

Downtown Vision:

***A Celebration of Urban Living
And A Plan For The Future of Portland -
Maine's Center For Commerce And Culture***

***A Component of the Comprehensive Plan
of the City of Portland, Maine
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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| FORWARD | 1 |
| INTRODUCTION | 2 |
| Why Plan for Portland's Downtown? | 3 |
| The Planning Process | |
| The Vision | |
| Overall Goals | |
| Historical Overview and Planning Context | 5 |
| A History of the Downtown | |
| Existing Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Zoning Ordinance | |
| Central Regional Role | |
| Accommodating Future Growth | 7 |
| Defining Downtown | |
| Possible Growth Scenarios | |
| Redevelopment Opportunities | |
| Broad Development Strategies | |
| General Development Policy | 12 |
| A GROWING AND COMPETITIVE ECONOMY | 13 |
| Managing Downtown | 14 |
| Role of Downtown Management | |
| Downtown Management Policies | |
| The Competitive Office Economy | 18 |
| History | |
| Demand and Shifting Concentration | |
| Strengths and Challenges | |
| Office Economy Policies | |
| The Competitive Retail Economy | 23 |
| History | |
| Strengths and Challenges | |
| Retail Economy Policies | |
| Tourism and Hospitality | 28 |
| Strengths and Opportunities | |
| Tourism and Hospitality Policies | |
| Arts, Culture and Entertainment | 33 |
| Role of Arts and Culture Downtown | |
| Opportunities | |
| Arts and Culture Policies | |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| The Downtown as Neighborhood | 38 |
| History | |
| Downtown Housing Today | |
| Residential Opportunities | |
| Downtown Neighborhood Policies | |
| City Services | 44 |
| Maintenance | |
| Public Safety | |
| Human Services | |
| City Services Policies | |
| MOVING ABOUT | 51 |
| Traffic | |
| Transit | |
| Parking | |
| Moving About Policies | |
| OPEN SPACE AND PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT | 62 |
| Walkable City | |
| Existing Open Space | |
| Open Space Network | |
| Programming of Open Space | |
| Open Space Policies | |
| A DESIGN FRAMEWORK FOR DOWNTOWN | 73 |
| Physical Evolution of the Downtown | |
| A Design Framework for Future Growth | |
| Urban Form Policies | |
| AREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS | 86 |
| Areas Within the Downtown | 88 |
| Old Port | |
| Civic Center | |
| Monument Square | |
| Congress Square | |
| Upper Congress | |
| Perimeter Growth Areas | 98 |
| Bayside | |
| India Street | |
| Gorham's Corner | |

FORWARD

Downtown Portland is a special place, important to the City, the region, and the State. As the largest urban center in Northern New England, the Downtown embodies a synergism of traditions, resources, talents and vision that have been nourished over time. It's natural setting and its historic built environment support diverse businesses, government services, arts, entertainment, academic, cultural and religious institutions, and recreation. While each could exist outside Downtown, only in the Downtown can people experience the vitality of their relationship. The whole is far greater than the sum of its individual parts. Each part is crucial to the greater whole and must be nurtured for the whole to flourish.

Downtown Portland offers an intact 19th century cityscape, where diverse activities, building types and styles create a human-scaled urban fabric, encourage human interplay, and provide a strong framework for economic development.

Over the last 30 years, many cities have pursued massive renewal projects and the construction of insular developments which dissipated their sense of community and of place. Fortunately, Portland has preserved its human scale and its friendliness. With continued and renewed attention, Downtown Portland will become even more livable for the broader community.

Today, Downtown Portland faces substantial but surmountable challenges. Its greatest need is public and private leadership who will promote a positive attitude about the Downtown. Such leadership will not only encourage an attitude, but make it visible – celebrating the Downtown's resources and opportunities and becoming involved in the day-to-day concerns of its businesses and people.

This Plan was initiated at a time when many feared rampant development would diminish the livable character of our historic Downtown. We now see the livable Downtown threatened by recession and loss of competitiveness in the regional marketplace.

Today, the City must take advantage of this period of relieved development pressure to position itself for future growth. This Downtown Vision transcends cyclical market fluctuations and provides guidance for policy makers and the larger community in steering a clear course for the future. The Downtown must be flexible, creative and aggressive in adapting to changing markets in the retail and office sectors of the local economy. New develop-

ment and redevelopment are vital to the continued growth of our Downtown and are critical to meeting evolving needs of the various sectors of the Downtown economy. A strong economic profile and urban vitality demands people and activity Downtown.

While there are important development opportunities and particular facilities identified in this Plan which can help shape the economic forecast for the coming years, this Downtown Vision is not only about singular development proposals which will reposition the Downtown for the 1990's and beyond. This Plan sets forth a Vision of cooperative management, of a stewardship of the Downtown felt by all individuals and organizations, of actively viewing the Downtown as a fabric in which all the parts of the Downtown are inter-related and where the sum of those parts is far greater than the whole. This Downtown Vision is about the vibrant urban environment which can result when a planning and development process responds to the needs of people who use the Downtown.

Downtown Vision is a celebration of urban living and a plan for Portland's future as Maine's Center for commerce and culture.

INTRODUCTION

WHY PLAN FOR PORTLAND'S DOWNTOWN?

Cities are shaped over time by many small, individual decisions - both public and private. Most often, changes are subtle but every City sometimes reaches a critical threshold where major decisions greatly influence its future course.

Portland's Downtown has reached such a threshold. During the recent development of the mid-1980's and more visible during the leaner current market, the Downtown has been facing intense competition from surrounding communities for office and retail development. On Congress Street, the City's Main Street for the past century, a number of long-standing retail businesses have either closed, shifted to other locations in the Downtown, or have moved to suburban locations. The addition of new office space in other parts of the Downtown coupled with increasing suburban competition have resulted in considerable vacancies in upper story space in this Congress Street area. Other concerns include the image of the Downtown as a place to shop and work, affordable parking for employees and shoppers, open space, and care and maintenance. Efforts to address these problems and others which arise from day-to-day have often been dealt with in piece-meal fashion.

At the same time, the Downtown offers many opportunities including growth prospects in the office and residential sectors, a heightened emphasis on arts and culture, and a new convention center, all of which provide benefits to the Downtown retail and service economy. Areas identified as Transition Areas in the 1974 Land Development Plan remain today as opportunity areas. There continues to be a need for a collective vision and framework for the future development of the India Street, Bayside, and Gorham's Corner areas as they relate to the future of the Downtown.

To re-establish Downtown's competitiveness, its opportunities must be better defined. We need to emphasize, re-invest in and promote our position as the region's leading center for legal, financial, medical and governmental services. We need to work energetically to retain our Downtown businesses, as well as attract new businesses. Similarly, we need to reinvest in and promote our historic and livable built environment, our vibrant arts and cultural community, our diverse shopping and dining opportunities, our accessibility to neighborhoods, and our unique natural setting. We must aggressively maintain and improve our sidewalks, parks, and streets. Our position and our greater potential as a vibrant, diverse, and human-scaled community, through sharing a respon-

sibility as stewards of our Downtown, are cause for celebration and a foundation for the future.

The purpose of this comprehensive planning process is to offer a community vision and framework for action for Downtown Portland. It is necessary:

- 1) to understand the role Downtown plays in a changing and highly competitive economy;
- 2) to understand and enhance the physical framework of the built environment to assure a livable, pedestrian-oriented, human-scaled Downtown; and
- 3) to take advantage of those special characteristics and opportunities which set the Downtown apart and create an exciting living, working and recreational environment.

At the same time, we must try to understand and accommodate the needs of all residents in the community. We must promote continued responsiveness of and access to the community's policy-forming and decision-making process. Downtown Vision charts a course for public and private actions that will carry Downtown Portland into the 21st century as a vibrant, progressive and livable urban community.

The Planning Process

Downtown Vision is one component of the City's overall comprehensive planning program for the entire City. Over the past eight years, the City has been reviewing and revising major elements of the comprehensive plan including the residential neighborhoods, Portland's Casco Bay islands, the waterfront and the neighborhood commercial areas. Now, the focus has turned to the Downtown. The community has reached concensus on the Downtown's role and on how best to balance economic growth with the quality of life and unique physical environment which Portland offers.

In 1987, the City of Portland initiated a public comprehensive planning process focusing on the City's central business district, with public forums, workshops, surveys and a videotape to encourage open participation and community input. Reinforcing this focus on comprehensive planning from the state level, recent growth management legislation has added a broader perspective and imperative for our comprehensive planning process. At the center of this process, the Portland Planning Board

and staff have coordinated consultant efforts and produced background research and technical papers on Downtown issues, which subsequently were reviewed by Downtown business, civic, and neighborhood leaders.

Policy alternatives have been discussed in public meetings by the Planning Board and City Council and provide the background reference for this Downtown Vision.

The Vision

Our vision of the Downtown for this and future generations is an expression of belief that the Downtown can and will retain its livability and, by encouraging appropriate development and by nurturing opportunities, will become an even better and more attractive place to live, work, visit, and find employment.

WE ENVISION DOWNTOWN PORTLAND AS MAINE'S CENTER FOR COMMERCE AND CULTURE

A Downtown for People...

...where people of all ages and all socio-economic groups find an exciting, friendly and compassionate atmosphere within the stores, offices and cultural facilities, as well as on the sidewalks and open spaces throughout the Downtown; and where people want and are encouraged to come together.

A Downtown of Opportunity...

...where a bustling office and retail economy combines with a thriving and diverse cultural, entertainment, and visitor economy to provide a prosperity shared by the entire community; and where opportunities abound for expanding existing or creating new businesses, for finding jobs, for securing adequate housing and satisfying needs for goods and services, for finding diversion and entertainment, and for influencing community policies and programs.

A Beautiful and Rich Downtown...

...where the character of the physical environment--Downtown buildings, open spaces, and pedestrian areas--is of the highest quality of design and detail; where a strong sense of the history and traditions reflected in past development inspires and guides contemporary design and where the physical environment is always being tended and enhanced.

A Progressive and Active Community...

...where leadership and sense of collective mission produce affirmative actions to promote growth, Downtown character, and quality of life; where decisions and directions support a community vision, yet where individual initiative is encouraged and supported; and where the community is in control and has the will and

ability to create a positive City experience in which we can all share and enjoy.

A Downtown which Celebrates...

...where all people come together day-to-day as well as on special occasions to participate in urban events in CELEBRATION of the excitement of life Downtown.

Overall Goals

1. To preserve and enhance the livability and walkability of Downtown Portland for residents, workers, shoppers, and visitors.
2. To maintain and enhance the Downtown's prominence as the regional center for commerce, human services, historic resources, culture and the arts.
3. To encourage growth and development Downtown while preserving and strengthening the unique identity and character of the Downtown.
4. To achieve diversity in the Downtown's economy, in activities, uses, and participants.
5. To achieve the highest quality urban experience through high standards of excellence for improvements to the physical environment, including new construction, building alterations, and the enhancement of the pedestrian environment.
6. To preserve and enhance the quality and vitality of neighborhoods within and adjacent to the Downtown.
7. To accommodate ingress to and egress from the Downtown with a maximum efficiency and minimum of vehicular congestion, while maintaining a favorable pedestrian environment.
8. To manage traffic and parking to diminish and decentralize the concentration of private automobiles in the heart of the Downtown through a creative combination of on-street, on-site, central garage, and peripheral parking, and alternative transportation mode solutions.
9. To encourage innovative plans within the Downtown which can respond to changing market conditions and which can help achieve other goals.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND PLANNING CONCEPT

A History of the Downtown

Since its infancy, the growth, development and redevelopment of Downtown Portland has been spurred onward by local and regional economic growth and set back by disaster or economic downturns. As a burgeoning harbor village, Portland was bombarded and burned to the ground by the British in 1775. Yet, by the early 1800's, the City had established itself again as a lively maritime center.

The Embargo Act of 1807 spelled economic disaster for Portland; the maritime economy collapsed and banks failed. But spurred by the War of 1812, Maine became by the mid 1850's a leading shipbuilding center with Portland sharing in considerable prosperity. In 1866, fire ignited by a careless Fourth of July celebrant swept through the heart of the City, destroying almost 2,000 buildings and leaving 10,000 people homeless. Before the ashes had cooled, the City was rebuilding and by the 1880's was an exporter of fish, lumber, glassware and stoneware.

The City seal, with a phoenix rising from the ashes and the motto "Resurgam" - "to rise again" - conveys the spirit which has moved Portland forward. More recently, the war-related ship-building and economic growth of the 1930's and 40's gave way in the 1950's and 60's to declines in manufacturing and waterfront dependent activity as the private automobile and suburbanization quickly began reshaping the region.

By the late 1960's and early 70's, the City again began to revive and be reshaped through a combination of private initiative in the rehabilitation of the Old Port and collective community action and public interest in major infrastructure improvements at the Franklin and Spring Street Arterials and Route 295, the Maine Way urban renewal project along Congress Street, the Cumberland County Civic Center, and more recently the redevelopment of Congress Square.

The Existing Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Zoning Ordinance

The existing comprehensive plan for Downtown uses as its foundation the 1974 Land Development Plan (LDP) for Portland. When the LDP was adopted, Downtown Portland was the region's economic, business and retail

center and intown Portland was "Maine's cultural entertainment capital." One of the LDP's principal objectives was to strengthen the Downtown's "old core" - that area bounded by State, Spring, and Franklin Streets and Cumberland Avenue.

The LDP identified four "transformation areas" around the perimeter of the Downtown core where market pressures were likely to change existing uses: India Street, the Fore Street/Gorham's Corner, the waterfront, and Bayside. While the LDP did suggest broad categories for potential uses, it neither created an urban design framework nor outlined viable approaches to the development of these areas. Downtown Vision recognizes the potential and provides a framework for encouraging desirable change in these areas.

While many other parts of the LDP have been updated by both policy and land-use code amendments, B-3 Business Zone modifications over the last two decades have been limited to responses to specific concerns and a series of interim amendments adopted over the past two years as a result of work-to-date on Downtown Vision. An effective overview of the Downtown in the late 1970's, the LDP today is inadequate, particularly within the B-3 Downtown Business District zoning - giving little attention to the special character of sub-areas within the Downtown, to opportunities for growth, to street level uses and to the pedestrian environment. Since the 1974 Land Development Plan, the City has assimilated a number of studies and reports into the comprehensive plan: the 1983 Gateways to Portland report, the 1983 Portland Waterfront Public Access Project, the 1988 Congress Street study by Greater Portland Landmarks documenting historic resources along Congress Street in the central Downtown area, and the 1989 Shoreway Access Report.

In addition to local studies and ordinance provisions, 1988 State growth management legislation requires every municipal government to plan for growth through preparation of a comprehensive plan. Directly relevant to Downtown Portland are state-wide planning goals to promote an economic climate which increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being, affordable decent housing, the preservation of historic and archaeological resources, and an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth.

Central Regional Role

As regional planning in the Cumberland County area moves forward with the broad recommendations of the Vision 2000 planning effort, the City of Portland and Downtown will have a central role to play as the urban center of northern New England. Issues such as transportation, infrastructure, and human services all must be examined from a regional perspective. Within this broader context, a healthy and vibrant Downtown will inspire and encourage a healthy and vibrant region. Downtown Portland, then, must pursue a future through both Downtown Vision and broader regional planning initiatives.

Downtown Portland's role in the region will continue to evolve as redevelopment occurs within the Downtown, as growth and development occur in the surrounding communities, and as local, regional, and national markets evolve. The Downtown fulfills several important functions:

Urban Center: Portland today is the largest and most urban community in northern New England. It is a livable city, revealing the diversity more common to larger urban settings while still offering people the scale, friendliness and sense of participation of smaller communities.

Retailing Center: Historically, the Downtown has been the region's retail center. With substantial growth in suburban areas, it is now one of several regional centers with a particular strength in specialty, arts-

related, and visitor-oriented retailing, as well as in dining and entertainment.

Office Center: The Downtown continues to be the regional center for legal, governmental, finance, and service industry office space, a role being challenged by a growing suburban office market.

Arts and Culture Center: With a diverse arts and culture community, the Downtown continues to be the region's cultural and entertainment center.

Service Center: The City of Portland is home to three major hospitals, the Portland campus of the University of Southern Maine, the Portland School of Art, Westbrook College, and to numerous public and private elementary and secondary schools.

Transportation Center: The Portland International Jetport has been one of the fastest growing airports in New England over the past decade, now providing service from four major passenger carriers with over 24 flights per day directly serving, among others, six major airline hub cities.

Waterfront Center: The Portland Waterfront is the busiest deep-water port in northern New England, with activities ranging from the International Ferry Terminal service to Nova Scotia and portage for visiting cruise ships to the Casco Bay Ferry Terminal service to the City's Casco Bay Islands, from fishing and ship repair to entrepreneurial tours and deep-sea fishing and recreational boating.

Figure ____: Regional map of Greater Portland

ACCOMMODATING FUTURE GROWTH

Defining Downtown

One objective cited in the 1974 Land Development Plan for the City which stands today is to delineate a central business district and to identify areas of likely expansion. Recent surveys on the Downtown's boundaries reveal broad impressions of what make up the area ranging from the entire peninsula to a three-block area along Congress Street. As Downtown Vision was being prepared, it became clear that the definition of Downtown varies widely. For office activity, the boundaries range from the Old Port to the Government Center complex below Cumberland Avenue. For Downtown visitors and tourism, boundaries extend to the waterfront and include the Congress Square hotels and cultural amenities. As such, the term "Downtown" is used loosely throughout "Downtown Vision." Figure ___ shows the area generally known as Downtown, with the boundaries of Commercial, Center, Pleasant, and High Streets, Cumberland Avenue, the Franklin Street Arterial, Middle

and India Streets. These boundaries for the central business district are not hard and fast, but instead reflect an integrated urban mix of uses.

Delineating Edges: The hesitation to draw hard and fast boundaries reflects the intensive integration of activities and building uses, and the substantially overlapping sub-areas within the Downtown. Particularly at the perimeters of the central business area, uses common to the Downtown extend into adjacent areas and neighborhoods, while residential or other uses of the perimeter area extend into the more intensive Downtown.

Certainly, some elements in the urban landscape suggest fairly well-defined boundaries. To the east, the Franklin Street Arterial provides a substantial break between predominantly commercial activities on the west and a very mixed combination of commercial, residential, institutional, and industrial uses to the east. In the area bounded by Middle, India, and Commercial Streets, the uniformity of commercial activities continues across

Figure ___: Aerial photo of B-3 Downtown Business Zone

the Arterial. Cumberland Avenue, along the north, serves as a very distinctive dividing line between residential uses below Cumberland Avenue and commercial and institutional uses between Cumberland Avenue and Congress Street. This edge holds generally true between the Franklin Street Arterial and Chestnut Street, shifts somewhat toward Oxford Street between Chestnut and Alder Streets, and then back to Cumberland Avenue. Along the waterfront, the Old Port Exchange directly abuts the waterfront uses and the dividing line generally is Commercial Street, although commercial uses of the Thomas Block and the Carroll Block on the waterside of Commercial Street demonstrate Downtown activity and use.

High Street along the western edge of the Downtown presents a fairly consistent delineation between the residential uses to the west and commercial and institutional uses to the east. In the immediate vicinity of Congress Square and continuing westerly along Congress Street to Longfellow Square, ground floor uses have a decidedly Downtown character while upper story uses progressively become more residential in character and use. The appropriate boundary for the Downtown business zone reflects the density and mixture of uses and ground floor commercial activities in this area. Figure ___ depicts revised B-3 business zone district boundaries.

Identifying Sub-Areas: The Downtown is comprised of a number of sub-areas, as illustrated in Figure ___. While some of the policies outlined here apply broadly to all areas of the Downtown, others focus on one or more sub-areas. The final section of Downtown Vision describes policies for the following areas in a district-by-district discussion:

Areas Within the Downtown.

1. Old Port Exchange
2. Civic Area
3. Congress Street, including:
 - a. Monument Square
 - b. Congress Square
 - c. Upper Congress

Perimeter Growth Areas.

4. Bayside
5. India Street
6. Gorham's Corner

Defining Zoning District Boundaries: The City's Zoning Ordinance defines zoning districts which have generally uniform use, bulk, height and location and requirements for property within each zone. Downtown

Figure ___: B-3 Downtown Business Zone District Boundary Map

Vision takes a somewhat modified approach to zoning within the Downtown, recognizing the diversity of its physical environment. Figure ___ recommends a B-3 Downtown Business Zone somewhat larger than the current zone. Many of the requirements within the District are uniformly applicable. In addition, however, overlay map areas are proposed which show differing height, bulk and location requirements, areas of required ground floor uses, and areas of required protection for pedestrian open space. These overlays allow standards to reflect more specifically the predominant or desired physical form of development on a block-by-block and street-by-street basis.

Possible Growth Scenarios

For the Downtown to evolve, its environment, buildings and uses must adapt to changing needs and opportunities, and involve more people and more activity. Effectively encouraged and directed, this growth can enhance the quality of life and urban character of Downtown for everyone. The public must expect and demand no less.

To assess the impacts of growth within the Downtown for the next several years, projections have been developed for Primary Office Space, Retail Space, and Resi-

dential Units based on growth patterns in Portland since 1976. These projections are based on historic periods of low, medium and high growth within each of the three categories of development. These development growth rates are not economic forecasts but projections tied to past rates. Growth estimates reflect actual net absorption of space, not the amount of space constructed in any one year.

| Table 1 - Office Growth Projections | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Rate | % | additional space(SF) by 1995 | total space(SF) |
| Low | 5 | +1,327,000 | 4,150,000 |
| Medium | 10 | +3,228,200 | 6,051,200 |
| High | 15 | +5,812,400 | 8,635,400 |

Office Growth: Projections are based on a 1987 base existing floor area of 2,823,000 square feet.

Low - 5 percent per year, an assumed minimum based on 1980-1982 recession rate.

Mid - 10 percent per year, the rate of growth from 1976-1986, adjusted downward slightly.

High- 15 percent per year, the rate of growth from 1981-1986.

Figure ___: Downtown map illustrating functional Sub Areas

| Table 2 - Retail Growth Projections | | | |
|--|-----|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Rate | % | additional space(SF) by 1995 | total space(SF) |
| Low | 1.2 | +164,800 | 1,802,800 |
| Medium | 2.0 | +282,600 | 1,920,600 |
| High | 3.1 | +455,400 | 2,093,400 |

Retail Growth: Projections are based on a 1987 base existing floor area of 1,638,000 square feet.

Low - 1.2 percent per year the rate of growth in retail establishments from 1977-1982.

Mid - 2 percent per year, the rate of growth in retail from 1972-1977.

High - 3.1 percent per year, a rate based on adjusted projections of the Greater Portland Council of Governments (COG) estimates.

| Table 3 - Housing Growth Projections | | | |
|---|------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Rate | % | additional units by 1995 | total units |
| Low | .88 | +190 | 2,740 |
| Mid | 1.25 | +270 | 2,820 |
| High | 2.2 | +490 | 3,040 |

Residential Growth: Projections based on a 1987 base existing housing of 2,550 units.

Low - .88 percent per year based on the rate of growth from 1970-1980.

Mid - 1.25 percent per year, an inferred medium rate from GOG statistics.

High- 2.2 percent per year, a rate projected for 1985-1995 by COG.

In considering these numbers, the rate of growth is especially important. As the regional economy varies, the pace and scale of Downtown development will fluctuate, too. How Downtown competes with other communities in attracting and retaining commercial development will also affect the pace and scale of its growth.

A rapid pace of development - mirrored in large and small scaled projects and in the hustle and bustle of the Downtown streetscape - is often equated with success. But the adverse impact of such rapid growth on the quality of life and historic fabric of our Downtown cannot be overlooked.

A slower pace, too, presents threats - that standards might be relaxed in the belief that any development is better than none at all.

Downtown Vision asserts that growth is good and desirable, but only at a pace and character which assures the quality of life espoused here. With proper management

and with community agreement, the Downtown is very capable of absorbing and benefiting from considerable growth over the next twenty years, while positioning itself well to carry through periods of economic inactivity.

Redevelopment Opportunities

Contrary to an often cited belief, Downtown Portland is rich with underutilized parcels which offer opportunities for new development or major building rehabilitation and reuse. A survey of land uses reveals over acres of vacant parcels, surface parking lots, and marginal buildings of one or two stories. Figure ___ maps such underutilized properties. Major redevelopment opportunities have been identified in the interior of blocks between Congress Street and Cumberland Avenue (between Preble Street and Forest Avenue), and on sites along Free Street between Oak Street and the Art Museum and between Center and Cross Streets. Redevelopment potential exists for major sites between Congress and Free Streets as well involving the rehabilitation and redevelopment of sites in the heart of the Downtown. In addition, selective demolition or creative adaptive re-use involving major expansion of existing buildings within the Downtown have been suggested by owners looking for greater use of their property. Major development proposals have been approved for several Downtown sites but are not yet under construction and are highly questionable given the current economy. These sites represent a combination of large and small sites which stand ready for redevelopment and are likely sites for redevelopment as the economy turns.

Developers and property owners have not ignored this long-term development opportunity. Redevelopment opportunities are not limited to parcels in the center of the Downtown business area. Land assembly involving multiple parcels has occurred in lower Bayside along Marginal Way, in Upper Bayside around the Government Center complex, in the vicinity of Spring, Cross, Commercial and Center Streets, in the India Street area, and in the Gorham's Corner area below Fore Street. The challenge for the future of Downtown will be to guide development in the heart of the City and manage the development of perimeter areas to complement and support the Downtown core.

Broad Development Strategies

The development and redevelopment opportunities offered by these parcels suggest that the growth projections cited above are realistic. However, development of all such sites is unlikely in the short term as they are often held off the market for reasons unrelated to their desira-

bility, and without more sites than projects, the cost of land escalates dramatically. It is clear that substantial redevelopment can be accommodated over time within the Downtown area.

