asbestos materials, lead paint, and contaminated soil. Shortly thereafter, the Minnesota Historical Society announced plans to develop Mill City Museum. Private, corporate, foundation, city, county, state, and federal entities all contributed to this \$32 million project. Construction on the museum began in March 2001.

Where possible, the design has left intact many features of the original mill, including flour bins, milling machinery, the engine house, rail corridor and a wheat house. Limestone, brick, concrete, and steel was used within the museum to emphasize its industrial origins. Among the new architectural features is an eight-story glass facade overlooking the Mississippi River. True-to-scale graphics of the milling machines are featured on the glass façade to give visitors an idea of how massive the milling process was. The facade forms a reflective backdrop for the weathered masonry walls that frame a 100-by-100 foot, open-air courtyard formed by the 1991 fire. Ruins of the historic mill are showcased in the courtyard through significant excavation efforts. Interior spaces include hands-on exhibits such as a Baking Lab, Water Lab, and the Flour Tower – an eight-story elevator ride that enables visitors to experience the powerful, noisy, industrial process that turned wheat into flour. A rooftop observation deck offers sweeping views of the Mississippi River, St. Anthony Falls, the Stone Arch Bridge, and Mill Ruins Park.



Mill City Museum



Washburn A Mill, post-fire, ca. 1991



Mill City Museum Courtyard



photo credits: Minnesota Historical Society, Historic American Survey

Site Information

**Site Program:** Flour Milling Museum,  
Commercial Office, Gift Shop, Cafe

**Site Area:** Not Available

**Building area:** 70,000 sf

**On-site parking spaces:** 0

**Development Cost:** \$32 Million

### Gas Works Park Seattle, Washington

In 1903, the Olmsted Brothers, who were conceiving a city-wide park system in Seattle, thought the site would be ideal for a public park and playground, given its great views of the city, and lakeside location. In 1911, Virgil Bogue, who developed a plan for Seattle influenced by the City Beautiful Movement, advocated for industrial rather than recreational use of the lake. The gas works at Lake Union, known as the Lake Station plant, became the largest private utility in Seattle. It grew quickly, and by 1954, the plant used 1,071 miles of gas main to serve Seattle, Renton, Kent, and Tukwila. Production ended in 1956, when Seattle converted to natural rather than coal-generated gas.

The city acquired the site from the Seattle Gas Company for a park in 1962. It was said that nothing would ever grow on this ground again due to the hydrocarbon contaminants, soot and petro-chemical waste polluting the soil. A massive soil cleaning effort was needed to create the park that now stands in its place. While park signs advise visitors against eating the dirt there, the site recently underwent additional remediation to remove contaminated soils. The long history of environmental impacts at Gas Works will require specialized maintenance efforts for some time to come. The effort is well worth it. It has been said that there is no better convergence of Seattle's industrial past and its present values than Gas Works Park.

The park was opened to the public in 1975. Portions of the original "Gas Works" remain, the largest remnant of the 1,400 such plants that existed in the US, and can be seen in the background. The boiler house has been converted to a picnic shelter with tables, fire grills, and an open area. The former exhauster-compressor building, now a children's play barn, features a maze of brightly painted machinery. On the top of Gas Works hill is a giant 28-foot-wide sundial created from concrete inlaid with cast bronze, shells, ceramics, art, and other objects.



aerial view of Gas Works Park



Seattle Gas Company site, ca. 1960



remnants of the original refinery machinery

#### Site Information

**Site Program:** Park, Children's Play Area,  
Restroom, Burke-Gilman Trail, Picnic  
Tables, Waterfront

**Site Area:** 20 Acres

**Building area:** Not Available

**On-site parking spaces:** Not Available

**Development Cost:** \$5 Million  
(1963 - 1973 dollars)

photo credits: Jennifer Shutts, Northwest Aerial Photography  
Seattle Parks and Recreation

**The Can Company  
Baltimore, Maryland**

The Can Company is a mixed-use complex consisting of the four-story Signature Building; the three-story Factory Building; the two-story 1895 Building; the boiler house; and a small annex. In September 1997, DAP Products Inc.—the world’s largest manufacturer of sealants and adhesives—signed the first lease at the Can Company, and development of the 1895 Building was fast-tracked to allow the corporation to move its world headquarters to Baltimore by March 1998. DAP Products Inc. employees 125 people and serves as the Can Company’s commercial anchor tenant. In hopes of attracting young, high-technology companies to Baltimore, the Baltimore Development Corporation, the Maryland Economic Development Corporation, and the federal government teamed up to create the Emerging Technology Center, a high-tech incubator. The center’s 48,000 SF of office space takes up the entire third floor of the three-story Factory Building and will accommodate up to 30 start-up companies. The four-story Signature Building is home to Bibelot Books and Music, Donna’s Coffee Bar, and gr8, an Internet marketing firm.

