

The Avenue Lofts (1923, 2004) The Crane Lofts (1909, 2007) Looking east down NW Irving, at NW 15<sup>th</sup>



The Gadsby Building (1906) The Keen Building (1907, 2012) Corner of NW Hoyt and NW 13<sup>th</sup>, looking SW



Corner of NW Irving and NW 13th



McKenzie Lofts, NW 12<sup>th</sup> and NW Glisan Completed 1998



Riverstone Condos (1998) NW 11<sup>th</sup> and NW Johnson, looking NW



Tanner Place / Jamison Park Completed 2000





# ←→ False perspective looking south down 13<sup>th</sup> avenue

(cover image of DAR submission from Security Properties)



Actual view looking ← south down 13<sup>th</sup> avenue



Early Design Exploration – two 100' Buildings (prior to receiving feedback from the PDNA)



Title 33, Planning and Zoning 5/1/13 Chapter 33.510 Central City Plan District

#### CHAPTER 33.510 CENTRAL CITY PLAN DISTRICT

(Amended by: Ord. No. 165376, effective 5/29/92; Ord. No. 166313, effective 4/9/93; Ord. No. 166702, effective 7/30/93; Ord. No. 167189, effective 1/14/94; Ord. No. 167515, effective 3/30/94; Ord. No. 167464, effective 4/15/94; Ord. No. 167555, effective 3/30/94; Ord. No. 167464, effective 4/15/94; Ord. No. 167555, effective 1/8/95; Ord. No. 168702, effective 7/1/95; Ord. No. 169535, effective 1/8/96; Ord. No. 168702, effective 1/1/97; Ord. No. 169535, effective 1/8/96; Ord. No. 169699, effective 2/7/96; Ord. No. 170704, effective 1/1/97; Ord. No. 171219, effective 7/1/97; Ord. No. 171522, effective 3/13/98; Ord. No. 173259, effective 5/14/99; Ord. No. 174160, effective 1/0/8, effective 1/102; Ord. No. 174263, effective 3/13/98; Ord. No. 173259, effective 1/1/20; Ord. No. 175163, effective 1/101; Ord. No. 175204, effective 3/2/01; Ord. No. 175837, effective 9/21/01; Ord. No. 175966, effective 10/26/01; Ord. Nos. 176024 and 176193, effective 2/1/02; Ord. No. 176469, effective 7/1/02; Ord. No. 177028, effective 1/1/02; Ord. No. 177028, effective 1/1/02; Ord. No. 177028, effective 1/1/20; Ord. No. 176489, effective 1/1/22, effective 6/7/03; Ord. No. 176489, effective 1/1/20; Ord. No. 177028, effective 1/1/20; Ord. No. 177028, effective 1/1/20; Ord. No. 176287, effective 1/1/20/03; Ord. No. 176489, effective 6/7/03; Ord. No. 177028, effective 1/1/22, effective 1/2/2, effective 1/2/03; Ord. No. 176489, effective 6/7/03; Ord. No. 177028, effective 1/1/22; Ord. No. 177028, effective 1/1/20; Ord. No. 176489, effective 1/2/22, effective 6/7/03; Ord. No. 177028, effective 1/20/03; Ord. No. 17708, effective 1/2/03; Ord. No. 176429, effective 6/7/03; Ord. No. 1770837, effective 1/1/20/03; Ord. No. 176429, effective 6/7/03; Ord

Ord. No. 178172, effective 3/26/04; Ord. No. 178425, effective 5/20/04; Ord. No. 178509, effective 3/26/05; Ord. No. 178409, effective 3/26/05; Ord. No.

179092, effective 4/1/05; Ord. No. 179925, effective 3/17/06; Ord. No. 179980, effective 4/22/06; Ord. No. 180619, effective 12/22/06; Ord. No. 180667, effective 1/12/07; Ord. No. 181357, effective 11/9/07; Ord. No. 182319, effective 12/5/08Ord. No. 182429, effective 1/16/09, Ord. No. 183517, effective 3/5/10; Ord. No. 183269, effective 10/21/09; Ord. No. 183518, effective 03/05/10; Ord. No. 183598, effective 4/24/10; Ord. No. 185915, effective 5/1/13.)

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## 33.510.200 Floor Area Ratios

**A. Purpose.** The maximum floor area ratio (FAR) standards are intended to accomplish several purposes of the Central City Plan. These include coordinating private development with public investments in transportation systems and other infrastructure, limiting and stepping down building bulk to the Willamette River, residential neighborhoods, and historic districts. While consistent with these purposes, the floor area ratios are intended to be the largest in the Portland region.