The important questions which now face Downtown Portland are how to promote growth that reflects the objectives of Downtown Vision, and how to encourage growth in locations which support and enhance the existing fabric. Such growth should be directed through the following broad development “strategies”:

Fine Grain Fabric: Build upon the rich urban fabric of the existing environment and remain sensitive to the needs of a pedestrian population;

Responsive Building Character: Respond to and enhance the overall character of the built environment in its relationship to the natural topography, visual landmarks and important view corridors, existing historic resources, and Gateway approaches to the Downtown;

Mend the Fabric: Reinforce through infill the existing form and concentration of development, by establishing policies which encourage intensive and compatible development which ties together the fabric of the central Downtown area;

Reaffirm Congress Street: Re-establish the standing of Congress Street as Portland’s Main Street, focusing on strengthening its role as a Cultural Corridor and reinvigorating its retail and office sectors; and

Perimeter Growth Areas: Provide and guide opportunities for commercial and residential growth on the perimeter of the central Downtown area which support and enhance the entire Downtown.

Figure ____: Redevelopment Opportunities Map

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Growth and development in the Downtown is desirable, but only at a pace and character which can be managed properly. The Downtown with its perimeter areas, can accommodate growth at the rate experienced over the past decade. This will change the skyline of the Downtown and character of the pedestrian environment. If directed well, this change will preserve the Downtown's sense of identity, uniqueness and scale. Growth and development within the heart of Downtown should take the form of site-by-site filling in and intensifying the existing fabric. Growth and redevelopment of perimeter areas should proceed and be encouraged in a manner that reinforces the viability and intensity of activity within Downtown, while serving as transitional development between the City's center and surrounding residential and commercial areas.

Promoting growth and development in the heart of Downtown does not suggest its wholesale transformation. Rather, this Plan envisions both large and small scale development, rehabilitation, and attention to context which reinforce the historic Downtown -- the scale and character of its built and pedestrian environment.

This Plan identifies the geographic area of Downtown, calls for the strengthening of its heart, and demands a program of coordinated public/private management and economic development to accomplish it.

Implementation Approaches

Land Use and Zoning Policies: This document sets forth a series of policies which relate to land use and zoning. Ordinance amendments accompanying this document deal with appropriate uses, dimensional and other requirements and standards such as parking and signage within the B-3 Downtown Business Zone. Also, additional amendments provide for relocation of displaced tenants, a public arts program, and revisions to the City's Site Plan Ordinance, accompanied by a series of Downtown Urban Design Guidelines. Further, this document provides a framework for integrating a Downtown open space plan with the City's comprehensive open space plan.

Administrative Policies: This document provides for a number of administrative policies and City departmental programs or efforts which support broad policies and private initiatives.

Economic Development: Downtown Vision provides an overview of the opportunities for concentrated economic development activity within the Downtown. Efforts of the Downtown Portland Corporation should support the goals and policies of the plan for Downtown.

Management: This document sets forth a framework for considering aggressive management of the Downtown, including such issues as maintenance, security and coordination of business policies.

Private Initiative: Downtown Vision identifies a number of opportunities where private initiative is necessary to fully realize the vision for the Downtown. While public policies provide a framework, private investment and participation will assure growth and revitalization.

***A GROWING AND COMPETITIVE
ECONOMY***

MANAGING DOWNTOWN

A downtown environment is measured by the vitality and character of streets, open space, and pedestrian areas, shaped by the inter-relationship of its economic, cultural, and physical aspects. Some are visible, such as the care of streets and sidewalks, while others are reflected in the stability, variety and economic well-being of the Downtown's retail, business, institutional and residential sectors.

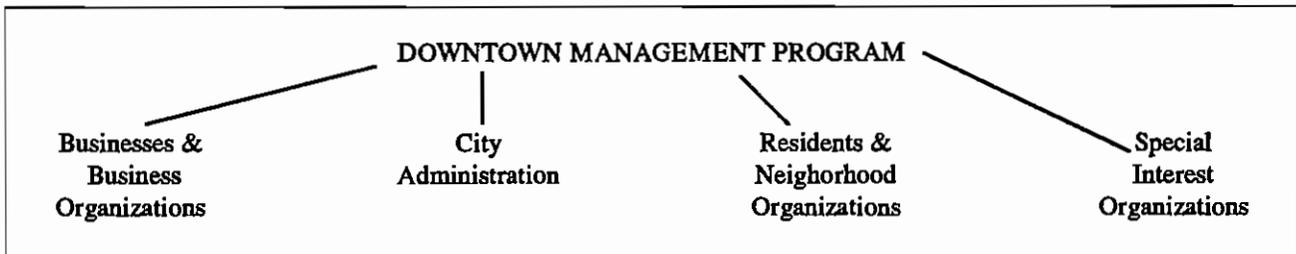
For Downtown to benefit from the opportunities described in Downtown Vision, a coordinated public and private effort to manage its growth must occur. Management needs to involve business, neighborhood, cultural, institutional, hospitality, and government leaders in a program to identify, evaluate, and pursue Downtown improvements and to implement Downtown Vision. Downtown services, Downtown businesses, long-range planning efforts as well as attention to day-to-day issues would all be concerns. Such a program would assure that individual issues and interests are approached as part of a coordinated effort to manage the entire Downtown. As such, duplication of efforts can be avoided while shared interests which affect different Downtown organizations or can be reviewed and coordinated more effectively.

The Congress Square revitalization program, the Maine Way renewal project of Monument Square, and the ongoing Waterfront planning effort are the results of such coordinated public and private programs.

Today, within the Downtown, there is the need for a similar public/private effort focused on coordinated management with communication and cooperation between all affected parties a fundamental priority.

An effort, led by Intown Portland Exchange, is currently underway to develop a formal proposal for a management program. To date the effort has had both public and private cooperation. The following organizations and groups have been identified as interested parties and play varying roles in developing such a public/private cooperative management effort:

Intown Portland Exchange
Uptown and Company
City Manager's Business Advisory Committee
Chamber of Commerce
Convention and Visitor's Bureau
Portland Neighborhood Council
Portland Arts Alliance
Greater Portland Landmarks
School and Church Leadership
Human Service Organizations
Portland City Council and Planning Board
City of Portland Administrative Departments



Role of Downtown Management

Downtown management program would bring together diverse groups that have a stake in the vitality of the Downtown. This management program's role can be as broad or as narrow as the community wants. Downtown Vision recommends the following roles be considered as critical to the Downtown's place in the region and to its livability.

Communication: Bring the community's public and private leadership together regularly to grapple with Downtown issues.

Advocacy: Develop a collective voice to pinpoint problems, identify solutions, formulate policy statements, and lobby for support of those policies. Assume leadership in pursuing Downtown Vision goals and in implementing proposed policies.

Business retention and recruitment: Develop aggressive programs to encourage businesses to remain and

expand Downtown and actively recruit new local, regional, national and international businesses. As a possible part of these programs, develop an inventory and clearing house for information about available commercial space Downtown.

Promotion and marketing: Coordinate the programming and promotion of special events, advertising, and marketing programs which benefit the entire Downtown.

Management of basic services: Establish and carry out on-going monitoring of programs dealing with maintenance (litter control, street sweeping, snow removal, and so on) and security issues.

Project planning and implementation: Provide leadership in major comprehensive and site-specific planning efforts and program implementation within Downtown.

Focus Area

One aspect of the current effort to develop a proposal for a management program is to identify an appropriate geographical area on which to focus the various components of such a program. Figure ____ is a preliminary draft of a map depicting a potential management district.

Figure ____: Preliminary Draft - Potential Management District

DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT POLICIES

DM 1 Downtown Management Entity: The City in cooperation with Downtown business, civic and institutional organizations should form an umbrella public/private management entity.

This body, with representatives and support from all Downtown interest groups and the public sector, should promote coordination and communication between these groups and growth and development Downtown. Responsibilities should include such issues as coordinating retail management, Downtown marketing, nurturing and supporting existing office, retail, cultural and residential interests while encouraging new development and business, and overseeing the care and enhancement of the pedestrian environment.

To initiate this process, the City should designate an upper level management position dedicated to Downtown development, with the following principal areas of concern:

1. Develop a consensus on forming the Downtown management entity, including agreement on the range and extent of its services and define its structure including membership, roles, and responsibilities;
2. Develop a program of financial support for staffing and operational activities, particularly combined public/private funding which might include a Downtown special assessment program;
3. Develop and coordinate rapid-response system for maintenance, safety, and other issues.

DM 2 Downtown Management District: The City, in cooperation with the private sector, should define a specific geographic area within the Downtown, a Downtown Management District, which will be the area of attention for the Downtown management entity. (See Figure ___ for a preliminary map of a potential management district.)

DM 3 Downtown Development Corporation: The City should move forward in implementing the Downtown Portland Corporation (DPC) to bring the resources and initiative of the public sector together with the private investment community. Figure ___ illustrates the priority area within the Downtown which is the focus of attention of the DPC.

The Corporation has been charged with the implementation and administration of economic development programs that enhance and create business and employment opportunities downtown. This includes:

1. Business development - Attract, retain, and stabilize businesses;
2. Development financing - Stimulate growth and development Downtown by assisting in financing projects through loan programs, bond or equity participation, and tax increment financing; and
3. Advocate for the interests of the Downtown - Provide constant and intensive advocacy and coordination for the enhancement and development of the Downtown. Advocate and implement the policies and programs of Downtown Vision.

Management Implementation Action Chart

| <u>Recommendation</u> | <u>Timing</u> | | | <u>How</u> | | <u>Implementing Body</u> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| | <u>Adopt with Plan</u> | <u>Next 3 Years</u> | <u>3 to 10 Years</u> | <u>Ordinance</u> | <u>Program</u> | |
| DM1 Public/Private Management Entity | x | x | | | x | City/Private |
| DM2 Downtown Management District | x | | | x | x | City/Private |
| DM3 Downtown Development Corporation | x | x | | | x | City |

Figure ___: Priority area of Downtown Portland Corporation

THE COMPETITIVE OFFICE ECONOMY

History

Downtown Portland is a major regional center for finance, insurance, accounting, legal, governmental and other professional services. As the largest city in the state and northern New England, Portland has a distinct advantage in attracting professional office growth. Many of the corporate offices of leading banks and other service institutions are located Downtown, as are the offices of the state's largest newspaper and leading television and radio stations.

The Downtown is home to the Cumberland County Courthouse, the Cumberland County Registry of Deeds, and the Federal District Court, and home as well to an unusually large number of attorneys. Other professions are also concentrated Downtown, with many architectural and landscape design firms, advertising and marketing firms, and accounting firms.

As Portland evolved from a waterfront-oriented port city to a commercial center for the region, office space was traditionally located in low-rise brick and wood structures, close to industrial or warehousing activities. Portland's first major mid-rise offices, the 10-story Fidelity Trust Company Building, was built in 1910. The 12-story Chapman (Monument Square) Building followed in 1924. It wasn't until 1970 that the City's first modern office building, the Casco Northern Bank building on Monument Square, was constructed, followed by Canal Plaza, Maine Savings Bank, and the Maine Bonding and Casualty building.

A second wave of office construction begun in the mid-1980's has resulted in an even more dramatic expansion of Downtown. Beginning with the construction of One City Center, and followed quickly by 100 Middle Street, One Portland Square, 10 Moulton Street, the Gateway office development, and, most recently, Two Portland Square, over 700,000 square feet of office space has been added to the Downtown supply. In addition, over 800,000 square feet of additional Downtown office space has received City approvals but is not yet under construction.

While newly-constructed buildings are perhaps more visible, many existing buildings have been rehabilitated for office uses, totaling in excess of 530,000 square feet since 1982. This represents a major resource for existing office tenants seeking expansions and small-space ten-

ants, while preserving some of the finest commercial architecture in northern New England.

The growth of office development since the 1960's reflects national changes from industrial to service-based economies. As office-based workers have represented the fastest growing sector of the labor force during this period, office space needs have also been affected by an increase in the volume of office activities and in the average amount of floor space per office worker.

Table 4 - Office Inventory

| Class | Office | Bank | Service | Total | Vacancy |
|-------|----------------|--------------|----------|----------------|-------------|
| A | 1,273,040 | 40,274 | 13,678 | 1,326,992 | 10.92% |
| AR | 730,178 | 11,200 | 27,390 | 768,768 | 19.52 |
| B | 561,050 | 42,963 | 1,840 | 605,853 | 3.70 |
| BR | 417,400 | 7,129 | 21,928 | 446,457 | 9.23 |
| C | 273,386 | 2,643 | 0 | 276,029 | 5.83 |
| D | <u>104,533</u> | <u>1,610</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>106,143</u> | <u>5.11</u> |
| Total | 3,345,697 | 106,819 | 64,836 | 3,530,242 | 10.78% |

Class: A- central location, recent construction, elevators to all floors

AR- central location, high quality rehabilitation, elevators if over 3 floors

B- lesser quality or older office buildings

BR- recently rehabilitated buildings downgraded for location or physical aspects

C- older and less modern facilities further downgraded

D- less desirable in terms of older facilities, deferred maintenance, or location

Source: McMullin & Associates, 8-1-89

The importance of the office sector is most vividly illustrated by the fact that about 13,000 people or two-thirds of the Downtown workforce are employed in office activities. These employees are the primary source of support for other businesses as well as for the existing retail and cultural sectors.

Demand and Shifting Concentration

As the greater Portland area has grown, so has the demand for office-based professional services. Many Downtown firms have needed to expand, and new office space has been marketed mostly to these existing businesses. As the economy has slowed, absorption rate for office space has dropped to 47,409 square feet in August 1989 compared with the 1985 rate of 582,503 square feet. The 1985 figure, however, reflects a boom period and the more recent rate better typifies office growth over time. In spite of the slowdown, most recent estimates show office vacancy rates Downtown at under 11 percent and slowly declining.

Before Canal Plaza was developed, most major offices were located in the Monument Square area, stretching along Congress Street for about two blocks. With Canal Plaza and several later developments in the 1980's, most new offices have been built below Middle/Spring Streets in Old Port peripheral areas, where parcels were more easily assembled, substantial private investment in retail was occurring, and where a desirable building environment was in place. While the Monument Square area is being reinforced by One City Center and the redevelopment of Monument Way, as well as the proposed addition to the Fidelity Building, office uses are becoming more widely distributed to other Downtown areas.

Strengths and Challenges

1. Tradition and history

Strength: Downtown has a large number of older firms of various sizes, with leadership who have long-term commitments to the area.

Challenge: A large number of younger firms have recently located in the Downtown, many without traditional or generational loyalty to the central area. In addition, corporate mergers and acquisitions of what historically have been local businesses has weakened commitment to the Downtown. Location and expansion decisions are made for a variety of reasons, including the attachment top executives have for a community. When decision-makers are located out-of-state, those attachments lessen.

The challenge is to nurture these attachments with both older and younger firms and emphasize to national corporations their role and responsibility to Portland's Downtown.

2. Concentration and communication

Strength: Diverse professional goods and services are concentrated Downtown and people can easily conduct business face-to-face -- assets that cannot be duplicated in far-flung suburban locations.

Challenges: Electronic communications and reliance on the automobile challenge face-to-face ways of doing business. Downtown must counter that challenge, creating an easy and pleasant ambiance for face-to-face business by enhancing its pedestrian qualities and preserving the sense of a lively urban center.

3. Unique urban opportunities

Strength: Downtown offers a unique environment for office employees. Businesses Downtown have the opportunity to be housed in new landmark office buildings or in a variety of historic brick structures, many which offer views of the Harbor, Back Cove, the White Mountains, and the historic city-scape. Shopping, cultural activities and amenities, the waterfront, and public parks are a short walk for employees on lunch hour or after work.

Challenge: The challenge is to maintain and enhance the quality, character, and variety of the Downtown. As suburban locations increasingly recognize the attraction of well-maintained and landscaped areas to employees and tenants, so, too, must the Downtown recognize their value.

4. Regional center

Strength: Downtown Portland continues to be the regional center for office activity. Its particular strengths are in large-office financial, legal, and governmental employment and substantial and diverse professional tenants such as media, design and graphics, and advertising. Supporting these businesses are many consumer and service-oriented retail establishments, and diverse cultural, institutional and recreational activities.

Challenge: The challenge is to respond to the needs of all economic sectors, to reassert the advantages of being Downtown, and by developing incentives for locating and remaining Downtown.

5. Office space inventory

Strength: The Downtown provides an inventory of office space which meets the needs of businesses of all sizes. Recent new office construction and offices built over the last 20 years provide high-quality space with large floor areas. Many older buildings offer high quality and architecturally-unique office space suitable for smaller businesses.

Challenge: The Downtown must market its available office space effectively -- highlighting existing opportunities and finding matches between potential tenants and suitable space. New ways to meet space needs must be developed and available space continually assessed in the face of changing needs.

6. Redevelopment opportunities

Strength: A variety of Downtown sites and structures offer redevelopment opportunities. See *Accommodating Future Growth* for further discussion.

7. Parking

Strength: Currently, the Downtown supply of parking spaces through parking structures, on-street parking and surface lots meets the quantity of parking demand. See *Moving About* for further discussion of parking issues.

8. Public transit infrastructure

Strength: Public bus and ferry systems provide a basic level of service to large geographical areas within our community. See *Moving About* for further discussion of public transit, an important and potentially critical component of access for Downtown employees.

OFFICE ECONOMY POLICIES

1. Strengthen and enhance the Downtown as the prominent professional office center of the State and northern New England.
2. Provide a balanced supply (cost, quality and location) of office space that provides opportunities for small, medium and large-sized companies and which accommodates new and expanding business needs.

Policies

OE 1 Reinforce Downtown Core: Identify and in-fill office development opportunities Downtown through:

- a) increased maximum building heights along the Congress Street corridor (between Congress Street and Cumberland Avenue) and in the Congress to Spring Street corridor to encourage taller office development;
- b) identify short and long-term infill redevelopment or rehabilitation opportunities for properties within the central business district; and
- c) rehabilitate and re-use upper stories along Congress Street from Monument to Congress Square to provide a mix of affordable office space.

OE 2 Area development plans: Create long-term programs and urban design plans to encourage mixed-use development, including substantial office growth, in the lower Center/Danforth/York Street (Gorham's Corner) and Bayside areas of the Downtown. Encourage additional office development in the India Street area within the context of mixed office, retail and residential uses.

Such peripheral office growth must provide office opportunities which support and complement those in the central Downtown. Office development, as part of a mixed use approach to revitalizing these peripheral areas, must be of a scale and character compatible to those areas.

OE 3 Economic development:

- a) **Retain businesses, retain jobs:** Cultivate existing Downtown office businesses with a rapid-response program which assists, persuades, and nurtures Downtown employers, particularly those who have voiced specific needs to remain Downtown.

As a first step, the program will identify major Downtown employers, assess their satisfaction level and take stock of their short and long-term needs.

Through public and private efforts, the program will become an integral part of Downtown management.

- b) **Recruit new business:** Develop a coordinated marketing program which promotes Downtown, seeks out potential new businesses, and identifies incentives to create new jobs.
- c) **Develop financing tools:** Through the implementation of the Downtown Portland Corporation, the City must move ahead taking the lead in pursuing creative financing mechanisms and incentives, such as tax-increment financing, the Capital Improvement Program, or the Portland Development Fund, which will assist in attracting and retaining Downtown office tenants.

OE 4 Capital Improvement Program: Identify and develop a multi-year funding plan within the City's Capital Improvement Program for regular and continuing improvements to the public infrastructure in support of the Downtown office economy.

Office Economy Implementation Action Chart

| Recommendation | Timing | | | How | | Implementing Body |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| | Adopt with Plan | Next 3 Years | 3 to 10 Years | Ordinance | Program | |
| OE1 Reinforce Downtown Core | x | | | x | | City |
| OE2 Area Development Plans | | x | | x | x | City/Private |
| OE3 Economic Development | | | | | | |
| a. Job Retention | x | x | x | | x | City/Private |
| b. New Employment | x | x | x | | x | City/Private |
| c. Financing | | x | | | x | City/Private |
| OE4 Capital Improvement Program | x | x | x | | x | City |

Figure ___: Downtown Office Development Opportunities

THE COMPETITIVE RETAIL ECONOMY

History

Retail is important to the Downtown as a key component of its urban identity. The broad diversity of restaurants, specialty shops, art and craft-related businesses, and fine clothiers are all key attractions to residents, workers, and visitors alike. Proximity plays an important role as the array of businesses located throughout the Downtown are all within a convenient walking distance. The diversity and individuality of the Downtown retail community is a strength in terms of character, variety, and personalized service.

From the late 19th to the mid 20th century, Downtown Portland was the retail shopping center for the region. Early on, small specialty shops made up the retail sector. Then, large and attractive department stores -- Libby's, Rines Brothers, Eastman Brothers, Owen Moore, and Porteous Mitchell and Braun -- opened their doors to shoppers. Over time, Sears, S.S. Kresge, F.W. Woolworth's, and Montgomery Ward followed.

Up until the 1960's, Congress Street bustled with retailers serving Downtown businesses, workers and Portland residents. The phenomenal increase in automobile ownership encouraged dispersion of population and shopper mobility while changing retailing strategies and consumer expectations have altered the face of Downtown. By 1969, Jordan Marsh had opened in South Portland, followed a year later by the Maine Mall. For the first time, a major shopping opportunity presented itself as an alternative to the Downtown.

But unlike many communities, Downtown Portland has been shielded from the most adverse affects of this trend. First, within and immediately surrounding the Downtown, stable and economically-diverse residential neighborhoods provided a population base that continued to partially depend on and support Downtown retailers. At about the same time, Downtown Portland was experiencing an office construction boom which bolstered an employee base that supported retail businesses. Also in those years, interest in the then derelict Old Port area was piqued by a few private property owners, followed by public improvements to sidewalks, lighting and so on. Finally, the City undertook a major Downtown renewal effort with the Mainway Downtown Revitalization Program -- involving extensive land-use planning, public

land acquisition, and street and pedestrian walkway improvements in the central Downtown. The mid-1970's also saw the development of the Cumberland County Civic Center.

Into the early 1980's, a partnership between the City and private property owners brought dramatic changes to the area through the Congress Square Urban Development Action Grant program -- a major addition to the Portland Museum of Art, the creation of Congress Square Plaza, the rehabilitation of the Sonesta Hotel, the transformation of the former Congress Square Hotel into housing, the development of the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, and major facade renovations to commercial buildings along Congress Street.

Today, retailing continues as a vital ingredient for a healthy Downtown economy as it supports Downtown Portland residents, workers, visitors, and surrounding neighborhoods. Yet Downtown retailing is vulnerable to the changing regional retail market and to the uncertain future of traditionally strong retail areas Downtown. The traditional retail area of Congress Street between Monument and Congress Square faces uncertainty in the form of vacant storefronts as office and tourist activity has shifted to the Old Port area. With the closing of the Porteous Department Store, the loss of a symbolic and historic anchor tenant in the Downtown adds to the uncertainty while creating new opportunities for redirecting the retail character of the Downtown. Countering the uncertainty is a growing strength in smaller scale specialty retail and service activity both along the Congress Street spine and in expanding perimeter areas of the Old Port.

It is also important, given the region's highly competitive retail economy to recognize and take advantage of features commonly found within coordinated retail management programs such as more uniform hours of operation, maintenance and security programs, and marketing and advertising efforts.

Strengths and Challenges

1. Commitment

Strength: Many long-term property and business owners have strong commitments - personal and financial -- to Downtown.

Challenge: The suburban retail areas mount increasingly strong challenges, especially as Downtown Portland is not responding forcefully enough to ensure its place in the regional retail economy.

2. Management

Strength: Several Downtown membership organizations are involved in marketing, advertising, programming of street festivals and entertainment, maintaining the sidewalks and open space, encouraging existing retail to stay and recruiting new businesses. See *Managing Downtown* for further discussion of the importance management holds for Downtown retailing.

3. Growing retail base

Strength: The Downtown retail base is growing with the potential for up to 164,000 square feet of new retail space by the year 1995 based upon past growth.

Challenge: These statistics are by no means assured, and to achieve such growth, existing retail businesses must be supported and new businesses must be attracted. Where successes occur in attracting retail businesses, potential problems of success, such as parking congestion or late-night rowdiness must be monitored and dealt with.

4. Diverse retail

Strength: A diverse retail base exists, particularly strong in specialty and arts-related retailing, and in dining and drinking establishments.

Challenge: These strengths must be built upon -- broadening this retail base to benefit and serve the entire Downtown community.

5. Street-level retail

Strength: The storefront or street-level retail on many Downtown streets encourages impulse shopping, pedestrian activity, and is visually appealing.

Challenge: Non-retail or non-pedestrian oriented uses at the street level must be prevented from encroaching further Downtown.

6. Market population

Strength: Residents, employees, tourists, volunteers, and patrons of arts and cultural organizations make up day-to-day customer base Downtown.

Challenge: This existing population must be encouraged to use and promote the Downtown as a retail and entertainment center, and the products and services Downtown must meet their special needs and interests.

7. Physical environment

Strength: A rich and historic cityscape provides a unique shopping and browsing environment.

Challenge: The quality of the pedestrian environment must be maintained and enhanced. This is discussed further in *Open Space and Pedestrian Environment*.

8. Customer service

Strength: Independent and mostly retailers offer an exceptional level of service and attention to customer satisfaction.

Challenge: This aspect of Downtown retailing - the sense that shopping Downtown is special because of the personal service and local character - must be preserved while striving to attract local, regional, and national retailers. Shopping Downtown is distinctively local and personal. By comparison, shopping at the Maine Mall is no different than shopping at identical malls throughout the country.

9. Parking

Strength: There is an adequate overall quantity of surface and structured parking spaces and a substantial number of short-term turnover parking spaces located on-street within the Downtown.

Challenge: Spaces must be available and affordable for shoppers by effectively managing turnover parking and by enforcing parking regulations. Affordable long-term parking must be available for employees of retail businesses. Further discussion of parking can be found in *Moving About*.