Tenants of the Can Company complex have preserved the building’s industrial features, such as brick facades, high ceilings, and expansive windows, while adding modern features to create unique spaces that take advantage of the site’s historic character. This blending of design styles is evident in most of the leased retail spaces.

Financing included an equity contribution from the developer; a bridge loan for land purchase and initial construction; a construction and permanent loan from Riggs Bank; the purchase of historic tax credits from the Bank of America (through syndication by the Enterprise Social Investment Corporation); and an equity investment by Fannie Mae’s American Communities Fund.



pond and courtyard

**Site Information**

**Site program:** Retail, Restaurants, Office, Technology Center, Industrial  
**Site area:** 4.3 Acres  
**Building area:** 200,000 sf +300,000 sf Industrial  
**On-site parking spaces:** 290, +30 Spaces Leased from Adjacent Site  
**Development Cost:** \$28 Million

historic photo credits: Historic American Building Survey, Library of Congress, Urban Land Institute.



American Can Company



exterior of building after renovation



exterior view

### Albers Mill Portland, Oregon

The Albers Milling Company was at one time the largest cereal and grain manufacturing corporation on the Pacific Coast. Originally constructed between 1909-1911, this building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The renovated mill on the Willamette Riverfront includes a regional wheat exhibit center with demonstration kitchen, public information area, and auditorium equipped with multi-lingual audiovisual aids for research and development of new wheat products. The Oregon Export Certification Laboratory is the only one in the United States authorized by the Japanese government to certify food for export to Japan.

The original flour mill's grain silos were incorporated into the exhibit's interior design and include interactive and multi-media presentations. These displays tell the story of how wheat and other agricultural products are grown, exported, and transformed into food for global markets. Additionally, an interpretive display stands as a tribute to the mighty Columbia River and its importance to the region's economic past and future.

This complex project received partial funding from a government grant award. Private developer H. Naito Properties contributed the land and building and the not-for-profit Wheat Marketing Center, Inc. contributed a grant from the Cooperative State Research Services of the United States Department of Agriculture.



renovated interior



original Albers Mill building



exterior of the Albers Mill building today

#### Site Information

**Site Program:** Office, Exhibition Space,  
Greenway Trail

**Site Area:** 3.2 Acres

**Building area:** 135,000 sf

**On-site parking spaces:** 266

**Development Cost:** Not Available



entrance to Albers Mill building

# Appendix: Summary of Stakeholder Interviews

## Stakeholder Interview Summary

The following section summarizes the major points derived from the Centennial Mills stakeholder interviews conducted during April and May 2006. Interviewees included developers, residents, non-profits (environmental, historic, arts), public agency staff, an architect, a parks advocate, and a freight advocate. While each individual had specific aspirations for the Centennial Mills site or concerns regarding its redevelopment, there were many consistent themes, including:

- Develop the Centennial Mills site to be a unique and iconic part of Portland;
- Preserve some, but not all, of the buildings, particularly the most distinctive and recognizable landmark Buildings (the Feed mill, the Flour mill, and the water tower);
- Integrate artifacts related to milling, the site's history, and Portland's riverfront history;
- Salvage and reuse materials from the site;
- Develop the site via a public / private partnership;
- Depart from the *status quo* residential development of the Pearl District;
- Emphasize public access to the river;
- Improve access to the site (specifically addressing the railroad) for all visitors, especially pedestrians;
- Enhance Tanner Creek as an amenity;
- Accommodate on-site or nearby parking.

Most of the stakeholders interviewed recognize that Centennial Mills represents an enormous opportunity and should be developed into something distinctive that would attract visitors from all parts of the city, the region, and even the nation. Most realize that in order to achieve these goals, an element of public investment will be necessary in order to break away from strictly profit-driven development programs. Nearly all interviewees felt that the history of the mill should be preserved by renovating two or three key buildings and constructing new buildings to replicate and/or complement the scale and mass of the existing buildings to keep the "feel" of the mill complex.

Public access to the site and the river was an important component for most of the stakeholders' visions for the site. All stakeholders thought the Greenway Trail should continue through the site somehow and link to other public places within the site. Some thought that the pilings should be used for pedestrian river access (as a pier or wharf); others felt that people should be able to touch the water and walk along the waterline. Something more than a simple trail is desired. Some thought that Centennial Mills would be a logical location for a water taxi stop, but would have to be planned appropriately. Most stakeholders want something interesting and beautiful to happen with Tanner Creek and its outfall. Roughly half of the stakeholders are interested in daylighting Tanner Creek.