## 33.510.205 Height

**A. Purpose.** The maximum building heights are intended to accomplish several purposes of the Central City Plan. These include protecting views, creating a stepdown of building heights to the Willamette River, limiting shadows on public open spaces, ensuring building height compatibility and step downs to historical districts, and limiting shadows from new development on residential neighborhoods in and at the edges of the Central City.

**B.** The height standard. The maximum building height for all sites in the Central City plan district is shown on Map 510-3 at the end of this chapter. Heights greater than shown on Map 510-3 are prohibited unless allowed by Subsections C. through G., below, or by 33.510.210.D. through G., below.

#### 33.510.210 Floor Area and Height Bonus Options

A. Purpose. Floor area and height bonus options are offered as incentives to encourage facilities and amenities that implement the Central City Plan.

#### **B.** General regulations.

- The bonus options are only allowed in situations where stated. Only new developments are eligible for the bonuses unless specifically stated otherwise. Exceptions to the requirements and the amount of bonus floor area or height earned are prohibited.
- Projects may use more than one bonus option unless specifically stated otherwise. Bonuses may be done in conjunction with allowed transfers of floor area.
- The maximum floor area increase that may be earned through the bonus options must be within the limits for overall floor area increases stated in 33.510.200.C.
- Buildings using bonus floor area must not exceed the maximum height limits shown on Map 510-3 unless eligible for bonus height.
- 5. In residential bonus target areas, as shown on Map 510-4, the residential bonus option must be used before any other bonus. A bonus floor area ratio of at least 1.5 to 1 from the residential bonus option must be earned before the project qualifies for other bonus options.
- 6. If any portion of the site is in the Greenway bonus target area, as shown on Map 510-4, the South Waterfront Willamette River Greenway bonus option must be used before any other bonus. Bonus floor area of at least 7,500 square feet from the South Waterfront Willamette River Greenway bonus option must be earned before the project qualifies for other bonus options.

D. General bonus heights. Bonus height is also earned at certain locations in addition to the bonus floor area achieved through the bonus options. Bonus height is in addition to the maximum heights of Map 510-3. Qualifying areas, shown on Map 510-3, are located such that increased height will not violate established view corridors, the preservation of the character of historical districts, the protection of public open spaces from shadow, and the preservation of the City's visual focus on important buildings (such as the Union Station Clock Tower).

## E. Bonus height option for housing.

1. Generally. In the bonus height areas, building heights may be allowed to be greater than shown on Map 510-3 if the bonus height is for housing. Although this subsection allows the review body to approve bonus height, the review body may also require reconfiguration of the building, including reducing its height, and may approve all, some or none of the bonus height requested, based on application of the criteria in E.4, below.

- 4. Approval Criteria. The approval of the bonus height is made as part of the design review of the project. The bonus height may be approved if the review body finds that the applicant has shown that all of the following criteria have been met:
  - The increased height will not violate an established view corridor;
  - b. If the site is within 500 feet of an R zone, the proposed building will not cast shadows that have significant negative impacts on dwelling units in R zoned lands;
  - c. If the site is shown on Map 510-3 as eligible for the Open Space (OS) performance standard, the project must meet the performance standards of Subsection 33.510.205.E.;
  - If the site is on a block adjacent to the Yamhill or Skidmore Fountain/Old Town Historic Districts, the project must meet the performance standards of Subsection 33.510.205.D.;
  - e. The increased height will result in a project that better meets the applicable design guidelines; and
  - f. Approval of the increased height is consistent with the purposes stated in Subsection 33.510.205.A.

#### 33.510.205 Height

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## **CENTRAL CITY FUNDAMENTAL DESIGN GUIDELINES**



## PORTLAND'S CENTRAL CITY



Figure 1. Portland's Central City Plan District and Subdistricts

Portland's Central City encompasses 4.3 square miles, bisected by the Willamette River. The river is the Central City's most significant geographic feature and acts as the binding element that links its east and west bank communities. The Willamette occupies 13 percent of the Central City's area and has approximately seven miles of shoreline (on two sides) within the Central City's boundary. Six of the eight Central City subdistricts include Willamette riverfront area.

The boundaries of the eight subdistricts follow previously adopted planning study boundaries, neighborhood boundaries, arterials, or geographic features. The eight subdistricts are: Downtown, University District, Goose Hollow, River District, Lower Albina, Lloyd District, Central Eastside and North Macadam. Other subdistricts are expected to emerge as the Central City evolves over time.