Perceptions about parking must be changed -- especially, notions about what is a reasonable walking distance in a city.

10. Northern New England climate

Strength: The Spring, Summer, and Fall seasons can be spectacular and support outdoor activity including shopping, browsing, and simply taking part in the pedestrian street scene.

Challenge: Portland must be seen, too, as a winter city, with year-round activities and businesses. Downtown must be made attractive and the pedestrian experience pleasant during winter months-with safe and clear sidewalks, and accessible parking.

Street-level uses should be encouraged which allow people to move inside between businesses while supporting street-fronting uses.

RETAIL ECONOMY POLICIES

1. Strengthen and enhance the Downtown retail sector to meet the diverse consumer needs of Downtown workers, Downtown and City-wide residents, and visitors.
2. Revitalize Congress Street, Portland's Main Street, by establishing and promoting the Congress Street Cultural Corridor with additional cultural facilities and related retail uses.
3. Pursue infill retail development within established retail areas and expand retail areas while complementing and supporting what already exists.

Policies

RE 1 Coordinated retail management: Develop, as a part of a broader Downtown management program, a coordinated retail program focusing on retaining existing businesses, identifying and attracting appropriate anchor stores and new retailers, and on encouraging cooperation among Downtown retailers on hours of operation and marketing.

These program components should include:

- a) **Job retention:** Cultivate existing Downtown retail businesses on an on-going basis and develop a rapid-response program which assists, persuades, and nurtures Downtown retailing.
- b) **New retail recruitment:** Develop a coordinated retail marketing program which promotes Downtown opportunities, and seeks out potential new Downtown retailing. Identification of incentives and inducements to assist new Downtown retailing.
- c) **Inventory:** Develop an inventory and clearing house for retail space data, with a survey and on-going program for planning, monitoring, and promoting ground floor retail activity.
- d) **Programming coordination:** Develop a coordinated programming effort that organizes activities and events that energize the Downtown retail environment.
- e) **Marketing and promotion:** Develop a marketing program to promote a positive image of the

Downtown focusing on common hours, parking, park and shop and other amenities.

RE 2 Supporting development: Support economic development which maintains and enlarges the retail base Downtown including employment, residential development and visitor trade. Emphasize development of upper stories with diverse uses that provide additional retail market demand.

RE 3 In-fill retail: Assure street-level retail or other pedestrian-oriented uses through requirements which:

- a) mandate ground-floor pedestrian-oriented uses along selected blocks of principal pedestrian streets (see Figure ___ for a map of the Pedestrian Activities District (PAD) and pedestrian encouragement areas);
- b) encourage retail in broader areas of the Downtown and ensure that new development or rehabilitation facilitates future pedestrian-oriented uses even if a market does not now exist;
- c) encourage the retention of existing retail uses in the Downtown and fill in vacant storefronts with retail and pedestrian activities.

RE 4 Parking: Improve parking availability for Downtown shoppers through improved parking management and alternative parking opportunities for day-long employees. Improve the availability of parking for evening and weekend shoppers and employees through more active use of existing and proposed parking, such as shared-use parking. See *Moving About* for further discussion of parking.

RE 5 Area development plans: Create long-term development programs and urban design plans for encouraging mixed-use development, including a substantial retail component, in the Gorham's Corner, India Street, and Bayside perimeter areas of the Downtown after in-fill development has occurred within the heart of the Downtown. Such perimeter retail growth must be compatible in scale and character with the areas, as well as support and complement the Downtown retail sector.

Retail Economy Implementation Action Chart

| Recommendation | Timing | | | How | | Implementing Body |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------|-------------------|
| | Adopt with Plan | Next 3 Years | 3 to 10 Years | Ordinance | Program | |
| RE1 Coordinated Retail Management | x | x | x | | x | Entity/City |
| RE2 Supporting development | x | x | x | x | x | City/Private |
| RE3 Infill Retail Development | | | | | | |
| a. Mandatory Street-level Uses | x | | | x | | City |
| b. Retail Encouragement Area | x | | | x | x | City |
| c. Retail Displacement | x | | | x | x | City |
| RE4 Parking | x | x | x | x | x | City |
| RE5 Innovative proposals | x | x | x | | x | City |
| RE6 Area Development Plans | | x | x | x | x | City/Private |

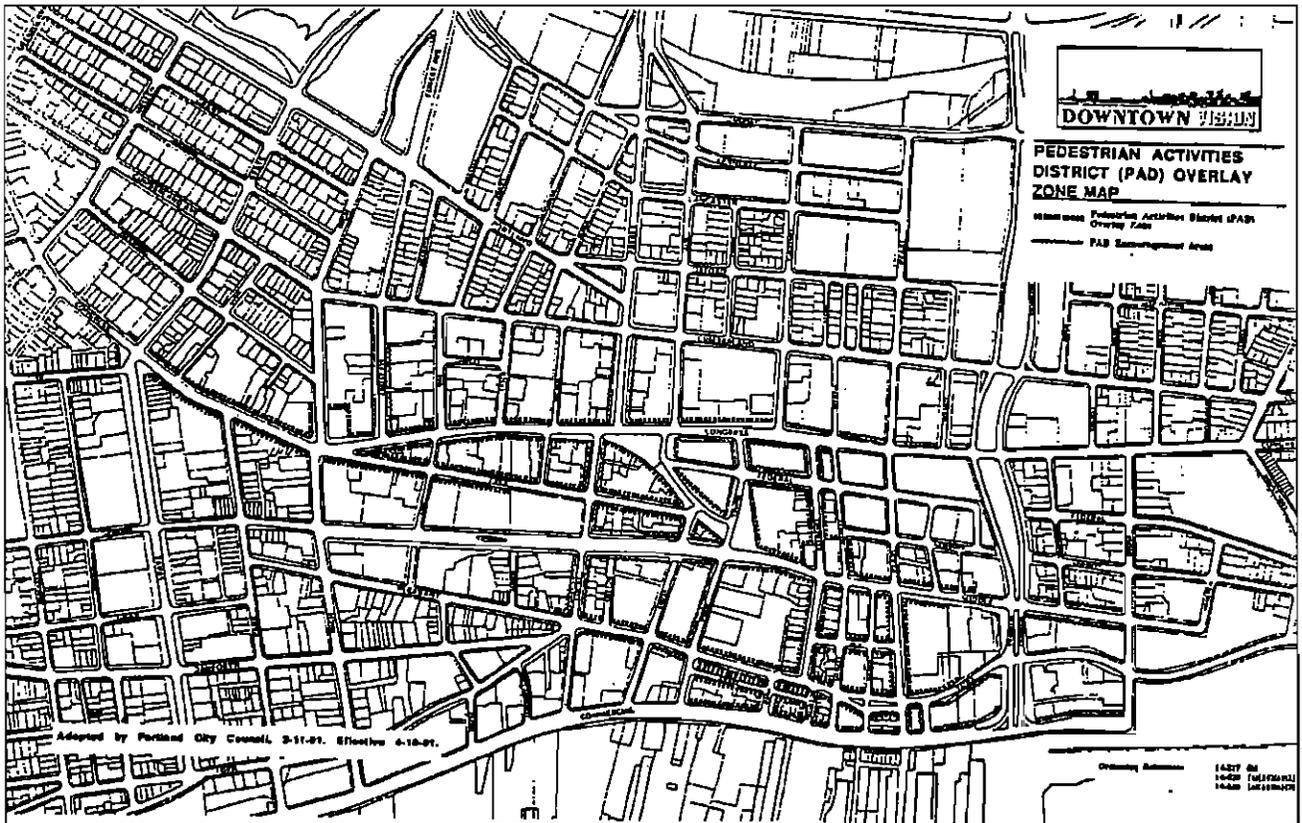


Figure ____: Pedestrian Activities District (PAD) map

TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

Recent rapid growth in tourism makes this Maine's second largest industry and largest employer. Downtown Portland, because of its unique setting, the scale and character of its historic built environment, and its specialty shopping, dining and entertainment opportunities, has also realized tourism-related growth. Portland is well positioned to receive substantial additional growth in the tourism and hospitality industry. Such growth, however, is not inevitable. Only with careful planning and promotion and with the development of adequate facilities will this industry realize continued growth and yield a tremendous boost to the Downtown and regional economies.

Those who live or work in Portland may already appreciate the qualities that attract visitors who for years bypassed the city. Today, the Old Port with its distinctive architecture and its specialty stores and many dining spots, the Waterfront with its commercial and marine-related uses, and the cultural attractions throughout the Downtown form a strong foundation for a substantial visitor industry.

Tourism directly supports existing hotels, restaurants, and visitor services, and contributes substantially to the Downtown retail economy and the arts and cultural community. Attendees to day-long events in 1988 contributed nearly \$13.9 million to the local economy. This economic investment allows Portland to support activities, facilities, and businesses typically found in larger cities. Growth directly benefits the local resident population, as a greater diversity of goods, services and cultural activities become available for residents and diverse employment opportunities are created. Downtown's pedestrian environment must be enhanced as tourism grows and potentially negative impacts, such as traffic and parking and impact on City services must be recognized and mitigated.

Strengths and Opportunities

Several broad regional and national trends in the tourism industry may impact public policy in Portland.

1. As communities recognize unique characteristics which can attract substantial tourism income, competition for the tourist dollar increases rapidly. Substantially increased event and attraction promotion reflects this heightened competition.

2. Changing vacation habits, with shorter and more specialized trips are frequently corresponding to business activities such as conventions.
3. Increasing numbers of foreign travellers and group travel present different types of demand and new opportunities.

In addition to these broad opportunities, the Downtown has specific strengths. These include:

1. **Visitor attractions:** The Downtown has a variety of activities, amenities and qualities which attract residents and visitors alike. The historic character of the Old Port and residential districts, the Waterfront's activities, and a range of arts and cultural offerings and facilities are some of the most significant.
2. **Visitor accommodations:** The Downtown has a supply of 518 rooms located in three distinctively different hotels, medium and small conference facilities in the Civic Center, the hotels, and other buildings, and many restaurants and drinking establishments.
3. **Marketing:** The City's Convention and Visitors Bureau aggressively markets the Downtown for major conventions and large tour groups. The City's Waterfront Division promotes the City's Port as a destination for cruise ship lines. While studies suggest that a large budget is necessary to effectively promote the Downtown, these organizations have had some success on a limited budget. Their efforts could be enhanced by a coordinated marketing program, a central visitors center, and appropriate staffing and funding.

TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY POLICIES

Develop appropriate attractions and improvements Downtown that complement and enhance the role of the tourism and hospitality industry.

Policies

TH 1 Convention center: Provide full public support through County-wide initiative and encourage private support for the development of a convention center in Downtown Portland. Selection of a site should be made quickly, with highest priority given to a location which is capable of interacting closely with existing Downtown hotels, retail businesses, and cultural institutions.

The Laventhol and Horwath Convention Center Study recommended that a convention facility of between 65,000 and 100,000 square feet of exhibit space, with additional smaller support spaces for meetings and banquets, would be appropriate for the City of Portland and would accommodate up to 90 percent of the national and regional conventions and tradeshows. It is projected that such a facility would generate considerable support for the Downtown's hotels, dining and entertainment businesses, arts and cultural organizations, and to a variety of businesses in the service sector of the Downtown economy.

The City appointed a Convention Center Planning and Building Committee as the steering organization for the project. Their tasks include evaluating potential sites, securing an option on appropriate sites, undertaking an economic impact analysis and a site/building specific-feasibility analysis, and working at the County and State levels on enabling legislation for a County option meals and lodging tax. This Committee should be encouraged and broadly supported as it moves forward with both state-wide lobbying efforts and with local programming, planning, and site selection studies. Program development should proceed keeping in mind the sensitive balance which must be reached between community-wide benefits and impacts.

A convention center in Portland's Downtown could have impact on property values, business activity, traffic, and pedestrian activity. Its site should provide direct benefit to the central portion of the Downtown, with particular benefit to the Congress Street area between Monument and Congress Squares. The convention center must provide support for and be supported by existing retail businesses, the growing Downtown

cultural community, and existing Downtown hotels and restaurants.

The new facility must be compatible with the existing building fabric Downtown – particularly in its scale, character, and design. The building program should explore integrating existing Downtown buildings -- on-site, adjacent to the site or supporting space within a reasonable walking distance. Such adaptive re-use of buildings may better integrate the scale of this structure into the historic fabric of the Downtown.

Important infrastructure questions -- including traffic circulation and parking -- must also be addressed in the center design.

TH 2 Centralized marketing program: Develop, as a component of a broader Downtown management program, an expanded and well-supported centralized marketing program which promotes the Downtown to visitors from and beyond the Greater Portland community. This program would expand on and integrate the current Convention and Visitors Bureau. One aspect of this program should include an adequately funded visitor information center.

TH 3 New hotel: In coordination with the development of expanded convention facilities, encourage the private sector to develop a new convention-quality hotel in the Downtown which includes from 275 to 400 rooms, located so as to integrate with existing retail and cultural areas, with other existing hotels, and with the new convention facility.

One finding of the 1983/84 Pannell, Kerr, Forster Convention Center Feasibility Study, confirmed by the Laventhol and Horwath report and by informal conversations with several major hoteliers, is the need for a convention-quality hotel Downtown of between 275 and 400 rooms close to the proposed convention center.

It is important to recognize the concerns and interests of the three existing Downtown hotels and the potential impacts a new hotel would have on their continued well-being. Working with existing Downtown hoteliers, the City should examine the impacts and opportunities for a new Downtown hotel and should establish an acceptable program and criteria for a Downtown hotel which meet the identified needs of the proposed

convention center, complement existing Downtown hotels, and integrate with and enhance the character and life of the Downtown. The City should then actively seek out hoteliers who are interested in meeting that program.

TH 4 Signage program: Develop a directional and informational signage program which provides a clear sense of orientation for the visitor while also informing visitor and resident alike of the diverse cultural and historic fabric which is Downtown Portland.

To really experience and enjoy Downtown, the visitor needs to move about confidently and to understand his or her surroundings. A new signage program would offer visitors:

- * clear signage for Downtown exits on major highways bringing people into city through each of the major Gateway approaches;
- * a sense of orientation and guidance in taking the most interesting or direct path to a destination; and
- * historical and cultural information – including markers highlighting significant building, persons and events.

TH 5 Visitor support: Develop a visitors program which includes Downtown promotional brochures and maps, identifiable comfort stations, and outdoor seating.

TH 6 Supporting activities: Encourage the development of arts, cultural, and entertainment facilities and activities in support of the tourism and hospitality sector of the economy. Enhance destination attractions which provide recreational, cultural, educational, and retail shopping choices within the Downtown area.

TH 7 City liaison: Establish the position of City Liaison to the tourism and hospitality industry.

The City staff position would:

- a) serve as liaison between the City and all public and private participants in the tourism and hospitality industry;
- b) establish an information clearinghouse on tourism-related activities and organizations;
- c) promote the role that tourism plays in the City's economic development;

- d) provide staff support for committees and programs affecting the tourism and hospitality community; and
- e) be the lead city staff person implementing the tourism policies of Downtown Vision.

TH 8 Waterfront: Enhance the waterfront as a destination attraction for residents, Downtown employees, and tourists alike, in coordination with on-going comprehensive waterfront planning.

The central Portland Harbor waterfront, adjacent to the Downtown, is a diverse and exciting area, attracting visitors and residents alike. Its appeal to pedestrians could be heightened in a number of ways, including:

- a) continued work on the waterfront walkway and shoreway access plan with added areas of public access and with appropriate directional and interpretive signage;
- b) implementation of full plans for public access and open space amenities for the Maine State Pier;
- c) continued improvements supporting visitor travel at the International Ferry Terminal;
- d) pursuing seasonal or permanent berthing for a significant marine vessel, such as the Nantucket Lightship;
- e) encouraging opportunities for private visitor-related businesses, including promoting commercial cruise ship visits and providing berthing for charter and other visitor-oriented commercial fishing, whale watching, and sight-seeing boats;

In addition, efforts to improve the Waterfront's appeal should examine the feasibility of:

- f) a waterfront visitor's center, which could include interpretive programs describing the history and continuing importance of the City's working waterfront;
- g) an aquarium on the Portland waterfront, perhaps in coordination with and catalyst for marine-related educational, institutional, and/or commercial facilities.

TH 9 Maintenance and amenity: Enhance the attractiveness of the Downtown through improved maintenance of existing and potential visitor attractions and through provision of additional visitor and pedestrian amenities.

See City Services (maintenance) and Open Space.

TH 10 Programming: Support expanded Downtown programming for events and activities throughout the year to extend the “tourist season” and to serve local residents and employees as well.

The City should:

- a) Support cooperative programming efforts to assure a balanced and exciting diversity of programs on a year-round basis.
- b) Support more frequent and more broadly distributed sidewalk events ranging from noon-time performances in the parks to impromptu sidewalk entertainment.
- c) Support an annual waterfront festival, such as the Port City Festival planned in coordination with the Port’s Blessing of the Fleet, which celebrates the City’s waterfront.
- d) Explore opportunities for highlighting Portland as a winter city. Continue to support New Year’s

Portland and a winter carnival or other celebration which could attract large numbers of people into the Downtown. Promote existing winter activities such as the Symphony, the Stage Company, and Mariners hockey games in tandem with the marketing of shopping, restaurants, and other Downtown offerings. Encourage the design of parks and open spaces that appeal year-round, and encourage the development of publicly-accessible interior open spaces.

- e) Program events such as street or neighborhood festivals, parades, craft shows, etc. to coordinate with significant conventions or conferences.

| Tourism and Hospitality Implementation Action Chart | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------|---------------------|
| Recommendation | Timing | | | How | | Implementing Body |
| | Adopt with Plan | Next 3 Years | 3 to 10 Years | Ordinance | Program | |
| TH1 Convention Center | | x | | | x | City/County |
| TH2 Centralized Marketing | | x | | | x | City/CVB/Entity |
| TH3 New Hotel | | | x | | x | Private |
| TH4 Signage Program | x | | | x | x | City |
| TH5 Visitor Support | | x | | x | x | City/Entity |
| TH6 Supporting Activities | x | x | | x | x | City |
| TH7 City Liaison | x | | | | x | City |
| TH8 Waterfront | | | | | | |
| a. Shoreway Access Improvements | | x | x | x | x | City/Private |
| b. Waterfront Park, Maine State Pier | | x | | | x | City |
| c. Visitor's Center | | x | | | x | City/CVB/Chamber |
| d. International Ferry Terminal | | x | | | x | City |
| e. Aquarium | | | x | | x | Private/City |
| f. Marine Vessel | | x | | | x | Private/City |
| g. Private Visitor-related Business | x | x | | | x | City/Private |
| TH9 Maintenance and Amenity | x | x | x | x | x | City/Entity/Private |
| TH10 Programming | | x | x | | x | City/Entity |

Figure ____: Tourism and Hospitality Facilities

ARTS, CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT

Downtown Portland today is Maine's center for arts and cultural activities and is unmatched in northern New England. The Downtown is well positioned to continue to draw from and capitalize on the existing arts and cultural community. The diversity of such institutions, events, and activities provides for a quality of life that reaches every segment of our community. While many cities are striving to create a cultural nucleus as a cornerstone to downtown redevelopment, Downtown Portland has been able to retain a quantity and quality of these amenities which provide a strong economic, cultural, and aesthetic foundation for the Downtown. Significantly, these amenities are distributed and integrated throughout the Downtown area and, in fact, into the City's neighborhoods as well. With increasing pressures for development within the Downtown and the increasing incentives for locating in non-Downtown locations, however, the City must assure that this cultural base remains intact and is nurtured.

Role of Arts and Culture in the Downtown

The arts and cultural community is extremely important to the life and well-being of the Downtown for the following principal reasons:

1. **Urban economic development:** Portland offers "big city" amenities and resources in a small, accessible city environment. Portland attracts people who no longer can endure the ultra-urban environments of Boston and New York, but want the cultural liveliness a city can offer. Portland also attracts the more rural population who want access to enrichment without the hassle of the larger cities. Other cities invest vast sums of money to develop a cultural and educational environment to strengthen the downtown; Portland already has such a thriving environment. These arts and cultural offerings of the City directly affect the desirability of Portland for office, retail, and institutional development. With the changing nature of information and communications systems, more businesses can afford to locate where their owners, managers, and employees want to live -- and they want to live in a lively and diverse cultural community.
2. **Industry:** The arts and cultural community must be viewed as an industry which provides a sizeable workforce, substantial administrative and produc-

tion budgets which translate directly into local spending and investment, and serves as a magnet for bringing in tens of thousands of visitors into the Downtown who would likely not otherwise come here and who support the broad range of eating, drinking and diverse other retail businesses. The components of this segment of the Downtown community include:

- a) Performing arts such as the Portland Symphony Orchestra, String Quartet, Stage Company, and Ram Island Dance Company;
- b) Visual arts such as the Portland Museum of Art;
- c) History and folklife such as the Maine Historical Society, the Longfellow House, Greater Portland Landmarks, the Victoria Society of Maine, and the Portland Fire Museum;
- d) Community culture, referring to those avocational activities or organizations that people participate in such as the Italian Heritage Festival, fraternal organizations such as the Masons, social clubs such as the Portland and Cumberland Clubs, and numerous Downtown religious institutions and churches.
- e) Major educational institutions such as the Portland Public Library, the Portland School of Art, Portland High School, and the University of Southern Maine;
- f) Recreational facilities and organizations including the Portland Boys and Girls Club, the YWCA and YMCA, and the Maine Mariners, and such facilities as the Cumberland County Civic Center, Portland Expo, and Portland High School;
- g) Arts-related businesses, including the variety of shops and galleries which deal directly with all types of artwork;
- h) Professional businesses that claim, as part of their professional training and day-to-day practice, an exposure and close association with the arts. This category would include the design profession (architects, landscape architects, interior designers), advertising and printing profession (photographers, typographers, graphic

designers), and the media (animators, film production, radio and television production); and

- i) Popular entertainment arts, including cinema such as the Nicholodean and the Movies on Exchange Street and music clubs such as the Cafe No.

The economic impact of this industry can begin to be understood by looking at seven of the largest cultural institutions, including the Portland Museum of Art, Public Library, School of Art, Symphony Orchestra, Stage Company, Concert Association, and Ram Island Dance Company. Collectively, these organizations represent an employment/volunteer base that ranks eighth regionally and is exceeded only by UNUM and Maine Medical Center within the City of Portland. Their collective projected budget for 1989 of \$9,818,657 translates to approximately \$18.1 million in direct and indirect local cultural spending. Collective projected 1989 attendance of 802,107 people at events and programs at these institutions translates into an even greater economic impact when projected patron expenditures at restaurants, galleries, and so forth are calculated.

In recognizing this sector of the Downtown community as an industry, it is important to keep in mind that these institutions and organizations experience the same problems and concerns as other Downtown businesses in terms of parking, vandalism, vagrancy, and maintenance.

3. Amenity: It is important to recognize the role of the cultural community in the Downtown's quality of life. Imagine Portland without the Museum of Art, Symphony, Library, School of Art, galleries and dance companies, enrichment programs that are offered in our public schools and broader community because of the presence of these institutions, and symbols of our City's history and culture such as the Longfellow statue, the Lobsterman, the fountain in Lincoln Park, Our Lady of Victory Monument in Monument Square. Would this be a City that attracts and retains residents, visitors, and businesses? Moreover, all of these institutions and programs are a comfortable walking distance; in essence, a cultural corridor.

The richness of the Downtown is embodied in these institutions and in the artifacts of their expression. The benefit realized by this segment of the community is felt broadly. Of the seven major institutions noted above, sixty (60) percent or more of the patrons reside in the Greater Portland area. The local population benefits directly and immediately from both the cultural amenities

provided by these various organizations and by the availability of shops, restaurants and businesses supported in large part by the cultural community.

4. Celebration: Embodied in the character and spirit of Downtown cultural organizations is the notion of Celebration which is an expression of Downtown's energy and creative opportunity. A variety of fun events for kids, visitors, shoppers, employees, will make Downtown exciting – a place where something always is happening, with many delightful surprises. The City, local business organizations and the cultural community together can cultivate this Downtown spirit.

Opportunities

The Downtown has a diverse and exciting foundation of arts and cultural organizations which should assume a priority position in the life of the Downtown. A number of opportunities present themselves:

1. Promotion and Leadership: Through coordinated promotion and assertive leadership, the visibility and central place of the various arts and cultural organizations and activities can be heightened.
2. Participation: The opportunity exists for the full community to participate in the diverse organizations and activities. This participation must be expanded beyond organization walls, bringing art and culture into our daily experience through public art.
3. Cultural Corridor: Because of the diversity and quantity of arts and cultural organizations, Downtown can assert itself as the cultural center of northern New England, with the cultural corridor of Congress Street from the City Hall Auditorium to the Portland School of Art. See Figure _____. This stretch of Congress Street is home to the Symphony at City Hall, Portland High School, First Parish Church, Portland Public Library, Longfellow House and Maine Historical Society, Casco Bay College, Center for the Performing Arts, Portland Museum of Art, State Theater, and Portland School of Art. Numerous fine jewelers and craft merchants are interspersed, and with quick access to the Civic Center and the Old Port Exchange with its diverse art and craft galleries, this area also has a substantial upper story community of related artist and designer studios.

4. **Schools and Churches:** The Downtown is home to Portland High School, Portland School of Art, Casco Bay College, and facilities of the University of Southern Maine. These schools, in combination with other public and private elementary, middle and secondary schools around the perimeter of the Downtown, offer a largely untapped resource of young people and faculty who can contribute to the life of Downtown. Their insight and energy in making the Downtown richer and more livable is encouraged. The Downtown also is home to a number of churches who provide community leadership including resources and assistance to many human service programs.