Willamette Greenway Trail



Union Station is within walking distance of Centennial Mills; the railroad tracks form a barrier between Centennial Mills and the Pearl District

Most felt that a public “greenspace” or park would not be as appropriate as something more urban or plaza-like (or dockside). These interviewees insisted that the area is already served well by greenspace with Jamison Square, Tanner Springs, and The Fields (proposed), as well as the North Park Blocks. One interviewee, however, argued that the City does indeed need a great deal more open space on the river, and that such a space should be large and unencumbered by buildings.

Improved crossings of Naito Parkway and the railroad tracks are needed. Suggested improvements include enhanced streetscape and signalization at Naito/9th and a pedestrian overpass from The Fields. General consensus among the stakeholders is that Naito Parkway should have streetscape improvements, including street trees, wide sidewalks, and opportunities to cross the roadway. Contrary to these opinions, the freight representative feels that the section of Naito in front of Centennial Mills should be designed to accommodate freight. (This would include keeping two lanes and large radii at the NW 9th intersection so that trucks serving the Central Post Office can efficiently turn the corner. The cross-section should have an “open roadway design” that does not include on-street parking and a center vegetated median.)

Some of the most interesting development programs that came out of the conversations with stakeholders include:

- Artist / craftsman workshops and display space;
- Flexible live / work / teach craftsman space;
- Locally-owned business complex;
- Sustainable building features;
- Chefs’ incubator, similar to the Chelsea Market in New York City;
- Urban open space (cultural park, heritage area, boardwalk/wharf/pier, etc.);
- Museum of some sort – including, perhaps, the Oregon Maritime Museum;
- Learning center – public grade school or university extension.

Most stakeholders felt that the Centennial Mills site should not be used for government uses due to the heightened security measures and access restrictions. The site should have the type of uses that would encourage lively interaction most hours of the day.

Most of the stakeholders emphasized that parking needs to be addressed due to the site’s relative isolation. Most prefer parking off-site at a nearby location to maximize the development on the site and to facilitate building preservation.

Stakeholders are split over whether or not the Mounted Patrol Unit (MPU) should remain on the site. Some feel that the horses are an interesting and unique feature, but that Centennial Mills probably is not the best location for them. Others feel that the unit adds an element of security and interest and can be successful integrated into the developed site. Those interviewees who felt that the MPU could stay on the Centennial Mills site suggested that the MPU may need to be reconfigured, and insisted that its exact program must be made clear. All recognize that the issue is political. The MPU itself has few opinions about the redevelop-



interior of Mounted Patrol Unit stables



Oregon Maritime Museum

ment of Centennial Mills, largely because the development program is not yet known. They have an interest in “being a good neighbor” and making sure that they can effectively manage their unit. They require that the new development not produce hazardous materials and/or produce excessive or startling noises; they also insist on perimeter buffers and limited access to the MPU in order to keep the horses, equipment, etc. secure.

Several interviewees raised concerns about the planning and redevelopment process. Many who have been involved with Centennial Mills for the last several years raised concerns about the previous process, insisting that the work had a “predefined outcome.” Concerns were also raised about the current process and its level of openness, with most interviewees advocating for a quick and efficient process that is also transparent.

In sum, the stakeholders interviewed feel that the Centennial Mills site has the potential to be a unique development that can showcase the best of Oregon, whether it is the history of flour milling, maritime commerce, or the historic waterfront, and/or Oregon’s commitment to sustainability, the arts, and local enterprise. All recognize that there are barriers to realizing what they would like to see on the site, but ultimately feel that the end result will be a remarkable asset for and tribute to the region.



Centennial Mills as seen from 9th Avenue

This page intentionally left blank.



---

## Appendix: Interested Parties

During the public process that produced the Centennial Mills Framework Plan, the following parties expressed an interest in being a part of any redevelopment proposal for the Centennial Mills site:

**The Creative Coalition of Portland (C-COP)**

1834 SE Stark Street, Portland, OR 97214  
503.232.7227, PDXArts@aol.com

**The Historic Portland Public Market Foundation**

PO Box 511, Portland, OR 97207  
www.portlandpublicmarket.com

**Light Watercraft Center**

PO Box 14812, Portland, OR 97293  
503.778.5202  
Contact: Bernie Thurber, Portland Boathouse  
www.portlandart.com

**Meyer Memorial Trust**

425 NW 10th Avenue, Suite 400, Portland, OR 97209  
503.228.5512  
www.mmt.org

**Oregon Maritime Museum**

115 SW Ash Street, Suite 400C, Portland, OR 97204  
503.224.7724, info@oregonmaritimemuseum.org  
Contact: Bob Layfield, First Vice President  
www.oregonmaritimemuseum.org

**Portland Art Center**

32 NW 5th Avenue, Portland, OR 97209  
503.236.3322  
Contact: Gavin Shettler, Executive Director  
www.portlandart.org