Portland's Central City has been shaped by a history of successful planning efforts. From the vision of the Olmsted brothers at the turn of the century, who foresaw the need for Washington Park, Terwilliger Parkway, and the 40-mile Loop, to the 1972 *Downtown Plan* and 1981 *Comprehensive Plan*, the Central City's growth has been nurtured and developed through thoughtful planning. The 1988 *Central City Plan* continued the tradition of implementing a long-range vision, reinforcing the Central City's role as the region's commercial and cultural center. The *Central City Plan* encourages vigorous, balanced growth, building on the city's strengths, and maintaining Portland's cherished livability and human scale.

## **RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES**



ADOPTED BY THE PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL 1996 AMENDED NOVEMBER 1998, NOVEMBER 2008 ORDINANCE 182319



Design and Historic Design Review in the Central City

# USING DESIGN GUIDELINES IN THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

The layering system of design guidelines is intended to create a consistent and dependable Central City design review process. All projects within the Central City's design zones must meet the *Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines* and the applicable design guidelines as designated by the subdistrict, historic district, or zoning code.

Design guidelines are mandatory approval criteria that must be met as part of design review and historic design review. They inform developers and the community as to what issues will be addressed during the design review process. The guidelines state broader concepts than typical development standards in order to provide flexibility to designers, yet they are requirements. Applicants are responsible for explaining, in their application, how their design meets each applicable guideline.

The design review process is flexible. It is intended to encourage designs that are innovative and appropriate for their locations. For this reason design guidelines are qualitative statements. Unlike objective design standards, there are typically many acceptable ways to meet each design guideline. It is not the City's intent to prescribe any specific design solution through the design guidelines.



View looking east over Tom McCall Waterfront Park during the Blues Festival

During the design review process, the review body must find that the proposal meets each of the applicable design guidelines. Proposals that meet **all** applicable guidelines will be approved; proposals that do not meet **all** of the applicable guidelines will not be approved.

If the review body approves the proposed design, they may add conditions to their approval to ensure the proposal's compliance with the guidelines. If the review body does not approve the proposed design, they would prefer that the applicants revise the design to address deficiencies rather than have the city impose a specific solution through conditions. The review body may also address aspects of a project's design that are not covered in the design guidelines. They may find that such action is necessary to better achieve the goals and objectives for design review in the Central City.



## **Design Guidelines**

- A PORTLAND PERSONALITY
- A1 INTEGRATE THE RIVER
- A1-1 LINK THE RIVER TO THE COMMUNITY

#### Background

Since the days of the first settlers, the Willamette River has provided Portland with pleasure, passage, and profit. Its connection to the Pacific Ocean allowed Portland to become an international port which nourished the growth of the city. The river has always been the focus for Portland. It is the central feature and reason for Portland's existence.



As new development in the River District pushes north towards the Willamette River, the opportunity arises to reflect the nearby presence of the river within the district. Although the river gets quite close to many sites, it is effectively cut off from most areas by Naito Parkway and the railroad. In addition, as the river is not easily visible, linking the river to the community visually and physically will lean heavily on the expression and orientation of streets and pedestrianways, buildings, and open spaces in order to celebrate the river's importance to the community.

Orienting buildings and towers perpendicular to the river signals a shift in the landscape that will foster an awareness of the river's presence for residents, commuters, workers, and visitors. Private pedestrianways and streets arranged perpendicular to the river and the greenway will create strong connections that orient people toward it. Open spaces that enhance views of the Willamette River or features associated with it, such as the greenway, bridges, or water-related uses will strengthen the river's significance within the district.

### Guideline

Link the Willamette River to the community reinforcing the river's significance.









#### A2 EMPHASIZE PORTLAND THEMES

#### A3 RESPECT THE PORTLAND BLOCK STRUCTURES

#### A3-1 PROVIDE CONVENIENT PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES

#### Background

Incorporating pedestrian connections to the waterfront is critical to the River District as a mixed use residential community that successfully facilitates and accommodates the pedestrian. In order to improve the safety, convenience, pleasure, and comfort of pedestrians, development should support and enhance a pedestrian network throughout the District which provides easy connections with the adjacent neighborhoods and the waterfront.

These pedestrianways should be designed to be active, visible, and well lit, providing a safe and secure environment. Reusing or retaining cobblestone that was imported at the turn of the century to line the district's streets recognizes the historic character of the industrial area within pedestrianways while providing a level of texture that reinforces the pedestrian scale (Refer to Appendix for information about Cobblestones).