Figure ___: Downtown Cultural Corridor

ARTS AND CULTURE POLICIES

1. Promote and enhance the cultural community by retaining and encouraging arts and cultural organizations.
2. Support the cultural community by retaining and expanding performance and exhibition space, housing, studio space, and office/support space for artists, institutions, and organizations.
3. Promote the Downtown as the local, statewide and northern New England center for arts and culture.
4. Enhance and promote accessibility to diverse arts and cultural opportunities for all segments of the community.

Policies

AC 1 City liaison: Establish the position of City Cultural Liaison.

This City staff position would:

- a) serve as liaison between the City and all arts and cultural organizations;
- b) establish an information clearinghouse on local arts and culture activities and organizations;
- c) promote the role that the arts and cultural community plays in the economic development and cultural life of the City;
- d) staff committees and programs affecting the cultural community; and
- e) be the lead City staff person implementing the arts and culture policies of this Downtown Vision.

AC 2 Arts development program: Establish, as a component of a broader Downtown management program, a public/private Downtown Arts development program.

Downtown Portland has developed a diverse and impressive community of arts and cultural organizations, institutions, and individuals which plays an important role in the economic and cultural life of the City. To nurture that role, a Downtown Arts development program should be established within the Downtown management entity with representatives from the cul-

tural community, the City, and the development and financial community. Objectives of the program would be to evaluate and enhance the cultural and entertainment facilities Downtown and to evaluate the financial needs of this community.

AC 3 City Hall Auditorium: Provide full public and private support and move forward with proposed renovations to the City Hall Auditorium.

Constructed in 1912, City Hall Auditorium is one of the City's historic performance spaces. Home to the Portland Symphony Orchestra, the Portland Concert Association, and the Kotschmar Memorial Organ, this facility seats 2,400 patrons. For the past two years, the City has been involved in an architectural, acoustical, and feasibility analysis of the facility. The City has proposed renovations which include replacing obsolete seating, improving sightlines and acoustics, reducing seats to between 1,900 and 2,000; and upgrading support spaces.

The City Hall Auditorium plays a significant role in the cultural life of the City, serves as an anchor in promoting a Congress Street Cultural Corridor, and provides a strong foundation for public and private development in this part of Downtown.

AC 4 State Theater: Encourage private and/or non-profit sector support for efforts to re-establish the State Theater as one of the Downtown's premier cultural centerpieces. As a part of any feasibility studies focused on this facility, evaluate the need for and requirements of a mid-sized performing arts facility.

AC 5 Cultural Corridor: Promote the Downtown as the region's Cultural District, with particular attention to the Congress Street Cultural Corridor between the Portland School of Art and City Hall Auditorium. See Figure —

AC 6 Public Art: Promote the placement of public art throughout the Downtown through a mandatory Percent for Art program tied to publicly-funded and assisted development projects. Encourage private development to participate in this program as well.

AC 7 Artist Working Space: Develop programs to promote, encourage, and assist in the creation of affordable artist housing and studio space within and near the Downtown.

AC 8 Mayor's Award: Develop an annual Mayor's Award program promoting private contributions to public art and design.

AC 9 Financing: Develop creative financing mechanisms, such as tax increment financing, which can help support major new, expanded, or rehabilitated cultural facilities.

| Arts and Culture Implementation Action Chart | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------|-------------------|
| Recommendation | Timing | | | How | | Implementing Body |
| | Adopt with Plan | Next 3 Years | 3 to 10 Years | Ordinance | Program | |
| AC1 City Cultural Liaison | x | | | | x | City/Alliance |
| AC2 Downtown Arts Development Program | | x | | | x | City/Alliance |
| AC3 City Hall Auditorium Renovations | | x | | | x | City/Private |
| AC4 State Theater Rehabilitation | | x | x | | x | Private |
| AC5 Downtown Cultural District | x | | | x | x | City/Private |
| AC6 Public Art Program | x | | | x | x | City |
| AC7 Encourage Artist Housing/Studio | | x | | | x | City/Alliance |
| AC8 Develop Mayor's Award Program | x | | | | x | City |
| AC9 Develop Financing Techniques | x | | | | x | City/Private |

THE DOWNTOWN AS NEIGHBORHOOD

Downtown Portland has remained active and human-scaled in large part because of the people who live within and around it. The residential neighborhoods have historically provided the people, market support, and pedestrian activity to sustain Downtown through good and bad economic times. Many other downtowns across the country have languished because of a disappearing residential population and are going to great efforts to lure residents back to their Downtowns. Fortunately, Portland has retained substantial residential uses within and near its Downtown.

Downtown needs residential uses for many reasons. The presence of homes, and of residents who have a stake in the Downtown environment, means increased activity, particularly in hours beyond the normal workday. This population base supports retail and service businesses and cultural facilities and activities, and offers round-the-clock attention to happenings on the street.

City-wide statistics, however, show this historically stable base is eroding, with the Downtown population dropping over 50% since 1960 to fewer than 6,000 residents, and the East and West End populations also decreasing significantly since 1970. City urban renewal policies drove much of this decline, and, now, if the Downtown is to realize its potential as a thriving urban center, these trends must be reversed. The City must encourage residential uses within the Downtown and energetically support the surrounding neighborhoods.

History

During the late 1700's and early 1800's, Portland's intown neighborhoods began taking shape along Pleasant, Danforth, High and State Streets and at the foot of Munjoy Hill. Following the Great Fire of 1866, multi-family tenements were developed in Munjoy Hill, the Bayside area, and along Pleasant Street. By the mid 1880's, Munjoy Hill and the Western Promenade were being established, the area today known as Parkside was laid out, and infill development was occurring along Park Street. These areas grew up close to the Downtown and Waterfront where most people worked, did business, shopped and engaged in community activities. Throughout Portland's history, economic growth and the vitality and proximity of housing have had a symbiotic relationship. By the 1940's and 1950's, most housing construction consisted of off-peninsula single-family homes, with much peninsula housing viewed as substan-

standard and the attitude taking hold that high density and mixes of residential with non-residential uses were inappropriate.

Broad public policies and programs were driven by this perspective -- a zoning ordinance was developed, "blighted" neighborhoods were torn down for the construction of the Franklin and Spring Street Arterials, and housing was excluded from the Mainway Urban Renewal program in the central business district. At the same time, automobile use increased, and the traditional ties between the Downtown and surrounding residential neighborhoods began to break.

From 1960 to 1980, the overall Downtown residential population decreased by about 51 percent to 5,775 residents representing 3,424 households. This decrease is most apparent in the India Street and Bayside areas where decreases of nearly 70 and 68 percent, respectively, occurred. The Pleasant and Portland Street areas of the Downtown have decreased by slightly less than 43 percent, and the central business district by some 30 percent. Meanwhile, as population totals decreased, the size of households dropped dramatically as well from 2.45 to 1.6 persons, and the percentage of elderly and of low-income residents rose.

Downtown Housing Today

The Downtown and its relationship to surrounding neighborhoods reflects a uniquely urban and vital mix of social, cultural, ethnic and economic qualities. Neither ghetto nor homogeneous enclave, the Downtown is a melting pot of diverse populations coexisting in relative harmony. A variety of neighborhoods comprise the Downtown area and characterize this diversity. Downtown neighborhoods consist of loosely identifiable areas within the central business district such as Upper Congress Street, Congress Square, and Old Port, and perimeter areas including, India Street, Bayside, Pleasant Street, and Parkside, as shown in Figure _____. This population is exceeded only by the neighborhoods of the East End, West End, North Deering and Deering Center, but clearly does not present the cohesive and more uniform outward appearance of those predominantly residential neighborhoods. In some ways, portions of this population are invisible because residences are scattered throughout the Downtown area and are largely on upper stories of large multi-family or mixed-use buildings. From the street, it is often impossible to have an accurate sense of

how large this population is. Perhaps because of this dispersion and the difficulty of readily identifying a Downtown neighborhood, there is no collective voice or organized neighborhood group which is advocating for the residential needs and opportunities in the Downtown.

Central Business District: The central business district of the Downtown fans out on both sides of Congress Street including the area generally from Cumberland Avenue to Spring Street and then down to include the Old Port. A majority of the housing is multi-family, nearly a quarter of which is owner-occupied. The median age is 45, the highest of the Downtown neighborhoods, with nearly a third 65 years old or older. Many new upscale housing units have been developed in this area, primarily accommodating professionals who choose to live Downtown. Such housing as in the upper stories of Exchange Street, 99 Silver Street, and waterfront locations such as Chandler's Wharf, Portland Pier, and Baxter Place represent an urban lifestyle of choice for these households. These newcomers to the Downtown are joining long-time residents, including elderly residents and many residents who are disadvantaged and have few affordable housing choices.

Indicative of the Downtown's diversity, this area has one of the greatest concentrations of lodging rooms in the City. Tucked in and around the Downtown commercial area are a number of older established apartment buildings such as the Oakview on Oak Street and the Shepley and Ambassador on Casco Street. Buildings such as these provide an important Downtown housing resource that would be hard to replace if lost to redevelopment.

Perimeter Areas: The following three perimeter areas are important to the Downtown.

Over the last 25 years, the India Street neighborhood has undergone substantial change largely as a result of extensive demolition to accommodate the Franklin Street Arterial and in part because of redevelopment pressures from both the waterfront and the Downtown. Today, the area continues to be under substantial pressure to change. The India Street area is predominantly multi-family. Of the Downtown neighborhoods, the average household size and the median income are the highest, although 37 percent of the households are below the poverty level. India Street has a growing commercial character in what historically has been a predominantly residential neighborhood. While several large parcels of commercial and industrial uses are currently available for development proposals, there is fear that increasing commercial pressures will further encroach on the residential neighborhood. Recent city actions on rezonings in this area demonstrate an interest in upper story residential uses above ground floor commercial uses.

The Bayside neighborhood is also heavily multi-family, has a high proportion of renter-occupied units, and a population of 841. Bayside is another neighborhood in transition with a declining residential base, existing residential uses in substantial need of rehabilitation, encroaching surface and structured parking facilities, vacant or under-utilized property, and industrial activities which would be better located within the City's industrial parks rather than adjacent to the central business district.

The Pleasant Street/Gorham's Corner neighborhood is largely multi-family and renter-occupied. Commercial development extending from the Old Port Exchange and reaching across Spring Street from the Civic Center pose an encroachment threat to existing residential uses, and a burgeoning New Port at Gorham's Corner offers further commercial activity. The potential for residential displacement of moderately priced units is occurring at a time when building rehabilitation is underway for upscale residential uses in buildings with water views in this area.

Residential Opportunities

The Downtown will benefit from additional housing within and immediately surrounding its boundaries in a number of ways, through:

- 1.) increased pedestrian activity over extended hours of the day and night;
- 2.) increased activity providing a sense of vitality and personal safety and comfort typically felt on the street;
- 3.) more patronage and a more readily-accessible employee and volunteer base of Downtown residents for Downtown merchants, businesses and cultural institution; and
- 4.) support for Downtown transit alternatives which would benefit the wider community.

The existing residential building supply is diverse in size, cost and character of individual units and can meet the needs of broad segments of the population. In addition, the existing general building stock offers possibilities for adaptive re-use to create more housing throughout the Downtown area.

Several Downtown areas provide opportunity for more concentrated residential uses:

Upper stories: Residential uses in upper stories of buildings which do not easily accommodate commercial uses should be encouraged. Upper Congress Street, between Congress and Longfellow Squares, an important Downtown area of mixed retail, office, institutional, and residential uses can support additional residential uses with several large buildings already containing multiple residential units. The recent conversion of a former motel into student residences by the University of Southern Maine has reinforced the residential character of upper story uses throughout this area. The presence of the Portland School of Art and the nearby Deering Street historic residential neighborhood further encourage compatible residential uses.

Congress Street between Monument and Congress Squares is an area often talked about as having residential potential in the upper stories. The 1984 Upper Story Vacancy Study identified substantial vacant upper story floor space in this area, and suggested examining possible uses including residential to fill the space. Upper stories in the Old Port area reveal this mix of residential and commercial uses – providing lively street activity in the area. As a result of that study, the Congress Street Commercial Loan Program was established to assist in improving access to upper stories and in enhancing facades. But to date, no residential uses have been introduced into those spaces in part because sufficient demand has not existed. In many cases, spaces were not suitable to residential uses or life and safety codes were difficult to meet. However, upper story spaces located within the central business area between Congress and Monument Squares remain suitable for offices, artist studios and other commercial activities.

Cumberland Avenue corridor: Only a block north of Congress Street, Cumberland Avenue changes abruptly from the intensively commercial activities of the central business district to the overwhelmingly residential character of the upper Bayside area. The street itself serves as one of the most heavily-travelled east-west streets on the peninsula. In addition to both large (such as Franklin Tower and Back Bay Tower) and small single-family residential uses, Cumberland Avenue is also home to major facilities serving residential populations, including the Portland High School, the Portland Boys and Girls Club, and the nearby YMCA. Cumberland Avenue can be reinforced with additional infill housing and recreational open space to become a very desirable and high density residential street. Major redevelopment possibilities between the Franklin Street Arterial and Preble Street should be encouraged to realize this residential opportunity.

Perimeter areas: The three major growth areas around the Downtown's perimeter offer substantial and unique opportunities for strong residential components. Their development would help re-establish the continuous perimeter of residential neighborhoods historically supporting Downtown, and would provide diverse housing options for a range of income levels within a short walk of Downtown and the waterfront. While additional residential development on the waterside of Commercial Street is not desirable, upper-story development on the land side -- with attention to ground-floor retail uses could reinforce the residential character of Baxter Place and Harbor Landing.

The India Street area is characterized by a tenacious residential community maintaining itself in the face of commercial encroachment from two sides and the waning remains of an industrial past on the third side. The City has encouraged residential uses in this area, particularly on upper stories while permitting retail-oriented first floors. This offers a unique opportunity for intensive small-scale mixed uses. Other portions of this area have an industrial history which is uncertain today and which demands further examination. The Bayside area is a diverse area characterized by excellent automobile access, considerable vacant or underutilized land, and industrial uses ranging from moving and storage companies to scrap metal piles. Nearby lies a significant residential area which is struggling to maintain itself. This area has tremendous opportunity for major mixed-use office and retail development. A strong residential component would reinforce the existing residential fabric and support a broader attempt to re-establish a diverse and vibrant neighborhood.

Once industrial below Danforth Street and residential above Danforth to Spring, Gorham's Corner is now a diverse area of residential, retail and light industrial uses, serving as a transition between the Downtown business district and a substantial residential neighborhood. Commercial uses have evolved in some of the former industrial buildings and residences, and the area has been called the "New Port."

The area west of Center Street and north of Danforth Street offers substantial opportunity for residential redevelopment of in-fill lots which would help to solidify the residential character, and the large under-utilized properties below Danforth Street deserve further study through an area development plan.

DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD POLICIES

1. Improve the physical quality of Portland's Downtown neighborhoods and enhance their sense of community and vitality.
2. Retain and improve the existing Downtown housing supply and discourage the displacement of residential uses.
3. Promote a mix of housing options within the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods relative to cost, ownership, unit type and size.
4. Preserve and create quality affordable housing in the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, especially for residents with special needs and limited options.

Policies

DN 1 Surrounding neighborhoods: Continue to offer, expand and promote programs which maintain and upgrade housing in the neighborhoods within and immediately surrounding the Downtown.

The City currently has several programs directed toward housing rehabilitation in its neighborhoods. These programs, including City-wide grants, energy loans, City/bank loans, and federal rehab programs as they evolve are all directed toward low and moderate income neighborhoods with affordable housing opportunities as a primary objective.

The City should market these programs more actively and try to make them more flexible and attractive to investors in the Downtown's surrounding neighborhoods.

The City should also examine the need for additional programs to encourage improvements to residential areas for residents of broader income levels, with the aim to expand the income mix, and enhance both the historic and non-historic neighborhoods surrounding the Downtown. Such programs might include loan programs modelled after those identified above, revolving loan programs tied to a combination of public and private resources or services, and creative use of such funding mechanisms as tax-increment financing to provide enhanced infrastructure improvements, including sidewalks, street trees, and lighting.

The City should work closely with the University of Southern Maine, the Portland School of Art, and other institutions or organizations which may have substantial residential needs to encourage the balanced development of the neighborhoods in the Upper Congress Street, Parkside, Pleasant Street and Cumberland Avenue/Bayside areas.

DN 2 Upper stories: Continue support for improving access and re-use of upper stories, with more emphasis on upper-story residential uses between Congress and Longfellow Square. Expand this program to include residential properties within the Congress Street to Cumberland Avenue area.

The City should support a program in coordination with the Downtown management entity, Downtown business organizations, neighborhood representatives, and property owners to fully assess upper story space in the Congress to Longfellow Square area for re-use for residential tenants. The City should encourage efforts to promote residential uses in this area, including through the Downtown Portland Corporation which makes lower interest financing available to property owners and business owners for building renovation.

Existing building codes and zoning ordinances should be evaluated to assure adequate support for residential uses. Amendments should be proposed that increase housing opportunity without compromising basic health and safety concerns.

A program to actively market this upper-story space should also be developed.

DN 3 Relocation of tenants: Implement zoning and development ordinances which require the relocation of tenants displaced by new development, in locations within or adjacent to the Downtown. Where demolition is necessary to facilitate new growth consistent with the plan for the Downtown, relocation of existing residential tenants must be carefully addressed.

DN 4 Affordable housing: For residential development projects in excess of ten units, encourage a minimum of 10-20% percent affordable housing units.

To encourage a mix of housing types and resident income levels and affordable housing within residential rehabilitation and new construction, the City should develop programs which assist projects in excess of 10 units to provide a minimum of 10% of these units within an affordable range.

DN 5 Mixed-use perimeter areas: Initiate long-term development programs for the Bayside, Gorham's Corner and India Street perimeter areas with an objective of establishing and re-establishing residential components with a mix of income levels and types of housing within a context of mixed commercial and residential uses.

DN 6 Financing: Develop creative financing mechanisms, such as tax-increment financing or community loan pools from private banks as may be administered through the Downtown Portland Corporation, which can assist in infrastructure improvements to facilitate new housing construction Downtown and in perimeter areas.

DN 7 Neighborhood: Encourage Downtown neighborhood identity, with a recognized neighborhood organization promoting residential growth, livability and sense of community.

Surrounding neighborhoods both on and off the peninsula have formed organizations of residents and property owners who share similar concerns and commitments to their neighborhoods. Such organizations on the peninsula have been formed on Munjoy Hill, in Parkside, East Bayside, and in the West End. The central Downtown area, despite residents who share similar concerns about a wide range of neighborhood issues, are not represented by a collective voice. Within several of the larger residential buildings, tenant organizations have been formed which deal with building specific issues, yet these groups have not yet joined together to create a collective voice advocating support of Downtown living. Residential communities in the Upper Congress Street, Congress Square, Old Port, and Cumberland Avenue areas exist and should be supported as they advocate for the residential needs of that area.

| Recommendation | Timing | | | How | | Implementing Body |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------|-------------------|
| | Adopt with Plan | Next 3 Years | 3 to 10 Years | Ordinance | Program | |
| DN1 Surrounding Neighborhoods | x | x | x | | x | City/Private |
| DN2 Upper-story residential uses | x | x | | | x | City/Private |
| DN3 Relocation of tenants | x | | | x | x | City |
| DN4 Affordable Housing | x | x | | x | x | City/Private |
| DN5 Mixed-use peripheral areas | | x | | x | x | City/Private |
| DN6 Financing | | x | x | | x | City |
| DN7 Neighborhood | x | x | | | x | City/Private |

Figure ___: Residential Development and Opportunities

CITY SERVICES

Focused, coordinated and intensive management of the Downtown environment must be a top priority. Such strong and visible commitment is crucial to ensure that Downtown remains an attractive and desirable place to work, shop, live, and visit. The impressions visitors and residents have of a City are shaped by the quality and quantity of amenities and conveniences provided to the pedestrian and by the cleanliness of the streets, sidewalks and parks. Impressions of security and comfort, and the level of care and concern a community shows for its entire population, including youth, elderly, and the disadvantaged, are important as well.

The management of the Downtown environment must be understood as a combined public and private commitment. Maintenance, safety, and human needs issues must have the cooperative support of the City leadership, City administration, shop-keepers, office tenants, institutions, property owners, and by the average pedestrian on the street. The message must be conveyed that the Downtown community cares about the character and condition of its streets, sidewalks and open spaces, and that people are concerned about each other in their day-to-day encounters. Along with peer pressure, Downtown Vision recommends a quick-response program for dealing with such issues as vandalism, littering, accidental damage to property, untended maintenance and visible human need.

As one part of this effort, the community would provide a number of "Street Stewards," modelled after successful Park Ranger programs. This workforce would be assigned a variety of routine maintenance and house-keeping functions such as sweeping and litter control, snow and ice removal, and light plant care. Easily identifiable in their distinctive uniforms, these individuals would serve as a public resource, providing general information and directions to visitors, and as the community's "eyes on the street" filing requisition orders to repair vandalism, meet maintenance needs, and report criminal activity or emergency medical needs instantly via a portable communication device to the appropriate authority. These individuals would also provide a constant reminder of the importance of cleanliness of the street as they make their rounds through designated areas of the Downtown.

Maintenance

The importance of year-round maintenance throughout the Downtown business area cannot be over emphasized. This maintenance can be divided into specific areas of concern:

1. Street and sidewalk cleaning program, litter removal: Through a contractual agreement between the City, Intown Portland Exchange, and a private contractor, the Central Business district is provided litter control and cleaning services from April 15th to November 15th. These services include mechanically sweeping sidewalks and gutters daily (late at night), emptying trash receptacles, bus shelters, and kiosks, and removing litter from tree grates, planters, and streets. The program is funded through annual assessments made to property owners within the designated district. This provides a good base level of seasonal cleaning. The scope is thorough and with good oversight results in acceptable levels of cleanliness. Issues of winter season cleaning (in addition to snow removal) and boundary adjustments remain to be considered.
2. Snow removal: Snow and ice removal is extremely important throughout the Downtown in order to allow residents, shoppers, employees, and visitors to comfortably and safely move about. While City ordinances require that property owners keep their adjacent sidewalks clear of snow and ice, portions of the Downtown receive additional attention by City crews clearing and completely removing snow. Portions of the Downtown falling within the Maine Way area are annually assessed for these services. Boundary adjustments to this service area require considered action as well.
3. Maintenance of pedestrian amenities: Maintenance of such amenities as benches, sidewalks and curbing, and trash receptacles (repairs) are carried out by the City as part of a City-wide maintenance and repair program. These repairs are currently carried out on an as-needed basis. This past year a noticeable effort has been made to repair benches and replace trash receptacles, while previous efforts have corresponded more often with major but infrequent improvements. Sidewalks require on-going maintenance as brick replacement, grouting and sealing are normal tasks associated with regular sidewalk care.

4. **Maintenance of landscaping:** Maintenance of landscaping on public property throughout the Downtown is the responsibility of the City's Forestry Division. This Division cares for and maintains trees on City property, including street trees and trees within City parks. Until recently, street trees within the Downtown have received erratic maintenance resulting from demands elsewhere in the City. As problems Downtown arose, the City has responded. The Division has identified the Downtown as a high priority and is moving ahead with the development of an inventory of all Downtown street trees providing the basis for developing a regular program of maintenance and replacement.

Landscaping in the form of trees, shrubs, and flowers along with associated features such as planters, tree wells, and tree guards are important and attractive elements in the Downtown streetscape. In the central Downtown area alone, there are approximately 500 trees representing an important part of the Downtown character as well as a significant public and private investment.

Studies have suggested that untended and unmaintained trees in a typical urban environment can be expected to have a useful life of about five (5) years, while maintained trees in the same setting can approach 20 years of useful life of longer.

Public Safety

Employees, residents, and visitors to the Downtown must feel personally comfortable and safe as they go about their daily activities. Further, there must be confidence that one's car or other personal property will remain secure. Such a comfort level can be enhanced by more pedestrians on the street, a sense that people care about what is happening around them, and a police presence that is not oppressive but demonstrates that attention or assistance is always nearby.

One's perception of security is as important as the reality. Singular and isolated incidents of personal property damage or theft, or of personal safety problems, are quickly communicated by word of mouth, and can become a common perception of the character of an area. The community must constantly work to improve the image and reality of public safety throughout the Downtown. Downtown business organizations have recognized that issues of personal and property safety, directly impacting the image of the Downtown, are of highest priority in maintaining a livable and active Downtown.

The Police and Fire Departments have long histories of providing a high level and quality of protection for the City's Downtown. As the Downtown grows in scale, density of activity, and as the region and City become more urban, it will be important that police protection expand at a pace with changing demands and issues.

Routine police protection Downtown currently consists of four patrol cars on duty throughout the day with two additional cars in the evening, two mounted patrolmen between Longfellow Square and the Old Port during daylight, from one to six foot patrol officers varying at different times of the day, up to twelve additional officers focused on situations involving drugs, theft from autos, and vice in the evening hours, and a police cadet stationed seasonally in Congress Square.

Fire protection for Downtown is provided primarily through both Central Fire Station at Congress and Pearl Streets and Bramhall Station at Congress Street near Bramhall Street. Backup support and ladder truck assistance is provided as well from the Munjoy Hill Station on Congress Street.

Emergency medical protection is provided primarily by an ambulance located at Central Fire Station. City-wide response times have increased 25 percent over the past three years primarily because of traffic increases. MEDCU has also recognized increases in Downtown calls dealing with low-income and elderly individuals, as well as drug and transient-related calls. These special-needs calls require special training for most effective service.

Human Services

Downtown Portland is the regional center for social services, focusing on housing, homelessness, crisis management, health adolescent and citizen needs, family support, substance abuse, youth recreational activities, and employment. The majority of these services are privately operated, many publicly assisted, and supported by a dedicated and effective community-wide United Way network. These services attract individuals and families from the various neighborhoods around the City including many low and moderate income residents living within the Downtown or within a short walking distance of the Downtown. These services also attract individuals from other communities who recognize the City as a resource.