### A3-1 PROVIDE CONVENIENT PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES

Interstate 405 and West Burnside Street form barriers between the River District and the adjacent neighborhoods to the west and south. Design should strengthen the pedestrian character of the street connections located under raised portions of the interstate. Active building fronts should line Burnside. Orientation of buildings along Burnside and stronger connections across and along Burnside will better accommodate pedestrian life.

Creating physical and visual links across NW Front/ Naito Parkway is also key in strengthening the connection to the Willamette River. Buildings should orient to NW Front/ Naito with ground floor windows and entries located along the street to enhance the pedestrian environment and identify a more strengthened connection.

Development should also find ways to integrate open spaces and trails which further link the river and surrounding neighborhoods. Kearney and Irving provide dense pedestrianway networks throughout the district. Development along these streets should strengthen this network through the orientation of windows, entries, stoops, and other building elements which emphasize these linkages.

In addition to creating a dense pedestrian network, many streets in the River District provide a unique and historic or cultural role. Two festival streets located in Chinatown, Davis and Flanders, are curbless streets with bollards delineating the roadway from the pedestrian-only sidewalk. These streets allow space for the district to gather and celebrate during community events. NW 13th Avenue features hundred-year-old loft warehouses and also serves as an active, mixed-use pedestrian corridor, stretching beyond its historic district boundaries. NW 13th Avenue hosts a lively street fair on First Thursdays, populated with artists and musicians as well as patrons and residents. Development along these streets should encourage flexibility and creativity, reinforcing the sense of place that the streets embody.

#### Guideline

Provide convenient linkages throughout the River District that facilitate movement for pedestrians to and from the river, and to and from adjacent neighborhoods.

RIVER DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES | 2008



'Kearney Street' pedestrian pathway between NW 12<sup>th</sup> and NW 11<sup>th</sup>



## A 5 ENHANCE, EMBELLISH, AND IDENTIFY AREAS

#### BACKGROUND

Areas of the Central City are enhanced, embellished, and/or identified through the integration of distinct landmarks or special features with new development. Visual focal points inspire the observer and enrich the design context that gives identity to an area.

Unique elements in the right-of-way, such as street lights and special paving materials, enhance the character of an area and can help to orient pedestrians. Building elements such as roof forms, awnings, attached exterior lighting or signs that have been designed to reflect the local character of an area, embellish that area. The integration of local features such as heritage trees, historic structures, or other unique elements helps to identify them as important to the area's character. Public art, as well as water sculptures or fountains can also help to identify an area when successfully integrated with new development.

In addition, unique sign districts, such as Broadway or New China / Japantown, draw their identities from a collection of similarly-styled elements such as signs, streetlights, banners, or roof forms.



Restaurant and phone booth in New China / Japantown

#### GUIDELINE

Enhance an area by reflecting the local character within the right-of-way.

Embellish an area by integrating elements in new development that build on the area's character.

Identify an area's special features or qualities by integrating them into new development.

## A5-1-4 REINFORCE THE IDENTITY OF THE UNION STATION AREA

#### A5-1-4 REINFORCE THE IDENTITY OF THE UNION STATION AREA

#### Background

The River District has a rich railroad history. It once housed expansive rail yards, with Union Station as the centerpiece. Union Station's distinguishing element is the 50-foot tall Romanesque clock tower, which, since the postwar era, has featured the signature "Go by Train" neon sign. Poised to be served by light rail, the Union Station Area is a symbolic link between the past and future of the River District.



As the River District transforms, recognition should be given to the railroad era and the significance it has had in Portland's transportation and industrial development. This may be accomplished in a variety of ways. For example, the station tower could be outlined and articulated at night with appropriately scaled lighting. In addition, new development should reflect a high quality of materials, architectural detail, and texture. Primary building massing of new development should be oriented away from the station.

Although the railroad heritage provides a focus and theme for the area, the existing main rail creates a linear barrier. In addition to the need for track crossings, the visual connection between the areas located on each side of the railway is important to the area's realization. Design solutions for development in the Union Station neighborhood should allow for future crossings of the tracks and should protect important views across the tracks of key district elements such as Union Station and other features. Appropriate buffering of the tracks should employ solutions that relate to the surrounding structures and maintain visual access across the tracks, such as wrought iron fencing, low masonry walls with open railings, and deciduous trees. In addition, setting buildings back from the rail corridor will also provide a degree of separation as well as create an area for other uses such as landscaping, open space, parking, and circulation.

Buildings located adjacent to the railroad corridor will be visible from Union Station and other neighboring properties. Architectural attention should be paid to these facades as well as the other building facades to avoid the sense that these buildings are turning their back on the railway.

#### Guideline

Reinforce the identity of the Union Station Area.





## **C1-1** INCREASE RIVER VIEW OPPORTUNITIES

- B6 DEVELOP WEATHER PROTECTION
- B7 INTEGRATE BARRIER-FREE DESIGN

- C PROJECT DESIGN
- C1 ENHANCE VIEW OPPORTUNITIES
- C1-1 INCREASE RIVER VIEW OPPORTUNITIES

#### Background

The renewed focus for the District is the Willamette River and its associated components and activities. It provides an image and orientation for the District's future. Each development opportunity should, in its initial conceptual design phase, determine how the project will acknowledge the Willamette River. One of the ways is to maximize river view opportunities. Designers of projects are encouraged to innovate and capitalize on view opportunities in order to emphasize and focus the overall ambiance for the entire District. They should consider project orientation and the use of plazas, terraces, balconies, roof gardens, and other vantage points. Landscape design can help accent view corridors and maximize views. Designs should be thorough and creative, and maximize the opportunities to view the Willamette River. Projects should also consider means to enhance their neighbor's views of the river.

Urban centers achieve urbanity when they provide coherent order which is understandable to both the visitor and resident. It is important when designing viewing and stopping places that the solution is helpful in orienting and informing those who use these places.

#### Guideline

Increase river view opportunities to emphasize the River District ambiance.

## C 4 COMPLEMENT THE CONTEXT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS

## BACKGROUND

A consideration in the design of a new building is to complement the local context of existing buildings. Portland's Central City is made up of a diverse set of buildings characterized by the architecture of different periods. Together, existing buildings contribute to the built context in which new buildings are developed.

Within the Central City, there are localized groups of buildings that share similar design characteristics. In some instances, these areas have been recognized as historic districts. These areas often exhibit a common expression of design themes and/or details that distinguish the local architecture from that found in other parts of the Central City. This common expression of design themes and/or details can be referred to as a "design vocabulary".

The design vocabulary of existing contextual buildings offers developers and designers a set of design characteristics to build upon. Design characteristics reflected in an area's design vocabulary include building proportion, scale, rhythm, and construction materials, as well as smaller-scale elements, such as window and/or door styles, color, and roof shape(s). Designers can complement existing buildings through the innovative use of the local design vocabulary.



Historic buildings in the Central Eastside Industrial District

However, the design of a new building need not mimic or imitate the context of existing buildings to be complementary. Steel-framed buildings with large expanses of glass can complement an existing context of masonry-walled buildings with smaller window openings by recognizing and building on the proportion, scale, and orientation of nearby buildings. Designers and developers who propose significantly different building styles and/or materials must be able to prove that the new design builds on and complements the existing design vocabulary, without dominating or retreating from it. The successful incorporation of new qualities into an existing design vocabulary adds to the palette of design characterisitics available to future designers and developers.

## 33.510.205 Height

A. Purpose. The maximum building heights are intended to accomplish several purposes of the Central City Plan. These include protecting views, creating a step- down of building heights to the Willamette River, limiting shadows on public open spaces, **ensuring building height compatibility** and step downs to historical districts, and limiting shadows from new development on residential neighborhoods in and at the edges of the Central City.



Early Design Exploration – two 100' Buildings (prior to receiving feedback from the PDNA)





Chown Pella (1912, 1996) 88 ½ feet tall (historic district)





Irving Lofts (1925) 88 ½ feet tall (historic district)

The developer was advised to avoid height on 13<sup>th</sup> to protect the character of the avenue. If that results in a 150' tower on 12<sup>th</sup>, we will have failed to protect the unique personality and character of the greater Pearl neighborhood.

## 33.510.205 Height

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PRESERVE THE PEARL

June 5, 2014



[Type text]



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## E.4.e. Design Guidelines

- Linked to the river Oriented perpendicular to the river
- Provide Convenient pedestrian linkages
  Consistent with the current pedestrian paths toward the river
- Enhance, embellish, identify this unique part of the Pearl District Reinforce the identity of the Union Station Area
- Enhance view opportunities
  Considers means to enhance its neighbor's view of the river
- Compliment the context of existing buildings Including building proportion, scale, rhythm

E.4.f. Height Provisions in Zoning Code 33.520.205 A

- Ensuring building height compatibility
- Create a step-down of building heights to the Willamette
- Limit shadows from new development on residential neighborhoods

# "Unless heart and idea are attuned, there can indeed be no good result."

- Central City Plan