The population of the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods is comprised of a high percentage of people identified as low income elderly, and physically or mentally disadvantaged. The Downtown area contains the majority of inexpensive transient dwelling units such

as single-room occupancy units, and is where the overnight emergency shelters are located. The Downtown is recognized as a resource for those segments of our community that rely on these services. While many of these people do live within or near the Downtown, any who do not are able to utilize Downtown services because of available public transportation serving the Downtown.

One of the most frequently-cited concerns of merchants, employees and visitors of Downtown is the presence of panhandlers, "street people" and rowdy or abusive youth whose activities make the pedestrian experience uncomfortable. Their presence Downtown results in part from the services available to them and from their residing in nearby neighborhoods. The future desirability of the Downtown for all people will depend, in part, on the community's ability, to recognize the cause of these conditions and take responsibility to provide high quality health and human services to those in need. The Downtown is the urban center for the State, has been compassionate in its provision for those in need, and is recognized as a magnet as a result. It is important for the well-being of the Downtown and of everyone in the community that the financial and physical needs of this network of human service providers be supported.

These human service providers comprise a substantial employment sector within the Downtown economy, and includes both public and private organizations. In addition to services available through City Hall, the area of the Downtown below Cumberland Avenue, particularly between Chestnut and High Streets, has a particularly high concentration and diversity of human service providers.

CITY SERVICES POLICIES

Goals

1. Provide a high level of maintenance and pedestrian amenities which enhance the attractiveness and usability of the Downtown for all residents and visitors.
2. Deliver human services that protect the public health and welfare, and strive to maintain and enhance the quality of life for all residents and visitors.
3. Maintain a safe and secure environment Downtown for all of its users.

Policies

CS 1 Street Stewards: Establish a high public profile team of workers whose year-round responsibilities would keep Downtown looking good and functioning well, and whose work would supplement basic services by regular crews using heavy equipment. These individuals would perform a variety of functions, such as light cleaning, snow removal, light duty repairs of bench slats, lamp lenses etc., painting, landscape care and security. They would be courteous, friendly and helpful to the Downtown public. A part of their role can be to provide assistance (maps, directions, etc.) to visitors and passersby.

CS 2 Maintenance: Develop, as a component of a broader Downtown management program, an ongoing commitment to exceptional maintenance and upkeep of public and private streets, sidewalks, open space, and all facilities, fixtures, and elements. Develop a quick-response process for maintenance issues and a preventative program of public education promoting greater individual and personal responsibility for these issues.

- a.) Street and sidewalk cleaning program, litter removal:

The City should continue its street and sidewalk cleaning and litter control program throughout the Downtown area on a year-round basis. Figure ___ included within *Managing Downtown* presents the preliminary potential new management district boundaries. Periodic adjustments to the area boundaries should take place as development occurs around the edges of Downtown. Periodic side-

walk washing or flushing should be added to the cleanliness program, with purchase of necessary equipment. Winter street and sidewalk cleaning should be undertaken when conditions allow.

Business and property owners should be urged to maintain the tidiness of their property and dispose properly of litter generated by their businesses. This can be encouraged through educational programs offered and supported by the several Downtown business organizations and through the Downtown management entity.

In addition, city licensing policies for push-carts and take-out food businesses should be reviewed to assure that vendors and businesses bear some responsibility for litter control throughout the Downtown.

- b.) Snow removal program:

To encourage diverse year-round activities Downtown, the City should continue its snow removal program and examine expanding its coverage to include the area shown in Figure ___.

The City should also monitor new development and rehabilitation Downtown in order to expand the district as necessary in response to the snow removal program.

The costs, benefits and feasibility of heated sidewalk technology should be evaluated.

In all areas of the Downtown, the City should rigorously enforce current ordinances that require property owners to clear snow and ice.

Frequent salting of sidewalk areas has taken a severe toll on the Downtown's street trees. The City should examine alternatives such as urea and gypsum which are less harmful to plant materials than traditional salting for the melting of ice and snow. When an alternative is agreed upon, the City should encourage Downtown property owners and tenants to use that same material.

- c.) Maintenance of pedestrian amenities (sidewalks, lighting, benches, trash receptacles, bus shelters, kiosks, etc.):

Amenities Downtown should be repaired and maintained regularly. Most amenities Downtown have been part of major improvement programs such as Maine Way and the Congress Square UDAG. As they age, these amenities need upkeep, repair and replacement. Through a formal maintenance program, the public spaces around the City should be continually inspected, renovated and improved.

- d.) Maintenance of landscaping:

There is a need to develop an on-going and regular program of caring for and evaluating landscaping throughout the Downtown. Where landscaping is provided on private property, property owners should be responsible for regularly maintaining that landscaping in an attractive and healthy condition. Where landscaping is provided on public property, the City should have a regular program for similarly maintaining that landscaping.

Such regular maintenance should include regular pruning, fertilizing and watering of plant materials, maintenance of tree wells, tree guards and grates, and maintenance of planters.

In the provision of new landscaping, care must be given to the provision of adequate irrigation and drainage, with further concern over long-term maintenance and attractiveness. Wherever possible, planting should be clustered in large planted areas for more favorable conditions. Such planted areas should be raised somewhat where adjacent to pedestrian ways which require heavy salting during icy conditions.

- e.) Develop a quick-response process for maintenance problems and a preventative program of public education.

CS 3 Lighting: Develop a coordinated and comprehensive program to improve lighting Downtown.

Lighting Downtown is an important element in defining the character, comfort and safety of pedestrian movement. The City should do an analysis of pedestrian and roadway lighting throughout the Downtown, including illumination levels, photometrics and efficiency of luminaires, and the character, durability, and quality of fixtures and poles. Over time, the chosen thematic lighting fixtures will become part of a positive

Downtown image, assuming widespread use. As such, one or more high quality and attractive pedestrian lighting fixtures should be selected to enhance the evening experience of Downtown.

CS 4 Public Restrooms: In coordination with a Downtown Management program, establish and maintain publicly-accessible restrooms throughout the Downtown, focusing first on locations close to principal pedestrian routes.

Restrooms plainly accessible to the general public are needed throughout the Downtown. Existing ones located within public facilities such as City Hall, the Ferry Terminal, Public Safety building, and Courthouses should be made more available. Additional restrooms, at locations with supervision and security – such as in public garages and in potential new visitor centers or storefront police facilities, could supplement existing facilities.

CS 5 Safety: Enhance the perception and reality of safety Downtown in the following areas:

- a.) Police protection

The City should develop an expanded program of police protection Downtown, including:

1. more use of foot patrol officers and police cadets to establish a presence and authority and to develop closer ties with merchants, residents, and others in the Downtown. Continued use of police cadets in the Congress Square area and in other areas as problems arise has proven highly effective. An increased presence during late night hours is important to address rowdiness associated with Old Port bars and restaurants;
2. use of "Street Stewards" who move about Downtown providing visitor information and performing light maintenance tasks while also acting as "eyes on the street;"
3. plans to develop a storefront substation in the Congress Square area - its design should be compatible with area architecture and offer the opportunity for a variety of functions.
4. continuation of mounted patrols throughout the Downtown;

5. work with Downtown business organizations and residential groups to provide public education about protection from various aspects of criminal activity, establish Downtown crime-watch programs, and establish better communication between merchants, residents, and the City on these issues;
6. work with various human service providers to develop programs of "shared responsibility" for meeting both police enforcement and social service issues;
7. develop design guidelines which promote the construction of defensible, safe and lively environments; and
8. assess emergency call response times and adequacy of equipment and personnel in the face of future growth Downtown. In particular, examine current radio communications technology for each public safety division.

b.) Fire protection

The City should evaluate fire protection throughout the Downtown in the following areas:

1. assess emergency call response times and adequacy of equipment and personnel in the face of future growth;
2. evaluate existing life safety and building codes particularly for existing buildings and building rehabilitations. Enforce existing codes adequately. Examine alternative public and private programs which could encourage and assist owners of older buildings to improve their fire protection and fire safety status.

c.) Emergency medical protection

The City should evaluate the provision of emergency medical services (MEDCU) throughout the Downtown in the following areas:

1. assess emergency call response times and how adequate equipment and personnel are in the face of future growth;
2. with increased drug-related, transient, and elderly emergency service calls, assure that MEDCU personnel are adequately trained to deal with the special needs of these populations.

CS 6 Human Services: Identify social, health, and recreational needs in the Downtown and develop policies and programs to address them.

As a component of a broader Downtown management program, develop services to assure compassionate and quick response to human service issues and needs.

Develop an on-going program which analyzes the needs of residents, monitors the provision of public and private services Downtown, and addresses any inadequacies in the following areas:

- Emergency services for food, shelter, clothing
- Health services
- Counseling, information and referral services
- Drug and alcohol abuse and rehabilitation
- Senior citizen facilities and programs
- Recreation
- Child day care
- Employment services

Assess the long-term impact of continued Downtown growth and development on the availability and affordability of office and support space for these traditionally inadequately-financed providers of human services and develop a program directed toward the retention of such services.

It is also important to recognize the needs of the target populations for health, social and recreation services and facilities in making decisions regarding location. It is important to locate facilities and services where they are most accessible to their intended populations and in close proximity to related providers. At the same time, efforts should be made to prevent overwhelming a particular sub-area of the Downtown with an over-concentration of such services.

CS 7 Accessibility: Thoroughly evaluate how accessible Downtown is to the physically disadvantaged and develop a program to eliminate barriers throughout the Downtown.

If the Downtown is truly to be a place where everyone is able to work, shop, visit, and live, then physical barriers should be eliminated wherever they prohibit or limit access for those with physical disabilities and the elderly. The City must assure that new buildings and related street and sidewalk improvements are designed and constructed to be fully accessible per local, state, and federal codes.

The City should undertake a program to assess existing sidewalks, intersection and street conditions, public open space, and other public facilities and garages to identify and correct impediments or hazards impacting accessibility. Both public and private property owners should be encouraged to make their buildings fully accessible, in a functionally appropriate and aesthetically pleasing way.

City Services Implementation Action Chart

| Recommendation | Timing | | | How | | Implementing Body |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------|-------------------|
| | Adopt with Plan | Next 3 Years | 3 to 10 Years | Ordinance | Program | |
| CS1 Maintenance | x | x | | x | x | City/Private |
| CS2 Street Stewards | x | x | | | x | City/Private |
| CS3 Lighting | | x | x | x | x | City/Private |
| CS4 Public Restrooms | | x | | | x | City/Private |
| CS5 Safety | x | | | | x | City |
| CS6 Human Services | x | x | | | x | City |
| CS7 Accessibility | x | x | | x | x | City |

MOVING ABOUT

Introduction

Moving about Downtown Portland involves a multitude of transportation modes and destinations. Cars, pedestrians, trucks, buses, taxi cabs, bicycles and emergency vehicles daily interact and compete for road, parking and sidewalk space. Parking has commanded the most attention and study of these mobility factors. The City has invested heavily in parking facilities over the past twenty years, implementing in one form or another most of the recommendations for new facilities contained in a series of downtown parking studies.

The parking study which accompanies this Downtown Vision points to a variety of needs in the management of the City's parking supply, but does not reveal an overall deficit of parking at the present time. The trend in moving about Downtown over the past forty years has been to rely more and more on private automobiles for the community's workforce. Policy and infrastructure investments have reinforced this trend, through roadway improvements and construction of parking garages. Dispersed suburban development, both commercial and residential, and relative prosperity have made automobile usage affordable, led to declining transit use, and vastly increased traffic volumes.

Despite some traffic congestion and localized parking shortages, the Downtown handles its traffic relatively efficiently. Lessons from larger cities suggest that the current policy of almost exclusive reliance on private automobiles and on-site parking will lead either to unacceptable levels of congestion as the City grows, or reduced growth potential, or both. Air pollution and a lower quality of urban life also are foreseeable future consequences of our auto-dependent culture.

Downtown Vision cannot as a matter of policy reverse a forty year trend and the behavior and expectations of thousands of individuals by the stroke of a pen or mandate of regulation. It can, however, establish a policy of transition that encourages more sustainable and environmentally sound patterns of moving about.

In response to concern about parking Downtown, regulations in the 1980's demanded increasing amounts of on-site parking for every new development. New development will continue to be required to account for parking demand. Every reasonable means will be pursued, however, to manage that supply and demand to reduce the need for vast numbers of automobiles and parking spaces throughout the central business district.

Current traffic, transit and parking conditions are summarized below and a direction for the City's future is presented. The burgeoning suburbs may have no alternative but to pave vast acreages for parking, and some may suggest that the Downtown do the same to attract and retain business. On the contrary, however, Downtown Portland's superb pedestrian environment where you can leave your car conveniently out of the way somewhere and walk anywhere you need to go is a vitally important strength.

Traffic

The Portland peninsula is home to a mix of commercial, residential, institutional, and other uses which create a distinct traffic pattern. The number of entry/exit points are limited, and the crosstown roadway network distributes vehicles from entry points to destinations and back. The Downtown acts as a magnet attracting vehicles in the morning peak hour and releasing them at the end of the work day. Major arteries carry the vehicles in and out, with capacities determined largely by intersection congestion where they cross each other and side streets.

All traffic to or from the peninsula must pass through one of nine entry points, as shown in Figure _____. Five of these offer direct interchange with Interstate 295, including the Veteran's Bridge, Congress Street, Forest Avenue, Franklin Street Arterial, and Washington Avenue. St. John Street, Deering Avenue (from Brighton Avenue), and Preble Street (from Baxter Boulevard) are other entry points, along with the Million Dollar Bridge which connects the peninsula with South Portland and coastal points south.

Once traffic arrives on the peninsula, flow patterns across its length and width distribute vehicles relatively efficiently to and around the Downtown. Past policies for traffic improvement and infrastructure have emphasized high-volume capacity improvements such as the Franklin and Spring Street Arterials. More recent designs have recognized a competing need for a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment, notably the Maine Way traffic improvements along Congress Street, and the Commercial Street improvements near the Old Port. On Congress Street, land alignment, on-street parking, and signalization timing are designed to actually discourage through-traffic in favor of buses, taxis, pedestrians, and immediate destination traffic. Cumberland Avenue and Spring Street, on the other hand, are designed to quickly move traffic across town with a minimum delay.

Figure ___: Traffic Entry Points

The movement of traffic across the width of the peninsula relies heavily on several relatively high capacity arteries including the Franklin Street Arterial, the Preble-Elm Street one-way pair, and the High-State Street one-way pair. Other cross streets, such as Mellen, Forest, Pearl, India, Temple/Union, and Center Streets, provide numerous alternate paths across town and help to distribute traffic and relieve occasional back-ups. The character of the Downtown and Old Port is reflected in small blocks, narrow streets and intimate pedestrian scale. Despite some peak hour back-ups and occasional delivery truck blockage, the area copes reasonably well with vehicular circulation.

Recent improvements to the Downtown and peninsula traffic network include the Commercial Street rehabilitation project, the Tukey's Bridge redesign and a master control system for Downtown traffic signals. Replacement of the Million Dollar Bridge and extension of Commercial Street improvements are planned over the next decade. A study to resolve the worsening traffic problems in the outer Congress Street/Route 25 corridor to Gorham is underway. Plans to date for a new westerly corridor have incorporated a major I-295 interchange near the existing I-295/Congress Street interchange.

Downtown, no radical changes or major new traffic infrastructure is foreseen. Past projects such as I-295 and

the Franklin and Spring Street Arterials, are not likely to be extended or duplicated in new locations. Franklin Street is a connector from Commercial Street to I-295 and is therefore a major part of the City circulation pattern. Spring Street, on the other hand, while connecting between Temple/Union Streets and High Street with a high capacity link, does not provide the traffic service to offset its impact on the City fabric. Its width and design make it a significant break in the surrounding pattern of City blocks, and it is not a comfortable pedestrian street in the Arterial portion.

A number of improvements to the Downtown street network could enhance traffic flow if warranted by volume. See Figure ___ and the policy implementation list that follows. The policy demands as-needed improvements as well as managing development related to parking to avoid bottlenecks and changing flow patterns to maximize peak hour movements. None of the foreseeable improvements involves substantial right-of-way acquisition or dislocation of structures.

While short, medium, and long term priorities have been identified, case-by-case decisions will likely be made in development review traffic impact analysis. A consistent analysis and an ongoing traffic database require a computerized traffic impact assessment model for the entire peninsula. Such models are used to assess and

project system deficiencies and to simulate the impacts of system improvements and changes in volumes. A discrete transportation system such as the Portland peninsula can be modelled quite accurately. This model should be integrated within the development review process and any impact fee system that might be adopted in the future.

Transit

Mass transportation services have been provided Downtown since the late 1800's when the first trolley traveled Forest Avenue connecting Downtown to Riverton Park. Several years later trolley service expanded to Cumberland Foreside, Yarmouth, and Old Orchard Beach. Buses first appeared around 1935, operating on Ocean Avenue to Falmouth. During World War II, buses made many trips daily through Monument Square to the Bath Iron Works ship yard. Use of mass transit in Portland began to decline around the early 1950's as suburb urban auto ownership grew. In 1973, the Greater Portland Transit District (METRO) organized, providing bus service within and between Portland, Westbrook, South Portland, and Cape Elizabeth. Over the years Cape Elizabeth discontinued bus service and in 1983 South Portland dropped out of METRO and formed an independently-operated system (South Portland Bus Service, SPBS) as a City department with service links to the remaining METRO system. In addition to METRO and SPBS, transportation services are provided in greater Portland by Regional Transportation Program (RTP) and the Casco Bay Island Transit District (BITD).

For the past 15 years, METRO's ridership has had an overall decrease. Ridership in 1975 reached almost 3.75 million passengers. From 1976 to 1978, ridership declined as the price of gasoline declined, but again went up during the 1978-1981 gas price increases. Since 1985 however, gas prices have stabilized but ridership and bus miles have continued to decline. The number of registered automobiles in Cumberland County has increased from 128,356 in 1984 to 157,154 in 1988. Traffic counts entering the peninsula increased 33% over the period from 1977 (78,000 vehicle count) to 1988 (105,000 count).

Combined METRO and SPBS ridership has declined from about 3.6 million riders in 1981 to about 1.36 million in 1989. Declining ridership means declining fare box revenues and increased subsidization, which falls heavily upon the local property tax. In 1988, METRO receipts covered about 37% of its budget. The state provided only 2% assistance, the federal government 15%, and local subsidy almost 44%. This local share for Portland amounted to \$1.25 million in 1988 and \$1.35 million in 1989.

These statistics foretell a significant challenge if the community wishes to expand the role of mass transit as a major part of the transportation solution for Downtown Portland in the future. An effort is underway to evaluate the cost efficiencies that could be attained by combining administrative functions among the various service providers servicing greater Portland. While such consolidation might be difficult to implement, fiscal realities might force operators to become more creative or face further service cutbacks. Transit is heading toward a mode of last resort status for the transportation disadvantaged, with minimal service levels provided and subsidized to service a target market who have no other choice of transportation mode.

Such a role is not in the best interests of the Downtown, nor of the greater Portland region. If these negative trends can be turned around, the commuting workforce would have a realistic alternative to over-reliance on private autos. Downtown Vision calls for the increased role of the transit system along with small scale efforts to combine ridership into more efficient units such as carpools and vanpools. The success of this policy depends upon the attitudes and decisions of the operators, consumers, and government. If the resources and ridership do not materialize, the Downtown will have to continue to accommodate increases in traffic volumes. While the differences might not be dramatic, there will need to be some compromises in the urban character to move the traffic volumes, or increased vehicular congestion will result.

The goals, policies, and strategies that follow describe measures needed to accomplish the transit policy. The most effective techniques to promote transit usage involve firm restrictions on the provision of on-site private Downtown parking along with traffic management practices to promote and monitor private employer participation in mass transit. While such measures are potentially appropriate to Portland in the longer term, and certain aspects even in the short term, the most aggressive measures must await a public and private consensus and commitment to reduce reliance on private autos. The City must maintain a dynamic position to cultivate transit usage, and if the feasibility and willingness materializes, to step up efforts to increase the role of transit.

Figure ____: Potential Traffic Improvements

Parking

"The Perennial PARKING Problem . . . the parking problem and the Downtown problem are synonymous in many minds. On the other hand, while adequate parking may be everyone's objective, clearly it is not so easily defined."

This quotation, taken from the Portland Downtown Study of 1959 illustrates issues and concerns that have been with Downtown Portland for years. Issues of traffic and parking have been a focus of studies and concern periodically over the past thirty years. A chronology of studies dealing with parking and related issues reveals that perceptions and quantification of the problem, and potential remedies have evolved considerably over the past thirty years. Access (broadly defined) is now being considered within a comprehensive approach emphasizing better management rather than increase infrastructure.

A review of previous studies reveals that there were times in the evolution of Downtown where parking shortages did occur. During the period 1949-1951 the City experienced parking deficits in at least some portions of Downtown. The response - acquire and create surface lots. The period 1966-1974 saw the capacity of

surface parking exhausted and the emphasis changed from surface lots to new parking garages. Today, we are examining the proliferation of Downtown parking garages and challenging the impact of these structures both on the ability to conveniently access Downtown in the face of increasing traffic volumes and congestion, and on the character and quality of our pedestrian street environment.

As part of Downtown Vision, an outside consultant was called in to assess the parking problem and to develop a parking master plan. The public and business perception about parking that a near crisis condition exists prompted the City and a private sector business task force to commit matching funds to undertake this Parking Master Plan study. The purpose of the Parking Master Plan was to get the facts about existing conditions and recommend policies and actions to resolve any deficiencies uncovered.

The report entitled Parking Master Plan for Downtown Portland was completed in the fall of 1988 by Cambridge Systematics, Inc. with HMM Associates. The scope of work included a thorough investigation of existing parking supply and demand conditions including a complete database of all on and off-street spaces and a utilization survey, with a management evaluation of the parking stock, both on and off-street. Zoning provisions were

tested against actual surveys of parking demand for various uses, as well as compared with industry standards. Land-use forecasts which were generated for the Downtown Plan were used to forecast future parking needs. Finally, a preliminary assessment of traffic implications for future parking demand was made.

The full Parking Master Plan is incorporated by reference within this Downtown Plan. The following summary presents highlights of the Parking Master Plan findings and recommendations. The interested reader is referred to the source volume for the full analysis and report.

Excerpts and Key Findings of the Parking Master Plan for Downtown Portland

Supply Characteristics

The study area (per 1987 statistics) has a total of 17,501 parking spaces, 58 percent of which are in surface lots, 25 percent in garages, and 17 percent on the street. Downtown Portland has a very low proportion of parking spaces which are open to the general public. Seventy-five percent of all off-street spaces are reserved for employees, customers or tenants of specific buildings. In comparison, the proportion of private spaces in a selection of larger cities' downtowns ranges from 10% to 44%.

It is important to note that downtown Boston has placed a cap of 35,500 downtown parking spaces while Portland, Oregon has a cap of 40,855 parking spaces, both cities with substantially larger downtowns but only about twice the parking being permitted.

Usage Levels

The overall occupancy level of all parking spaces in the study area was found to be 69 percent at midday, the time when facilities generally reach their highest daily level of use. The occupancy levels for public turnover parking spaces are comparable to those found in larger cities, and indicate that the public parking supply is effectively full. In contrast, the midday occupancy for the private (reserved) off-street spaces was 60 percent.

The Old Port Exchange area has the greatest parking shortage and parking shortages are developing in the Cumberland County Courthouse, Monument Square, Congress Square, and Bayside areas. Off-street usage is about 20 percent higher in the summer than the fall and winter months.

Demand Patterns

Office space is the largest contributor to parking demand, accounting for 43 percent of the total. Retail space is the next largest demand generator, accounting for about one-fourth of the demand. Residential uses account for a sizable portion of the remaining parking demand - 20 percent.

The Monument Square and Old Port Exchange areas together generate 40 percent of the parking demand in the entire study area. These two zones, on the other hand, have only 27 percent of the supply. Other portions of the study area which generate more demand for parking than they supply are the Cumberland County Court area, Longfellow Square, Bayside and the State Street residential area.

Summary of Key Parking Problems in Downtown Portland

1. Critical shortages of public off street and on street parking in the Downtown core-particularly in the Old Port area. These shortages are most strongly felt by shoppers and visitors, who typically arrive after employees have taken the most desirable spaces. Shoppers and visitors are the most "vulnerable" users of the parking system-they are more likely than employees to choose not to come to the area if convenience and inexpensive parking is not available.
2. Increasing concern about decreasing availability of convenient, safe and affordable employee parking on the part of the business community. Waiting lists for monthly parking at the centrally located public garages are long and monthly parking costs at newer facilities have reached \$75.00 and above, due to the high costs of parking construction and the tight supply of general (unrestricted) monthly parking spaces in convenient locations. The concern about the worsening parking situation is a factor in the decisions of a number of large employers to relocate outside of Downtown Portland.
3. Inefficient utilization of private parking facilities which account for 75% of the total off street supply. Portland has an extremely high percentage of private reserved off-street parking and occupancy counts indicate that this portion of the supply has a much lower level of utilization (60%) than public, unrestricted parking (85%). Given the increasing density and scarcity of available land in Downtown Portland, and the high costs of new parking facility construction, making better use of existing parking should be a high priority.
4. Limited public sector ability to effectively manage parking as a coordinated system. Two factors which limit the City's ability to exercise a strong, coordinated parking management function are fragmentation of responsibilities for management of public on and off street parking facilities, and the relatively small number of parking spaces under public control.
5. Concern about the projected need for as many as 7100 additional spaces to support new development by 1995, which represents a 50 percent increase in the off-street parking supply. Given increasing traffic congestion and projected future (1995) critical conditions at several key intersections which provide access to Downtown Portland, there is a strong need to plan for future parking in conjunction with available street capacity. A strategy which relies on developers to meet future parking demand increases on site may run counter to efforts to keep traffic congestion in check by reducing the demand for parking and locating new facilities in peripheral locations.

General Recommendations - Parking Master Plan

Review of parking conditions and patterns in Downtown Portland indicates that there is indeed a shortage of certain types of parking in particular portions of the Downtown today which should be addressed in order to maintain and enhance a strong business climate. However, because of the high cost of new parking construction, the scarcity of Downtown land available for new facilities, and increasing levels of traffic congestion, the goal of providing a safe, convenient and inexpensive parking space for every downtown employee, shopper, and visitor does not appear to be realistically attainable. It is simply not economically feasible to provide every employee with a \$35 per month parking space within a block of their office.

Like many other growing downtown areas across the country, Portland has reached a point where some degree of parking inconvenience and/or expense must be faced as an unavoidable fact of life. This does not mean, however, that conditions should be allowed to deteriorate to a point where employees cannot park within five or six blocks of their workplace for less than \$90-\$100 per month, and shoppers and visitors are driven away to the malls.

This situation can be prevented by pursuing a balanced, strategic program combining strong and creative parking management to maximize the use of existing facilities, development of new peripheral parking facilities with shuttles, and moderate expansion of the Downtown parking supply as new development occurs.

The recommended parking strategy for Downtown Portland has short and long range components. In the short range, no new Downtown public parking garages are recommended other than those which have been approved or are in planning or approval stages at this time. This was based on the judgement that the level of public expenditure necessary to finance construction of a new Downtown public facility at the present time is not justifiable given that (1) average peak off-street parking utilization levels are only at the 65% level, (2) significant opportunities exist for making better use of existing facilities, and (3) 4000 spaces are likely to be constructed over the next five years as part of new developments, which are likely to cause shifts in parking locations which may alleviate some of the current shortages.

The findings of the parking surveys indicate that much can be done in the way of relatively low-cost management strategies to alleviate today's parking problems. The recommended strategy is therefore to try the low-cost parking strategies first, monitor their effectiveness, and then look to more costly supply expansion options if they are deemed necessary in the future. In the long term, City participation in the financing of new Downtown facilities may be desirable, and the City should be looking towards a greater role in parking development and management in order to address Downtown employee, shopper, and visitor parking needs.

As new growth occurs, parking needs are expected to increase substantially. The City needs to begin planning for these needs in the near future by putting a stronger parking management function in place, tapping new revenue sources for parking construction, pursuing new parking supply opportunities - particularly on the periphery of the Downtown area, and amending parking-related zoning regulations. In addition, the overall issue of access to the Downtown needs to be addressed, both in terms of traffic flow and enhancements to public transit services.

In the longer term, continued efforts should be made to strengthen the City's parking management function, move towards greater centralization of public parking facilities, expand long-term employee parking on the periphery of the Downtown, and increase availability of public parking for employees and visitors within the Downtown. City participation in the financing and construction of new Downtown public facilities (or expansion of existing facilities) should also be seriously considered as a long term strategy. In addition, actions should be taken to improve and expand public transportation and ridesharing programs in order to allow for continued Downtown growth without unacceptable traffic congestion which could severely impact the economic viability of the Downtown. Each of the longer term strategies presented here should be reevaluated and refined in 1992, based on experience gained with the short-term strategies, an examination of parking supply and use conditions, and a reassessment of likely development trends. The microcomputer parking analysis system developed as a part of this study should be used as a tool for tracking such conditions.

MOVING ABOUT POLICIES

Goals

1. Achieve convenient, safe, and uncongested access and circulation to and within the Downtown area to serve the commuting work force, residents, shoppers, visitors, and other users.
2. Maintain the Downtown as a comfortable and enjoyable walking environment.
3. Expand the role of mass transportation to gain popular acceptance by the commuting workforce, residents, and shoppers, vehicle maintaining service for transportation disadvantaged groups.
4. Provide sufficient parking availability and traffic capacity for existing and new development Downtown.

Policies

MA1 Transportation alternatives. Work in the long term to wean the Downtown workforce from over-reliance on on-site parking for single occupant commuter vehicles. Promote a pedestrian oriented Downtown center, with a higher proportion of commuters relying on transit, shuttle lots, van pools, ride share, walking, bicycling, and other alternatives to private automobile use in the heart of the City.

MA2 Parking management. Augment and manage the existing parking supply as detailed in the Parking Master Plan to meet the needs of employees, visitors and residents:

- a) Existing supply;

Maximize use and availability of existing supply through striping, metering and enforcement, pricing, and garage space allocation policies;

- b) Increase supply;

Increase supply selectively with careful attention to location, mix, and affordability factors, utilizing centrally-located garages as well as peripheral lots;

- c) Parking Department;

Coordinate parking management policies and practices through the City's Parking Department;

- d) Extended use of existing supply;

Promote shared use of parking facilities by employees, residents, and off-peak patrons of retail, entertainment, and cultural establishments. Require operators of municipally sponsored garages to maximize utilization, including late night hours, provide some 24 hour operation, and substantially reduce rates for overnight (limited hours) resident parking for garages that otherwise would be closed at night.

- e) Promotion;

Develop an on-going program of promotion directed toward reversing perception of parking shortage and asserting availability and convenience.

MA3 Traffic Impact Assessment Model (TIAM). The Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Study (PACTS) has commissioned a computerized model of the major arterials in the region. The model includes virtually all of the streets on the Portland peninsula. The peninsula portion of this model could form the basis of a traffic impact assessment model that would be capable of simulating changes to the traffic system. The effect of traffic volume increase on levels of service could be estimated and the effect on the network of system changes such as the ones identified below could be generated on such a model. The TIAM would be a valuable traffic engineering tool especially useful in evaluating development impacts and proposed solutions during the site plan review process.

MA4 Traffic. As the Downtown grows, make necessary infrastructure and traffic management improvements to accommodate vehicular peak traffic with a minimum of congestion. Emphasize management and modest infrastructure improvements rather than large scale roadway improvements that would substantially alter the face of the City. Recognize pedestrian safety and comfort in the heart of the Downtown as a top priority.

Prospective Improvements: The following range of improvements are possible to improve traffic through management. With progress in providing other alternatives for providing access to the Downtown, it may not be necessary or desirable to implement all of these. Prospective improvements include:

a) **Pedestrian movements;**

Improve pedestrian movements in and around Downtown including sidewalk improvements. Increase pedestrian emphasis by promoting awareness and enforcement of laws of pedestrian right of way at crosswalks coupled with enforcement of jaywalking laws. Develop a resolution to the pedestrian/vehicular conflict problems at Congress and Longfellow Squares.

b) **Intersection modifications including channelization, striping and parking control modifications at a number of intersections;**

c) **Limiting hours of truck delivery at certain locations;**

d) **Evaluate and implement where appropriate one-way traffic management changes including additional one-way pairs and one-way peak hour traffic programs.**

e) **Examine enhancements and solutions to specific traffic problem areas at St. John/Congress Streets and Park Avenue, Deering Avenue, and Veteran's Circle at Danforth/West Commercial/St. John's Street; and**

f) **Examine the need for increased capacity at the Franklin Street Arterial, including consideration of ramp and intersection improvements, channelization, and a possible traffic underpass.**

MA5 Mass transportation. Expand mass transportation services effectively and efficiently. Provide necessary infrastructure for comfortable and efficient downtown public transportation.

a) **Mass transit facilities;**

Construct mass transit facilities such as bus shelters and curbcuts for bus pullovers in conjunction with new private development projects and capital improvements projects.

b) **Pulse facilities;**

Improve the Metro Pulse facilities at Forest Avenue and Congress Street to enhance the ease and

comfort of bus patrons, including shelter from weather, schedule information, seating and security.

c) **Peripheral parking;**

Develop commuter parking lots on the periphery of the peninsula at locations such as Marginal Way at Preble Street; the Million Dollar Bridge, and Congress Street at I-295. Provide frequent, fast and comfortable shuttle vehicles to promote usage of peripheral lots.

MA6 Mass transportation - private. Increase private sector participation in the provision of mass transportation services.

a) **Management program;**

Establish a Transportation Management Program with a public and private commitment to resolve downtown traffic and parking problems, and encourage use of mass transit services. Promote techniques to increase use of alternative programs, such as encouraging large scale new development to provide a transportation manager in charge of carpool, vanpool and bus utilization programs.

MA7 Parking-new development. Require new development to account for its entire parking and traffic impacts, while providing flexibility and resources in the provision of parking to maintain the economic competitiveness of the Downtown relative to suburban locations.

a) **Parking ratios;**

Revise parking ratios as recommended in the Downtown Parking Master Plan;

b) **Public-turnover parking;**

In the heart of the downtown, require new garages to include a percentage of public-turnover spaces near the entrance.

c) **Incentives for alternatives to on-site parking;**

Provide for meaningful incentives to encourage alternatives to on-site private employee parking, including public parking, transit facilities, transit passes and peripheral parking lot utilization.

d) **Change of use requirements;**

For development consisting of change in use of existing buildings, eliminate the parking requirement, in recognition of the limitations of existing parcels and policies to promote adaptive reuse of buildings.

e) **Creative funding;**

Consider creative funding mechanisms such as tax-increment financing to assist in providing a mix of public and private parking associated with new large scale development.

f) **Capital investment in transportation**

Plan for capital investment in transportation infrastructure to accommodate the cumulative impact of development Downtown.

| Moving About Implementation Action Chart | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Recommendation | Timing | | | How | | Implementing Body |
| | Adopt with Plan | Next 3 Years | 3 to 10 Years | Ordinance | Program | |
| MA1 Transportation Alternatives | | x | x | | x | City/Private |
| MA2 Parking Management | x | x | | | x | City/Private |
| MA3 Traffic Improvement Assessment Model | x | x | | | x | City |
| MA4 Traffic | | x | x | | x | City |
| MA5 Mass Transportation | x | x | | x | x | City/Private |
| MA6 Mass Transportation - Private | x | | | x | x | City/Private |
| MA7 Parking - New Development | x | x | | x | x | City |

***OPEN SPACE AND PEDESTRIAN
ENVIRONMENT***

Introduction

Open space in Downtown Portland is made up of a variety of large and small publicly-accessible spaces, as well as the network of streets, sidewalks and through-block connections which tie these areas together and with other Downtown activities and neighborhoods. These open spaces form the gathering places where people downtown come together and interact. The livability of a city is mirrored in the character and quality of its parks and open spaces. Each of Portland's open spaces offers a respite from the buildings and urban hustle around it and a chance to step back and admire the streets, architecture, and general appearance of the City.

Where these public spaces promote human comfort and safety, accommodate and encourage diverse activities, and are located in relation to other activities and pedestrian circulation patterns, they should be full of people and exhibit the vitality and excitement of being Downtown. Downtown Portland is livable to the extent that these parks and pedestrian corridors are used and enjoyed.

Open spaces, including Lincoln Park, Monument, Longfellow and Boothby Squares, City Hall Plaza and nearby Deering Oaks Park contribute an historical context reflecting the growth of the City. These public open spaces reflect the tradition of open space planning which began with City Engineer William Goodwin, Mayor James Phinney Baxter, and the Olmsted Brothers at the turn of the century. More recent open spaces, including Canal Plaza and the plazas at Maine National Bank, Portland Square, and Maine Savings Bank have been incorporated within private development projects.

Connecting these various parks and plazas, the pedestrian sidewalk areas throughout the Downtown are important threads that tie this open space and building fabric together. Every sector of the Downtown economy demands a safe, pleasant and vibrant pedestrian environment to encourage retention and recruitment of businesses, employees, residents, customers and visitors.

Walkable City

The scale of the central business area and the relatively short distances between districts and activities Downtown allow at most a five-to-ten minute walk from any one point to another. Figure ___ provides a general sense of Downtown walking distances and average walking

time. This immediate accessibility encourages face to face interactions, browsing and lunchtime shopping, and the frequent use of parks, plazas and cultural amenities.

Figure ___: Walking Distances

A variety of studies from other cities suggest that the average person has a comfortable walking radius of between 900 and 1,300 feet - a range most of Downtown Portland's major employment and activity centers fall within. The Downtown Parking Study found that the average walking distance of a commuter parking in the Temple Street, Congress Square and Spring Street garages is a relatively short 1.6 blocks, or approximately 600 feet.

Distances which an individual is willing to walk, however, can increase or decrease in response to the pedestrian environment and are affected, too, by expectations and past-practices. Acceptable walking distances can be increased where sidewalks and parks are maintained, street-level activity both on the sidewalk and in the ground-floor uses of buildings are interesting and the character of building, paving, lighting and other elements are inviting. Acceptable walking distances decrease where significant gaps in pedestrian-level uses or a lack of activity or interest to the pedestrian occur, where sidewalks are poorly maintained or the street life uninviting.

In addition, varying weather conditions affect comfort and desirable distances on a day to day basis. The challenge facing the Downtown is to assure a street-level experience that is sufficiently inviting and interesting to

encourage walking and to overcome the automobile-oriented expectations of many who use the Downtown.

Existing Open Space

For a detailed inventory of existing Downtown open space, consult the Downtown Vision Technical Report #4: Urban Form, Open Space and Pedestrian Environment. The Downtown can be categorized into the following general types of public and private open space:

1. **Urban Park.** Urban parks are large, predominantly natural, park-like gathering places in or near the Downtown, such as Lincoln Park and Deering Oaks Park.
2. **Plaza.** Plazas provide an opening in the dense urban fabric, functioning as an outdoor room where people gather to enjoy the quality of the space and to watch other people. Examples Downtown include Monument and Congress Squares and City Hall Plaza.
3. **Pocket Park.** Pocket Parks are smaller open spaces generally framed by buildings and often the result of making creative use of space which remained following the demolition of another structure. Tommy's Park is such a pocket park.
4. **Entry Plaza.** Entry plazas are open spaces which generally emphasize entry circulation to a building, sometimes with or without landscaping or seating, such as the entrances to the Casco Bank Building and Maine Savings Plaza.
5. **Garden.** Gardens are intimate, sheltered landscaped areas intended for quiet recreational pursuits such as reading, chess, and brown-bagging by individuals and small groups. An example is the Longfellow House garden.
6. **Interior Atrium.** Interior Atriums can be dramatic interior open spaces which provide sheltered access to shopping and dining activity during inclement weather, as well as convenient through-block passage. Examples include the One City Center.
7. **Through-block Connection.** Through-block Connections facilitate the convenient movement of pedestrians by shortening walking distances between streets. These connections can be extremely valuable during winter months when the pedestrian wishes to minimize exposure to cold or inclement weather. These can be formal and provide access to multiple retail or service businesses, such as One Monument Way, or for the familiar Downtown pedestrian can be less formal and include passing through businesses which have entrances on two streets, such as Porteous, Carroll Reed or Maine National Bank. These connections are enlivened by the merchandise and daily activity of the respective businesses and, in the case of Maine National Bank, by rotating exhibits of local artists which have been placed along the connection.
8. **Linear Park.** Linear Parks are open spaces which tend to follow an extended linear path either linking specific areas or serving as access to a series of amenities. Examples include the shoreway access route being extended along the central waterfront providing immediate access to a variety of harbor views and activities, the potential connections along abandoned rail lines in both the India Street and Bay-side areas, and the Franklin Street Arterial which offers similar open space connection opportunities.
9. **Pedestrian Sidewalk Linkages.** Perhaps the most common of open spaces, sidewalks along public streets throughout the Downtown are vital open space connections linking other open spaces and various Downtown activities. These connections are also the critical lines of movement between the Downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods. Certain streets, because of the volume of pedestrian activity and because of adjacent cultural facilities, a concentration of businesses, other major open spaces, or important visitor attractions, have been identified as primary pedestrian linkages. Policies regarding ground-floor pedestrian uses, protection of view corridors affecting these linkages, and high levels of pedestrian amenity along these routes are put forward in this Downtown Vision. Examples of these linkages are Congress and Exchange Streets.

Open Space Network

In a discussion of Downtown open space, two different perspectives are useful in developing policies which promote and enhance livability. The first perspective is "the big picture" of open space throughout the Downtown. Downtown Vision calls for the recognition and enhancement of a Downtown Open Space Network of distinctive individual plazas and parks connected through a network and hierarchy of sidewalk linkages and through-block connections. See Figure _____. Characterizing these open spaces in a network asserts that these spaces work together in a variety of ways to establish the character of the Downtown.

Existing individual open spaces have been inventoried and general recommendations for their improvement are identified in the policy discussion which follows. Specific recommendations for the establishment of new

individual open spaces are discussed as well. The placement of these open spaces and the placement of any additional open spaces must be in coordination with this open space network to assure a supporting relationship and to avoid redundancy and detrimental competition for pedestrian activity.

Linkages are designated based on the locations of principal open spaces and on preferred pedestrian connections between open spaces and from open spaces to other pedestrian activity centers. Where possible, pedestrian linkages are coordinated with existing view corridors, historic building resources, and key commercial and institutional uses. This plan for Downtown open space includes and enhances existing linkages, and also identifies specific additional linkages that are now important or will become important as other elements of Downtown Vision evolve.

The second perspective focuses on the individual park or plaza or other open space and improvements which are needed to make that open space successful. Commitment to a high quality Downtown pedestrian environment must include standards and guidelines addressing what makes

a successful open space and what makes a desirable and vibrant sidewalk setting. Appropriate guidance increases the likelihood that funding for park improvements will result in a usable and enjoyable park.

Open space is a benefit to both the general public and private development. Downtown is fortunate to have several privately-developed but publicly-accessible open spaces which enrich the pedestrian experience. The city must encourage the retention and enhancement of these private open spaces. With intensifying periods of fiscal austerity at the State and local levels in municipalities across the country, the private sector has recognized the benefits of open space and stepped forward in many communities to provide and maintain public spaces.

Figure ____: Downtown Open Space Network

Programming of Open Space

Much of what we enjoy in Portland's open spaces we come upon by chance, such as an encounter with an old friend, the opening of flowers on a warm spring day, the changing colors of autumn foliage, or simply the opportunity to sit back and watch people passing by. A street musician, mime or juggler, and even a haranguing preacher can provide entertainment and diversity.

Many people are also attracted to the Downtown and to particular open spaces by street festivals, craft fairs, and organized musical performances. Programming of activities and events within these open spaces is an important element of the managing and enhancing the Downtown. The crowds drawn into the Downtown for such events as the Old Port Festival, New Years Portland, and other annual events provide opportunities to promote the area's livability and Downtown retail and cultural economy. Cooperative efforts by the City, Intown Portland Exchange, Maine Arts, Inc., and other sponsors have made these events both popular and successful, and have brought added vitality to Downtown open spaces.

Somewhat more controversial is the shared use of open space by private vendors and sidewalk cafes. Vendors complement the lunch crowds by selling food, newspapers, and in other cities, flowers. Sidewalk cafes provide a relaxed setting in which to be served and watch city life go on around us. The seasonal sidewalk cafe helps to attract people to parks and sidewalk areas and, with proper management, can provide a high level of oversight and supervision. Consideration should be given to licensing public space for this purpose. Suitable responsibility for cleanliness and litter patrol should be part of any vendor or cafe licensing scheme. Vendors, while arguably competing with businesses facing higher overhead costs, do provide service to the public and help attract crowds of people. Encouraging and accommodating people, after all, is the point of an open space system.

OPEN SPACE POLICIES

Goals

1. Establish as a top priority the quality and character of the Downtown pedestrian environment in discussions of management, funding, maintenance, and amenity.
2. Encourage excellence in urban design and sensitivity to pedestrian scale and interest throughout the Downtown in the construction, renovation, and rehabilitation of streets, pedestrian ways, and open space.
3. Develop an open space system throughout the Downtown which provides the highest quality parks, plazas, and pedestrian environment. Pedestrian improvements and amenities should utilize the best materials and be carefully-designed to provide a comfortable, durable, accessible, readily maintainable, and aesthetically-pleasing environment.
4. Buildings fronting an open space play a vital role in the success of that open space. They should provide pedestrian-oriented uses and be of high-quality materials, significant detail and interest to enhance the walking environment, be readily accessible from the open space through frequent building entrances and window openings, and should not detract significantly from solar access to open space during hours of heavy use.

Policies

OS1 Open space. Adopt a comprehensive open space component of Downtown Vision with the following policies:

- a.) Link large and small open spaces within the Downtown by designating and enhancing specific priority sidewalks and through-block connections;
 - i. Priority sidewalk linkages

Several key streets serve as the most important pedestrian routes in the Downtown. Figure ___ illustrates the Downtown Open Space Network, highlighting primary sidewalk linkages. Most prominent of these are Congress Street linking Longfellow Square to Lincoln

Park, Exchange and Moulton Streets linking City Hall and Congress Street to the waterfront, and Middle Street linking Monument Square and the Old Port. These routes are fully developed and historically have received the greatest attention in pedestrian improvements. Additional important pedestrian routes in the Downtown are Free Street linking Congress Square with Monument Square and the Old Port and Fore Street linking Gorhams Corner with the Old Port. Portions of each of these streets are important pedestrian connections today and are fronted by sites which, over the next several years, will introduce substantial new development and building rehabilitation making these streets even more important.

Crosswalks along these priority routes are critical to smooth and safe pedestrian movement, and should be carefully located, well-defined, and clearly suggest a pedestrian presence.

These pedestrian routes must be continually and thoroughly maintained and a wide program of improvements including additional lighting and landscaping, amenities such as benches and trash receptacles, and informational and directional signage should be developed to enhance these areas.

Where possible, pedestrians should be protected from inclement weather by awnings, canopies and internal connections between buildings and streets. Heating elements within sidewalks along priority pedestrian areas should be evaluated as potential long-term improvements.

Special amenities such as public art and pedestrian route markers are encouraged to add to the special character of these streets. These streets also are the primary areas identified for mandatory ground floor pedestrian-oriented uses with the objective of actively reinforcing the pedestrian environment.

ii. Other sidewalk linkages

While this plan encourages substantial improvements to primary pedestrian linkages, every pedestrian way Downtown should receive attention. The many streets and sidewalks that weave together the primary linkages and provide access to businesses, institutions and parking areas are part of everyone's normal daily movement through the Downtown. As described in City Services, maintenance in these areas cannot be overemphasized.

iii. Through-block connections

Existing property owners and developers are encouraged to maintain and create through-block connections. The Downtown Urban Design Guidelines provide guidance for the design and placement of these important pedestrian connections.

- b) Integrate this open space system with nearby open space elements such as the shoreway access system, Deering Oaks, and other open space resources, and provide convenient and attractive pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods;

With implementation of Downtown Vision and continued improvements in nearby neighborhoods, several additional streets become more important as pedestrian connections between growth areas, redevelopment areas and surrounding neighborhoods. Forest Avenue, High Street and State Street all offer excellent opportunities to tie the Downtown to Deering Oaks Park. Forest Avenue capitalizes on its role as a Gateway entrance into the Downtown and the presence of major cultural facilities (the Performing Arts Center and the YMCA). High Street links the cultural heart of the Downtown along an historic residential area to the Oaks. State Street links Longfellow Square and the Upper Congress Street area with the Oaks, again passing through an historic residential neighborhood.

Portland Street from Deering Oaks to Preble Street and Preble Street from Portland Street to Monument Square allow an important pedestrian connection between Deering Oaks and the Downtown along a route with a variety of redevelopment and rehabilitation opportunities. On a somewhat longer time frame, Chestnut Street connects redevelopment potential in the Bayside area, including a

possible major new open space, with the Downtown.

In an east-west direction, Spring Street, Middle Street, Congress Street and Cumberland Avenue provide important connections to the East and West End neighborhoods. Commercial Street provides connections for the Downtown in an east-west direction with the Shoreway Public Access system, including the improvements in place and envisioned along the central waterfront, as well as connecting along railroad rights-of-way to eventually complete a path around the perimeter of the peninsula.

Franklin Street should be improved to become an important pedestrian link and boulevard between Back Cove and the central waterfront(See policy OS 2(f.)).

- c) Examine the opportunity to develop new publicly-accessible open spaces within the Downtown and in perimeter areas around the Downtown;

In developing the Downtown Open Space Network, several locations have been identified which support the concept of open spaces along primary pedestrian routes and in areas that now have very little or no designated open space. The City should examine these potential sites, refine a development program based on the needs of the surrounding area and make plans for the acquisition, design and development of these open spaces.

i. High and Spring Street Park

Currently, a City-owned parking lot at the corner of High and Spring Streets offers an opportunity for re-use as a public park and playground along the Spring Street pedestrian linkage to the West End and at the edge of a residential neighborhood. This location also offers a corridor to the Harbor along High Street and the surrounding historic district. Demand for parking in this area should be evaluated and balanced with the opportunity for public open space.

ii. Shepley Park

In support of over 200 existing residences and potentially new residential units in the mid-block area bounded by Shepley, Brown and Oak Streets and Cumberland Avenue, a small public park would provide needed open space to this neighborhood. Coupled with other pe-

destrian improvements, such open space would enhance the character and quality of life in this residential area.

iii. Bayside Common

Open Space should be an integral part of an area development plan and program for the Bayside area. A framework of open space improvements including individual parks and pedestrian connections should be one of the tools used to establish a sense of organization for the entire area and provide amenity attracting private investment.

With a large parcel of railroad property sweeping through the Bayside area, an opportunity for a major public open space existings which could give focus to the entire area's redevelopment. Such an open space could separate automobile-related commercial development which might occur along Marginal Way, from intensive mixed-use office, retail and residential development on land moving up the slope toward Downtown. The City recognizes a need for publicly accessible open space capable of accomodating large crowds at events such as the Deering Oaks and Maine Arts Festivals. This area could provide open space specifically designed for City festivals in a centrally located and easily accessible area.

iv. India Street and Gorhams Corner

The perimeter areas of both India Street and Gorhams Corner currently have no designated public open space. Area Development Plans for these areas must outline opportunities for individual open spaces and pedestrian linkages.

- d) Develop a program to improve landscaping and pedestrian amenities throughout the Downtown, including enhancing accessible open spaces, providing street trees, planters, landscaping, ornamental lighting, public art (See Arts and Culture Policy 6) and street furnishings such as seating and trash receptacles;

In some areas, provision of benches or other amenities by private property owners which can be taken in at night could provide for active day-time use while avoiding potential evening or late-night problems. Care should be taken to assure that such amenities are consistent with an overall program for these items.

- e) Develop a comprehensive program of regular and emergency maintenance of pedestrian amenities (sidewalks, lighting, benches, trash receptacles, bus shelters, kiosks, etc.) and landscaping; (See City Services, Maintenance) and
- f) Encourage the enhancement of the open space system as a component of proposed new development.

Open space is an important element of the Downtown's infrastructure. New development within the Downtown should enhance the use and vitality of these areas. New buildings are encouraged through the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines and through mandatory ground floor pedestrian-oriented uses to add pedestrian activity to the individual parks and sidewalk connections. While added use enhances the safety and vitality of these areas, maintenance costs increase. The City should explore ways to encourage private development to contribute to the maintenance of the pedestrian environment, including a "Percent for Amenities" and an open space impact fee program.

OS2 Specific park improvement plans. Develop and implement specific park improvement plans for public and private parks throughout the Downtown.

Several prominent publicly-owned open spaces within the central Downtown area need substantial improvements. The following public open spaces need special attention:

- a) Congress Square Plaza - The original plan for Congress Square, which included an outdoor cafe and additional amenities, was only partially executed. Since its development, this plaza has suffered from a lack of carefully-programmed activity and maintenance. Congress Square Plaza demands a careful re-assessment of what role the Plaza can and does play in the life of Upper Congress Street, what design alterations are needed to attain that role, and what on-going maintenance and programming will assure the Plaza's continued use.
- b) Lincoln Park - One of the City's historic public parks, Lincoln Park was created following the Great Fire of 1866 as a precautionary fire break between the Downtown and Munjoy Hill. Through much of its history, the Park was the focal point of a strong residential neighborhood to the east and of a civic area dominated by public buildings to the west. As major roadway improvements along Franklin Street were implemented, and as a variety of other businesses and activities in the immediate

area changed or disappeared, activity, interest and attention to the Park disappeared as well. Over the last few years, renewed attention has been focused on the Park. The City has partially restored the centerpiece fountain, the Lincoln Square development proposal has made a commitment to make improvements within the Park, and Lincoln Park has been designated on the National Register of Historic Places.

Before further work is undertaken in Lincoln Park, the City should develop a comprehensive plan for the Park's historic rehabilitation, its adaptation for contemporary uses, and its on-going maintenance.

- c) Boothby Square - Located in the heart of the Old Port area, the City's Waterfront Historic District, Boothby Square was first developed at the turn of the century as a watering spot for horse drawn wagons hauling goods to Commercial Street. Over the years, this green space served as both a welcome public open space, and more recently as a dirt parking area used by patrons and service vehicles of the various surrounding businesses. Within the past year, the City has recovered the square as a public open space, resetting the curbing and installing posts around the perimeter to prohibit vehicular abuse, replanting grass throughout, and providing benches. The City is also pursuing reacquisition of the historic fountain which graced the park until 1946. A broader opportunity exists in this area of the Old Port to reconsider the entire Boothby Square area as bordered by the many buildings which front thereon. Before completing any additional long-term improvements in Boothby Square, the City should undertake a comprehensive plan for the rehabilitation of this area of the Old Port. Such a program might include sidewalk, pedestrian crosswalk and street improvements, street tree planting, ornamental lighting, benches and other pedestrian amenities.

View corridors leading to the waterfront and focused on the Custom House must also be considered. Any proposed facade improvements and new construction on each of two under-utilized lots will be reviewed under the Historic Preservation Ordinance standards.

- d) Post Office Park - Plans are currently underway to convert the existing parking lot at Exchange and Middle Streets to a public park. The City should move forward with completion and implementation of those plans.

- e) Tommy's Park - In coordination with improvements to plans for Post Office Park, the City has developed concept plans for the enhancement of Tommy's Park. Following completion of Post Office Park, the City should move forward with completion and implementation of those plans.

- f) Franklin Street Arterial - By its very form and presence, the Franklin Street Arterial is a major open space component of the Downtown. The Arterial serves as a major Gateway entrance to the Downtown and waterfront, and is an important view corridor. The City should undertake a comprehensive study of the opportunities presented by this linear area, considering the possibility for a richly-landscaped boulevard with pedestrian walkways and bicycle paths in addition to vehicular routes. This linear open space could tie the Downtown more closely to the waterfront, the pedestrian path along the Back Cove, and with multiple uses found along the east of the Arterial.

Several sites offer redevelopment opportunities directly abutting the Arterial. Their urban design plans should reinforce and contribute to those area's open space opportunities. While recognizing the importance of this route for moving traffic into and out of the Downtown, significant pedestrian needs including adequate and safe crosswalks must be met.

- g) Longfellow Square - The City, in cooperation with area property owners and tenants, should prepare a comprehensive plan for improvements to Longfellow Square. The plan should consider a reconfiguration of the plaza and pedestrian circulation patterns, landscaping and its impact on the visibility of the Longfellow monument, lighting and other pedestrian amenities.
- h) Waterfront - The City has developed plans for substantial improvements to the Maine State Pier (partially installed), a significant component of Portland's waterfront walkway system and an important destination relative to Downtown pedestrian amenities. Implementation of proposed open space amenities should move forward. The City should also consider expanding public access network along the waterfront for Downtown residents, employees, and visitors. Particularly extending connections between the Maine State Pier, the Carroll Block and incorporating the abandoned Canadian National Railway properties as open space between the Downtown and Eastern Promenade. Pedestrian connections to the west of the Million Dollar Bridge along West Commercial Street should also be strengthened, extending to

the Western Promenade Park, Harbor View Park, and the Fore River public access trail.

The City should examine developing a major public open space as part of redevelopment on the waterfront in the vicinity of Long Wharf immediately adjacent to the Downtown. Also, the City should look again at carefully integrating public access to the Fish Pier, which was originally part of the pier's plan. The entire waterfront and shoreway access system will soon have signage that will promote greater public use.

- i) **Private Open Space** - Private owners of publicly accessible open spaces must, with encouragement from the City, maintain and enhance those spaces. Substantial improvements have largely been completed for the Maine Savings Plaza including improved access into adjacent stores and the enhancement of a seating area through landscaping and improved visibility to the street. The Two Portland Square development has created a second plaza area adjacent to the Cross Street pedestrian and view corridor. The future success of this plaza depends upon a build-out of the overall Portland Square development that focuses pedestrian-oriented activities along these open space improvements, and avoids shadowing the space during critical-use periods.

The management and ownership of other Downtown open spaces, such as Canal Plaza, are encouraged to make a careful evaluation of these spaces, and implement improvements which will make these spaces more effective and desirable for active pedestrian use.

OS3 Winter Park Design. Too often parks and plazas are ignored or become an eyesore during winter months. Creative design features which result in parks and open spaces that are visually appealing during that half of the year are encouraged.

OS4 Urban design guidelines. Adopt Downtown Urban Design Guidelines which provide a frame of reference for the City and the development community when reviewing or bringing forward development proposals which are sensitive to the pedestrian and open space needs of the Downtown.

Guidelines are included as Addendum ___ and were developed as a part of this Downtown Vision and revised Downtown zoning. These Guidelines mandate the creation and maintenance of a high quality pedestrian environment. The Guidelines address the following:

1. Pedestrian relationship to buildings
2. Relationship to existing development
3. Sidewalk areas and open space
4. Landscaping, planters, and irrigation
5. Lighting
6. Hardscape, including paving and curbing
7. Pedestrian amenities including such details as benches, trash receptacles, bus shelters, kiosks, artwork and signage.

OS5 Open Space Programming. Develop, as a component of a broader Downtown management program, an expanded and well-supported programming effort for the Downtown's diverse open spaces which attract and entertain visitors from the Greater Portland community on a year-round basis.

OS6 Historic open spaces. Integrate the City's concern for preservation and creative re-use of our historic resources with comprehensive planning and management of the Downtown.

In order to encourage the creative, appropriate rehabilitation of historic open space resources, the following steps are recommended:

- as a component of the Historic Preservation Design Manual, develop a clear discussion of guidelines for the rehabilitation of historic open spaces and of site features within historic districts and related to landmark properties;
- examine existing open spaces throughout the Downtown in order to evaluate the appropriateness of designating additional sites for coverage under the historic preservation ordinance; and
- undertake a study examining the potential use of financial incentives at the local, state, and federal levels as well as mechanisms at the local level which could provide incentive or assistance in the rehabilitation of historically significant open spaces.

OS7 Cafes and Vendors. Sidewalk and plaza cafes and street vendors help to enliven public open spaces, attract the public, and provide a measure of security and control. These uses should be encouraged where appropriate, with proper licensing and regulation to ensure that location, maintenance, character, and hours of operation are appropriate.

Open Space Implementation Action Chart

| Recommendation | Timing | | | How | | Implementing Body |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------|-------------------|
| | Adopt with Plan | Next 3 Years | 3 to 10 Years | Ordinance | Program | |
| OS1 Open Space | | | | | | |
| a. Linkages within Downtown | x | x | | | x | City |
| b. Linkages to other areas | x | x | | | x | City |
| c. New open space | | x | x | x | x | City/Private |
| d. Provision of amenities | x | x | x | x | x | City/Private |
| e. Maintenance | x | | | | x | City/Private |
| f. Private contribution | x | | | x | x | Private |
| OS2 Specific Park Improvements | | | | | | |
| a. Congress Square Plaza | | x | | | x | City |
| b. Lincoln Park | | x | | | x | City |
| c. Boothby Square | | x | | | x | City/Private |
| d. Post Office Park | | x | | | x | City/Private |
| e. Tommy's Park | | x | | | x | City |
| f. Franklin Street Arterial | | x | x | | x | City/State |
| g. Longfellow Square | | x | | | x | City |
| h. Waterfront | | x | x | | x | City/Private |
| OS3 Winter Park Design | x | | | | x | City/Private |
| OS4 Urban Design Standards and Guidelines | | | | x | x | City |
| OS5 Open Space Programming | x | x | | | x | Manage/City |
| OS6 Historic Open Spaces | x | x | | x | x | City |
| OS7 Cafes and Vendors | | | | | | |

***DESIGN FRAMEWORK FOR DOWN-
TOWN***

Introduction

For the Downtown to evolve and respond to economic and social forces, its physical environment must undergo change and the community must balance that change with preserving and enhancing the existing qualities that make Downtown unique.

Downtown Portland is a walkable City, reflecting its 19th and early 20th century development. Its dense and historic fabric of mixed uses, small scaled, highly-textured and ornamented buildings, and public open spaces all combine to keep the Downtown alive with people.

The following section offers a design framework for encouraging economic growth and development compatible with the rich urban fabric of the Downtown.

Physical Evolution of the Downtown

1. **Natural Environment and Topography.** The Downtown has a unique natural setting - a strong sense of place created by Casco Bay and its islands, the tidal Back Cove, the Fore River, and the peninsula with its promenades and views to the White Mountains. The origins of this deepwater port city are always before us.

The topography of the Downtown peninsula is an important element of the natural setting. Munjoy Hill and the West End form the highest points on the peninsula, with Congress Street serving as their spine. The overall landform drops between these high points down from the high spine to the Harbor on one side and Back Cove on the other. The low point of the spine at Franklin Street Arterial, an area referred to as the "saddle area" because of its contours, is where development of the City began. Both the relatively steep topography and the Harbor's closeness have determined where development occurred. Today, these features - topography and water - play significant roles in the city's image, defining major gateways to the Downtown, creating views and providing a strong sense of place.

Location and design decisions for prominent buildings and structures must respect this natural context.

2. **Street Pattern.** The existing street pattern throughout the Downtown has been pushed and pulled by topographic changes, by need for access to the wa-

terfront, and by the shape of the peninsula. This pattern is influenced as well by building location and land use decisions made decades ago. Much travelled routes to the waterfront, which long ago were vital to commerce, continue to serve as both access and as view corridors and the diversity of block sizes and shapes has resulted in a variety of building massing and form. As a result, the pattern of streets and development Downtown today is characterized by an irregular grid, relatively small blocks, with various wedges and triangles formed by diagonal adjustments of fitting a rectangular grid onto an irregular land form. These triangles are or have potential to be prominent focal meeting points. Examples include Monument Square and One City Center, the intersections of Free and Congress Street, Portland and Preble Streets, and Gorham's Corner.

3. **Urban Form.** In addition to responding to the natural environment and historic street pattern, the urban form in the Downtown reflects the changing functional needs of the area's commerce, industry and institutions. Rising above the skyline and dominating many streetscape views are such structures as City Hall, the County and Federal Courthouses, Custom House, and several churches. In neighborhoods near Downtown, civic structures such as the Observatory, public schools, and other churches are visible and prominent from the Downtown. The design and placement of these structures convey the importance of civic and spiritual values to the community.

Portland shares with many other cities a relatively new urban landmark, the corporate office building. The development of the Fidelity Trust Company and the Chapman/Monument Square buildings in the 1910's and 1920's introduced over 10-story building construction. Additional new corporate office buildings of similar height did not appear in Portland again until the construction of the Casco Bank Building in the early 1970's. Through the 1970's and 1980's at least eight other large office buildings reshaped the City skyline and Downtown environment.

4. **Building Character.** Portland's Downtown building character is richly diverse in architectural style, reflecting an awareness of pedestrian scale and interest at the lower levels of every building. Traditional building composition incorporated a strong "tripartite" pattern of identifiable base, middle and top elements. The base portion of buildings tradition-

ally were comprised of storefronts with frequent building entrances and large window areas revealing the activities and merchandise held within. The upper stories of buildings have traditionally been more extensively ornamented, framing the repetitive form of the mid-section and providing a distinctive terminus to the vertical facade. Buildings of less than six or eight stories were generally conceived of as background buildings in the context of Downtown while taller buildings such as the Fidelity Building and key elements of buildings such as the church spires were developed with very distinctive form and/or with particularly strong architectural character serving as landmarks on the skyline.

Vertical scale of a building is expressed through the placement of cornices, special articulation of the base (particularly in the storefronts and at building entrances) and tops of buildings, by the rhythm of window openings from floor to floor, overall building height, and ornamentation visible from pedestrian levels. Buildings have traditionally demonstrated a horizontal rhythm marching along the street, with frequent building entrances, regular window and bay spacing, and facade proportions reflecting the incremental development of the Downtown's commercial streets. Prior to the 1960's office development, this pattern applied to both large buildings and small.

During the 1960's and 1970's, trends of contemporary architecture often neglected these patterns. More recently, architects have been rediscovering the value of tripartite building composition and pedestrian oriented features at the base of buildings as a technique to blend new with old, encourage greater pedestrian activity at street levels, and to distinguish between background buildings and landmarks on the City skyline. Articulating the building form helps to provide scale and proportion both from the pedestrian perspective and from distant views.

A Design Framework for Future Growth

1. Designing in the Public Realm: Creating a Rich Urban Fabric. Portland's built environment is so livable, for one, because of its fine grained development pattern - the small block structure created by a grid street network and the joining by party walls of a collection of separate buildings on individual lots. This building collage is bound by period architecture and common building scale. Rehabilitation and redevelopment must respect the existing built environment Downtown as well as recognize the differences between such areas as Congress Street, the Old

Port and Commercial Street to preserve Portland's sense of place and its livability.

Modern building technology and market conditions suggest land assembly to accommodate large scale buildings. Where buildings are proposed to cover entire blocks or combined blocks, special care and attention is needed to ensure that Portland's unique urban character as a fine grained City is preserved.

Design in the public realm amounts to what can be seen and experienced at pedestrian levels from public sidewalks and open spaces. New development must enrich the urban fabric, providing a positive character and texture at pedestrian levels. This focus includes the design of public streets and sidewalks, of amenities such as benches, lighting and other street furniture, and landscaping. (See Open Space, page). It also includes the design of those aspects of private development including building facades, building massing, and open space which impact the use and character of public space.

- a. Building character: The tripartite form is generally recommended, with special attention to the design and detailing of the base as experienced at close quarters by pedestrians. The relationship of base, middle and top give form and balance to the scale and proportion of buildings. It is the architect's art to ensure that the building makes a positive and comprehensible visual statement, balancing contrast with context to become an integral part of the urban fabric.
- b. Contextual relationship: Each element of the city, whether building or landscape, is seen beside its immediate neighbors and against the backdrop of the city as a whole. Compatibility is judged through comparisons which include scale, color, height, massing, use and materials. Any new development should reflect and reinforce in its design the recurring characteristics of its immediate context. When the immediate area has no particular character with which to relate, the new design should look to the larger context of the city. Portland is known for its buildings of red brick and light colored masonry, with individual windows punctuating their facades. Structures maintain consistent street faces and commonly have expressive roof lines.

Development which has occurred incrementally over time throughout the Downtown has generally been responsive to the character and use of existing buildings and open spaces. Innumerable buildings, while not remarkable as individ-

ual structures, combine to create a distinctive scale and character. Contrasting buildings, such as the Custom House, City Hall, and the Fidelity Building each were sited and designed with both the surrounding building environment and their individual place within this setting in mind. All new development and redevelopment Downtown should respond to the built environment in its relationship to the natural topography, to visual landmarks and important view corridors, to existing historic and non-historic buildings, and to existing and proposed open spaces.

- c. Orientation to the street: One of the failures of modern architecture mirrored in some contemporary buildings is the repudiation of the street. Design in defense against the city with fortress-like walls, little ornamentation and few openings except for vehicular or loading dock entries, do not communicate with surrounding streets.

Yet, the street is the public's link to a building. Every new building must be designed with recognition of its relationship to the public street. The building should face and greet the street, not turn its back. More than one front face may be required if several streets bound the property. The building should be punctuated by frequent inviting entry points, with one or more formal main entrances. A traditional pattern of bay spacing, ample windows and, where appropriate, storefronts are positive features. Careful detailing, ornamentation, and choice of materials at the base of the building (at least the first two floors) are critical to creating a positive pedestrian relationship to the building.

- d. Sidewalks, open spaces, and pedestrian amenities: New development and City investment should contribute to the quality of the urban streetscape. Brick sidewalks, or a combination of brick with granite or concrete sections are the standard for Downtown. Ornamental pedestrian lighting should be introduced throughout the downtown, with a thematic pedestrian lighting fixture to provide a sense of security, elegance, and vitality into the evening hours. A limited number of lighting standards should be established to provide continuity and identity for gradual distribution throughout the Downtown. Attractive street furniture including benches, bollards, planters and trash receptacles should be installed and maintained. The cylin-

drical trash receptacle has proved to be an acceptable standard, with the recently introduced "Ironsites" fixture a desirable option where resources permit. Street trees with guards and grates are a valuable contribution to the sidewalk environment. Plazas and pocket parks should be integrated within larger scale development. The location and design of such spaces should promote public use and tie into the Downtown open space network. Care should be taken not to disrupt significant streetwalls with plazas, where continuity of sidewalk, possibly widened, is more appropriate.

2. Urban form and the Skyline. Portland is the State's largest City and should be home to many of its largest corporations. As the City evolves, a bold urban statement can be made with larger-scaled buildings representing a strong business climate. While large buildings can stand out prominently, designs must respect the context of the surrounding built environment. Historic districts must be protected and civic landmarks not dwarfed or trivialized by an overwhelming scale of new development. Height, volume, form, massing, placement and quality of design are factors that will collectively establish urban form and shape the City's skyline and streetscape.

The Downtown Height Study prepared by consultants Carr, Lynch, Hack and Sandell provides a foundation for this discussion and presents key findings that are incorporated within this Downtown Vision.

- a. Height policy: The views of Portland's skyline are one of the unique characteristics of this City. The skyline has a great deal of importance to local residents as it is seen by most residents each day commuting from the surrounding neighborhoods and communities along the main approaches. Especially important are the views of the skyline from Portland Harbor, South Portland, Munjoy Hill, the Back Cove area, along Interstate 295 and from the International Jetport. The desire is to maintain a varied skyline, which reinforces the profile of the peninsula, with buildings stepping down in height as they move closer to the Harbor and Back Cove. The variation of building forms and heights that currently exists should continue to be encouraged. This includes slender elements which pierce the skyline as well as blockier background elements, providing a rhythm of light and building.

The dominance of the Congress Street spine should be reflected on the skyline, with concentration of the tallest buildings midblock between Congress and Cumberland to reinforce the historic form of the City and provide a sense of orientation for Downtown.

The pattern of building heights in Downtown Portland is complex and requires a distribution of height regulations to graduate height limits from the spine to the waterfront. The height policy directs and encourages the most intensive growth in the core of the Downtown where it can be best accommodated. Building height should be moderated in the historic area and near the waterfront where the impacts of large scale new development would be detrimental.

- b. **Street walls:** The street is public domain and serves more than simply a transportation function. The street is the counterpoint to the built environment, and can be perceived as rooms and corridors in the fabric of the City. Buildings give spatial definition to the street, and the street provides relief in the form of light, air, and a viewing vantage for the buildings.

Street faces which are relatively uniform in height, such as Exchange Street, provide the sense of a coherent district. While variety in overall building height is acceptable, abrupt changes - such as more than 50 percent differences in height - tend to make a district seem less cohesive. The variation of heights along upper Congress Street is within the acceptable variation.

While buildings in Downtown Portland vary considerably in height, the most cohesive areas tend to have one of three typical maximum street wall heights: 45-foot heights in the waterfront area; 65-foot heights in the Old Port area; and 85 to 90-foot heights along Congress Street. Exceptions, relatively infrequent, of course exist.

A continuous street wall gives emphasis and meaning to open plazas and squares. Street walls assist in reinforcing the unique and irregular street pattern, maintaining the density of the urban fabric, and through contrast, enhancing the significance of open spaces. The most obvious examples are Congress and Exchange Streets.

The height and proportions of buildings, together with their setbacks and step-backs, deter-

mine how massive they seem in relation to their surroundings. The critical dimension is the relationship to pedestrians on the street - whether they can relate to a structure or feel overwhelmed, and whether the street seems comfortable or canyon-like.

The most comfortable pedestrian street wall to street width ratio, as a rule of thumb, is between 1:1 and 1.5:1. Streets with such proportions tend to feel enclosed, but not canyon-like.

- c. **Tower massing:** Buildings taller than the current 125-foot height limit are more easily accommodated in the form of slender towers, stepped back from the street face, so as to cast fewer shadows on the street and be less visible to pedestrians passing by on major routes. Such a massing scheme also minimizes pedestrian winds by creating a shelf to deflect down-draft.

The interest of the skyline is enhanced when the massing of structures is not completely uniform and when the buildings have distinct profiles. Prominent and distinctive structures serve as landmarks in themselves and do not require logos or identification signs that can be read from a distance.

- d. **Civic area:** The area surrounding Lincoln Park is of special significance, housing many important public buildings. It is also a visually cohesive area, the result of limestone, marble, and other light-colored masonry structures, all of similar height and scale. Requiring a base street wall height of 50 feet will reflect the scale of the existing civic structures such as City Hall, the Federal Building, Fire Station, and Courthouse. In addition, lower portions of buildings should be light in color, preferably of materials similar to those which now exist in the area.

- e. **Visual landmarks:** Landmark buildings in Downtown Portland help give areas their identity and are important for orientation. They are important symbols of the City and its institutions. The most recognizable landmarks are:

- Portland City Hall
- Munjoy Hill Observatory
- Custom House
- First Parish Church
- Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Presently the distinctive profile of each of these landmarks can be seen against the sky from important streets and squares. This quality contributes to their visual prominence. Typically, they are surrounded by structures of similar or lower height, so they seem an integral part of the areas in which they are located. When landmark buildings are dwarfed by structures of considerably larger scale, they appear as remnants of some bygone era. Thus, two policies are important for landmarks: that they be read against the sky from important streets, and that they be surrounded by structures of similar scale.

The heights of neighboring buildings also should be limited to avoid blocking the view of landmarks against the sky. While a restrictive policy, it should be carefully applied to selected views. As an example, the views of City Hall tower when approaching along Park Avenue/Portland Street, Congress Street and Exchange Street should be preserved where possible for orientation. Frequent (though not continuous) views of City Hall from I-295 and Baxter Boulevard, too, give people a sense of orientation to the Downtown and of the central importance of this public building. These views have special meaning in the City, and it may be necessary on individual sites to limit building heights, set development back, or step back street walls an adequate distance to ensure that landmark structures can be seen.

The spirit of this policy could be extended to a variety of other important buildings in the peninsula area. Elements such as church spires, towers on schools and fire stations, and unique architectural roof features should be respected and viewed against the sky. In most situations, the area height limits will provide for this. However, views towards landmarks need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

- f. View corridors: View corridors play a large part in determining the City's visual character by revealing destinations and assisting pedestrians and motorists to orient themselves to the layout of streets and to the Downtown. Distant views provide visual and psychological connections to the world surrounding the City. Views may also make connections to the past by juxtaposing the old and the new.

Establishing view corridors preserves significant vistas within the downtown area. Figure ___ illustrates the critical long distance view

corridors in the Downtown area of Portland. Many shorter views, especially from Commercial Street to the Harbor, have been documented in the Portland Waterfront: Public Access Design Project and should, where possible, be maintained.

Portland has important links to the water. It was founded as a port city and maintains an active harbor. View corridors to the harbor help recall the City's history, and re-assert the contemporary presence of the harbor. Views can be to the opposite shoreline, middle of the water basin, or to the near shore, but in each case they offer a glimpse of the water and occasionally of passing boats. Views to the water in the Back Cove area are equally important to the visual structure of Downtown. When looking at the Cove one realizes the geography of the peninsula. View corridors frequently extend across private property and, in these areas, the heights of structures should be limited where possible so as to avoid blocking the object of attention.

- g. Key Open Spaces: Portland is fortunate to have a number of high quality public open spaces, located throughout the peninsula. These spaces provide relief from the congestion of buildings, and create places to gather, stroll, rest, eat and be entertained. The most important public and private open spaces on the peninsula are indicated on Figure ___.

The success of these spaces depends greatly on the amount of direct sunlight that reaches them, since Portland outdoors during certain seasons can be uncomfortably cold in the shade. The heights of adjacent development should be regulated so that key open spaces receive sunlight during the critical hours when each is actively used. By assuring sunlight, the period of use of the spaces can be extended several weeks in Spring and Fall, even during warm days in the Winter.

For most spaces in the Downtown, the critical period of use is usually the lunch hour and several hours before and after (approximately 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.). They are often active at other times, but during early mornings and late afternoons in Winter, virtually the entire Downtown is in shadow. Hence, there is little merit in attempting to regulate shadows for these hours.

- h. Gateways: The 1983 Gateways to Portland report outlined the importance and opportunities

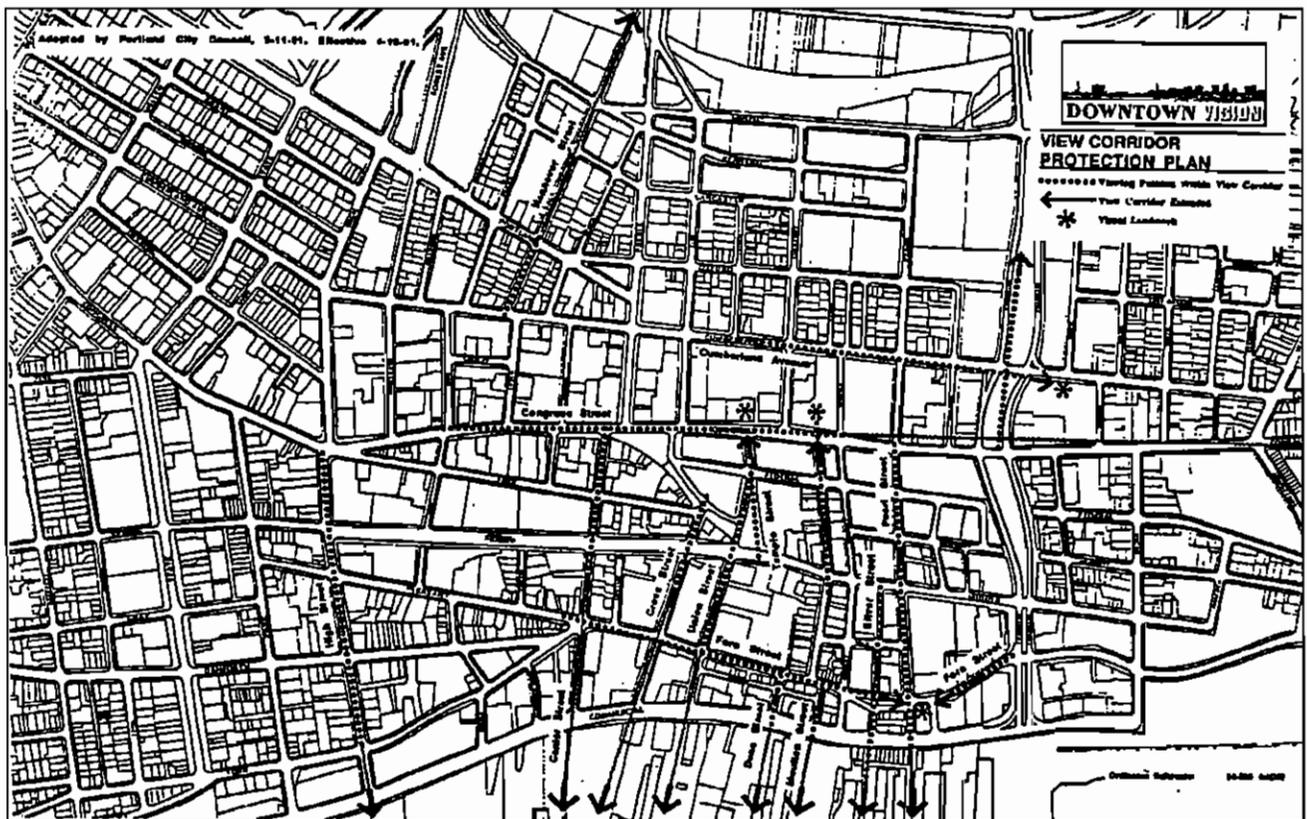


Figure __: View Corridor Protection Map

presented by many entrances to Downtown in creating first impressions, providing a clear orientation, and giving identity to frequently-traveled routes by which residents and commuters observe and relate to the City. While each entry is unique, opportunities exist to enhance them by preserving view corridors and skyline vista, improving the scale and character of buildings along those routes, and encouraging public and private development and infrastructure work which reinforce the qualities of each Gateway. See Figure __ for a map depicting Downtown Gateways.

3. **Preserving the Past:** One of Downtown Portland's most valuable resources is the extensive historic architecture which has been assembled since the mid-19th century. The City is fortunate to have retained so much of a physical fabric which provides a much-admired character, style, tradition, and history to the Downtown. These older buildings, combined with historic parks and monuments, are a cultural resource for the residents of the City, and are invaluable in support of economic development for the entire community. With proper stewardship including maintenance, rehabilitation and restoration of our historic structures and parks, those resources will continue to enrich the City's sense of place in

history. Historic resources have been shown to be major contributors to economic growth in the community in terms of continuing and increasing property tax revenues, renewing and increasing activity Downtown, and as a valuable draw for tourism.

Over the last 20 years, much historic restoration and rehabilitation has occurred throughout the Downtown. In support of further rehabilitation, and in order to prevent the loss of important resources while the City encourages new growth in the Downtown, an important balance must be established. The City has recently adopted an historic preservation ordinance which provides for the designation of historic structures, districts, and landscapes, and provides for review of new construction, alterations and demolitions affecting those resources. Several districts and properties are located within the Downtown and are covered by the protections and standards of the ordinance. The Waterfront (Old Port) Historic District lies entirely within the Downtown. The How Houses, a cluster of three Federal style early 19th century residences, located between Danforth and Pleasant Streets, also lie within the Downtown area. Portions of the Spring Street and Deering Street Historic Districts lie within or directly abut the Downtown, and a number of individual struc-

Figure ___: Gateway Entrances to Downtown

tures, including such historic landmarks as Portland City Hall, Portland High School, First Parish Church, Customs House, Longfellow House, and the Clapp and J.B. Brown blocks all sit within and add to the character of the Downtown. Lincoln Park, within the Downtown area, and Deering Oaks, lying at the perimeter of the Downtown, are included on the National Register as historic sites and are local historic districts with protections and standards under the local ordinance. See Figure ___ for a map depicting the location of Downtown historic resources.

Figure ___: Downtown Historic Resources

DESIGN FRAMEWORKS POLICIES

Goals

1. Encourage excellence in urban design and a sensitivity to pedestrian scale and interest throughout the Downtown in the construction, renovation, and rehabilitation of buildings, streets, pedestrian ways and open space.
 2. Preserve and promote the positive qualities and attributes which comprise the Downtown's unique identity, historic fabric, and sense of place through the re-use of existing structures and the development of new construction respectful of the built and natural surroundings.
 3. Develop an open space system throughout the Downtown which provides the highest quality parks, plazas, and pedestrian environment. Pedestrian improvements and amenities should utilize the best materials and be carefully designed to provide a comfortable, durable, accessible and aesthetically pleasing environment. Buildings fronting on pedestrian open space should be of high quality materials, of significant detail and interest to enhance the walking environment, and readily accessible from the pedestrian way.
- c. Old Port - 65 feet. To maintain the current character of this historic district.
 - d. Transition - 85 and 125 feet. To provide for gradual reduction of heights from the Downtown core to the water's edge, 85 feet between Cumberland Avenue and Lancaster Street; and 125 feet below Spring Street stepping down to 85 feet along the northerly side of Fore and Pleasant Streets.
 - e. Civic Area - 65 feet. To preserve the character and scale of this historic area.
 - f. Perimeter Areas - Gorham's Corner and India Street. Heights in these areas should be established at 65 feet. Changes in the West Bayside area and more specific revisions in both the Gorham's Corner and India Street areas (outside of the B-3 zoning district) should be developed pursuant to a comprehensive redevelopment use and design plan for each area to be undertaken by the City.
 - g. Waterfront - 45 feet. To preserve the character of this area and avoid excessive heights blocking views to the water.

Policies

DF 1 Height limits. The following maximum height limits support additional Downtown development while respecting the scale and character of existing buildings. Figure ___ depicts these heights.

- a. High Spine - 210 feet plus 40 feet architectural cap. To reinforce the spine of development along Congress Street by making it advantageous for new large projects to be located nearby. This height zone is carefully located in midblock areas from Congress to Cumberland (between Elm and High, Franklin and Pearl), to avoid too severe a change in scale along the two streets.
 - b. Downtown Core - 150 feet plus 40 feet architectural cap. To provide incentive for compact growth in the area bounded by Cumberland, High, Spring, and Franklin Streets, excluding the Old Port and Civic areas.
- DF2 Street Walls.** The height of the street wall is in many ways the most critical dimension affecting the scale of the City and the experience of pedestrians and motorists. One's awareness of the environment diminishes above a height of 40 to 50 feet, and the sense of scale within that street wall height is critical. Figure ___ depicts the maximum street wall heights and minimum setbacks described as follows.
- a. Downtown Core - 90 feet height with a 15 foot setback above that height. For streets in excess of 60 feet in width, such as Congress Street, that setback should be increased to 30 feet.
 - b. Old Port and Transition - 65 feet, with no setback required for buildings less than 90 feet in height. Above 90 feet, provisions of (a.) above shall apply.
 - c. Civic Area - Properties fronting on the Civic Area shall be constructed to a height of 50 feet at the street wall, with any additional height setback at least 15 feet from the street.

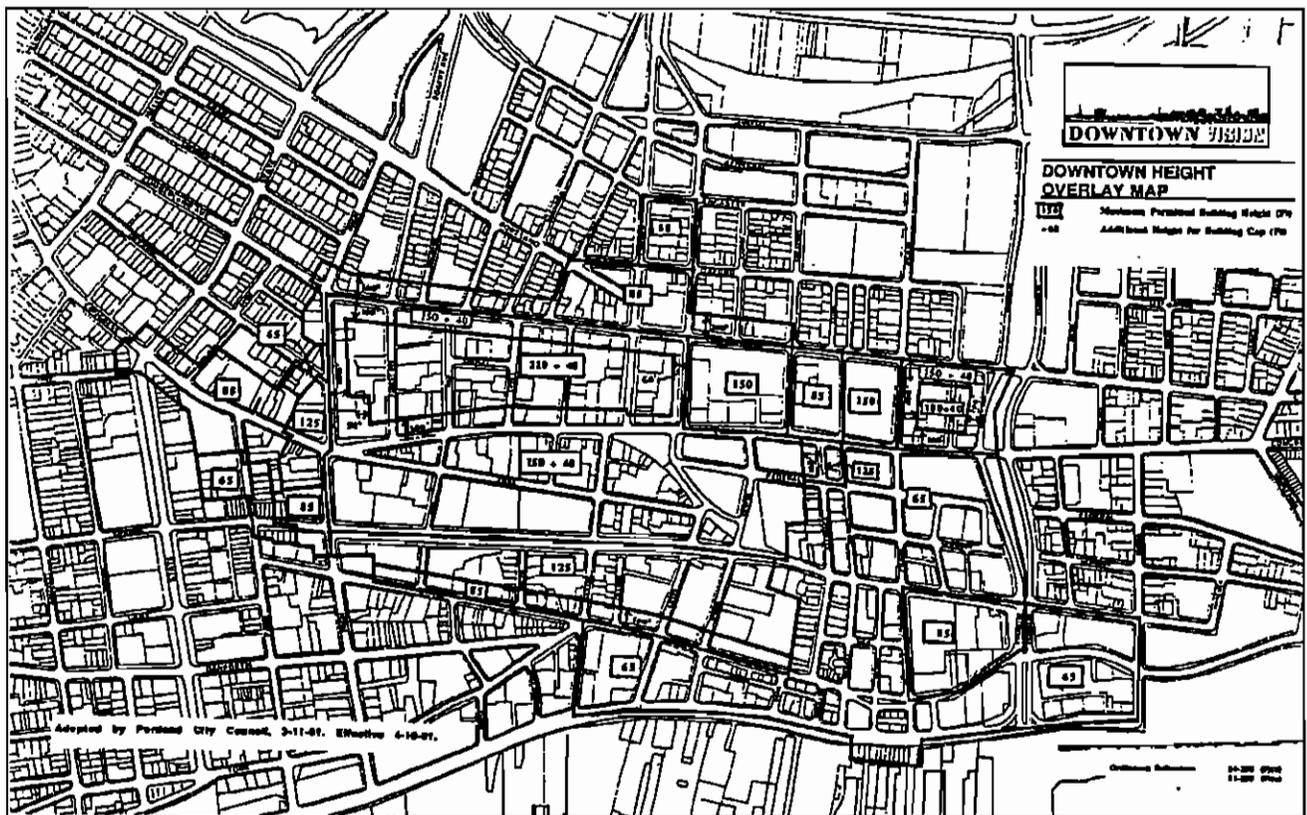


Figure __: Downtown Height Overlay Map

DF3 Tower Massing. Careful attention to the massing of taller buildings will contribute substantially to the character of the skyline as well as preserve sunlight and diminish wind impacts at street level. The objectives of the following provisions are to achieve more slender tower forms and mitigate street impacts of taller buildings.

- a. Limit the floor plate of structures above 125 feet in height to no more than 25 percent of the site area. However, on sites smaller than 40,000 square feet, this may prove impractical, so floor plates should not be restricted to less than 10,000 square feet. Maximum floor plates for floors above 125 feet in height should be limited to 15,000 square feet.
- b. Require towers to generally be located within the cone created by a 1.5:1 vertical to horizontal plane. Some flexibility will be needed in administering this guideline, to cope with small and irregularly-shaped sites. However, a step back as identified in policy UF2 (above) should be required at a height up to the maximum street wall elevation.
- c. Encourage architectural tops on tall structures that will be prominent on the skyline as a way of em-

phasizing their height, vertical character, and landmark status.

- d. Roof-top appurtenances should be fully enclosed in a manner compatible with the principal building.

DF4 Visual Landmarks and View Corridors. Portland's landmark buildings and relationship to the water are an important part of its unique character. Key views to the harbor, Back Cove and landmark buildings are a community resource to be preserved and protected. They create the sense of place which defines Downtown Portland as well as providing orientation to public moving about Downtown.

- a. Key view corridors as mapped in Figure __ are important to the community and should be preserved. Site plan review regulations should prevent structures from significantly blocking or diminishing these views.
- b. Landmark buildings should be viewed against the sky from key vantage points, and should be surrounded by structures of similar scale. Heights within a one block radius of key landmarks should be no more than 50 percent higher than the landmark and should not detract from the promi-

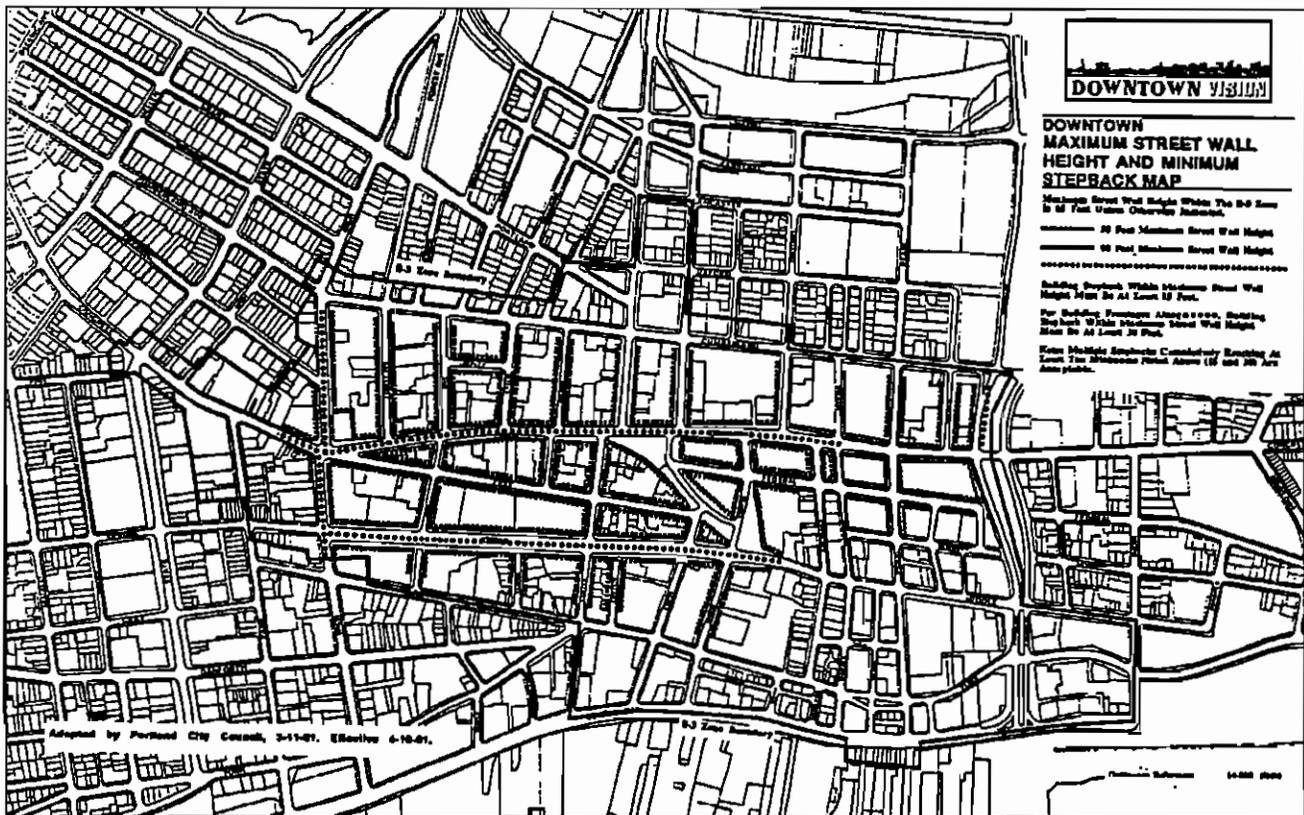


Figure ___: Maximum Street Wall Height and Minimum Setback Map

nence of the landmark by virtue of location or design.

DF5 Key Open Space Protection. Sunlight and wind protection are valuable attributes to open spaces, and development should not be allowed to unreasonably reduce the amount of sunlight or increase wind velocities detrimentally during the times when open spaces are heavily used by the public.

- a. Substantial shadow impacts on public open space caused by new buildings in excess of 65 feet in height shall be avoided during periods of significant use. As a general reference, from March 21 to September 21, new development should not increase the area in shadow by more than 10 percent in any of the following open spaces during the critical use hours listed below:

- Longfellow Square: 9AM to 3PM
- Congress Square: 10AM to 3PM
- Monument Square: 10AM to 3PM
- Lincoln Park: 10AM to 2PM
- Lobsterman Plaza: 9AM to 2PM
- City Hall Plaza: 10AM to 2PM
- Tommy's Park: 10AM to 2PM
- Post Office Park: 10AM to 2PM

- b. Key pedestrian streets which run along the length of the peninsula enjoy sunlight on the north side for much of their length. Design and massing efforts should minimize any shadow impacts on these sidewalks resulting from new development.
- c. Adverse wind impacts on open space and pedestrian areas caused by new construction or building rehabilitation shall be avoided.

DF6 Gateway Enhancement. Major gateway routes and views should provide a positive entry experience and image of the City. Streetscape, skyline, signage, public facilities and other aspects of the built environment should be designed to enhance the gateway views and experience to create the best possible first impression and image of Downtown Portland. See Figure ___ for significant Gateways.

DF7 Signage and Storefronts. Adopt signage and storefront design standards throughout the downtown.

DF8 Urban Design Guidelines. Many of these urban form policies can be addressed through zoning and site plan controls. Many require the careful analysis of the impacts of new development on a case-by-case basis. With clear standards and guidelines, the least restrictive programs and regulations can achieve the policy objec-

tives with some flexibility and responsiveness to unique development conditions and constraints.

Addendum ___ contains Downtown Urban Design Guidelines which provide direction and establish a level of expectation for public officials, the private sector development community, and for the citizens of Portland in assuring a high quality, livable and distinctive physical environment. These guidelines address the following issues:

- Scale and form
- Architectural character
- Building to sidewalk relationships
- Pedestrian environment
- Streetscape guidelines
- View corridors and gateways
- Signage, awnings and canopies
- Lighting
- Storefront Design
- Micro-Climate
- Merchandising and display
- Security
- Maintenance

DF9 Historic Resources. Pursue a program of integrating the City's concern for preservation and creative re-use of our historic resources with comprehensive planning and management of the Downtown.

In order to prevent the loss of historic resources within the Downtown, and to encourage the creative re-use and rehabilitation of those resources, the following steps are recommended:

- examine existing buildings throughout the Downtown to evaluate the appropriateness of designating

additional buildings or districts for coverage under the historic preservation ordinance;

- examine existing boundaries of National Register Historic Districts to evaluate, through possible boundary adjustments, the opportunity for making additional properties eligible for federal tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic structures;
- undertake a study to examine the potential use of financial incentives at the local state and federal levels and zoning mechanisms at the local level which could provide incentive or assistance in the rehabilitation of historically-significant resources; and
- include preservation planning and related public education as a component of comprehensive planning for the Downtown.

| Recommendation | Timing | | | How | | Implementing Body |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|---------|-------------------|
| | Adopt with Plan | Next 3 Years | 3 to 10 Years | Ordinance | Program | |
| DF1 Height Limits | x | | | x | | City |
| DF2 Street Walls | x | | | x | | City |
| DF3 Tower Massing | x | | | x | | City |
| DF4 Visual Landmarks/View Corridors | x | | | x | | City |
| DF5 Key Open Space Protection | x | | | x | | City |
| DF6 Gateway Enhancement | x | x | x | x | x | City/Private |
| DF7 Signage and Storefront Standards | x | | | x | | City |
| DF8 Urban Design Standards and Guidelines | x | | | x | | City |
| DF9 Historic Resources | x | x | | x | x | City |

AREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

AREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

Areas within the Downtown

1. Old Port
2. Civic Area
3. Congress Street: Central District
 - a. Monument Square
 - b. Congress Square
 - c. Upper Congress

Perimeter Growth Areas

4. Bayside
5. India Street
6. Gorham's Corner

Downtown Vision treats all the major factors comprising and influencing City life. In the following passages, the Downtown is treated as a composite of smaller neighborhoods, each combining the factors in a unique way to create distinctive patterns and character of form and function. If the plan and policies tend to dissect the City by treating with a magnified view of varied issues, this section attempts to step back and look at each sub area to see how those myriad pieces fit back together. A vision of the future must bridge from the micro view of details to the macro view of the whole. In doing so, some prognostication and license is taken to suggest the form and direction of change. More to be taken as example than as a literal prescription, the views presented offer a glimpse of the Downtown's future according to plan.

AREAS WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN

Old Port Exchange

The Old Port is as vibrant and valuable a part of Downtown today as when it was a center of commerce and shipping. Twice destroyed by fire, by British Captain Mowat in 1775 and again during the Great Fire of 1866, the Old Port exemplifies the resiliency of Portland suggested by the City motto - Resurgam. The area encompasses some 35 acres or 20-25 blocks oriented around the axis of Exchange Street and Commercial Street. Its historic quality has long been recognized as a National Register Historic District, and recently as a locally protected historic district.

Exchange Street from City Hall at Congress Street to Fore Street functions much the same today as it did in the turn of the century. Most of its buildings were constructed in the economic boom years after the 1866 fire. Retail, office, banking, and residences all blend together to create a lively urban environment. Many visitors come to Portland especially to walk up and down Exchange and neighboring streets, to shop, eat, and relax at a sidewalk cafe, and to enjoy its nightlife. The festive atmosphere created by visitors diminishes between Labor Day and Memorial Day, during which time the Old Port plays host more to its year-round population of residents and workers.

Commercial Street was largely spared by the fire of 1866, and therefore has a somewhat older building stock. A most impressive view of the bold street wall facing the waterfront can be experienced from Market Street facing west. In few places can one find finer examples of the New England seaport city heritage than these trade, commerce and warehouse blocks built at the turn of the century.

On the land side of Commercial Street today, however, the use has changed dramatically from its historic roots. No longer is rail and ocean shipping the primary distribution system. The warehouse and distribution activities have gradually made their inevitable moves to more modern and spacious industrial park sites on the City's outskirts - where highway access is of primary importance. Acknowledging this reality, the tracks connecting the Canadian and U.S. rail systems have been pulled from Commercial Street. For better or worse, we no longer have the old world experience of the rail cars shuttling down the middle of the street. Even the view

of tractor-trailer trucks backed up to loading docks obstructing most of the wide street are becoming more rare.

In place of the warehouse distribution function, fine buildings have been converted into the Old Port mix of retail, office, and residential uses. This transformation is not yet complete, with a few redevelopment and infill opportunities still available.

While Exchange and Commercial Streets retain most of their historic building fabric, as do several other prominent streets such as Middle, Fore and Market Streets, the blocks to the east near Franklin Street, and portions of Fore Street toward Gorham's Corner have undergone more substantial changes. Canal Plaza and 100 Middle Street reflect larger-scale office developments, whose forms and predominantly single-purpose uses deviate from the historic building fabric.

As more infill development takes place on the blocks bounded by Franklin, Middle, Pearl, and Commercial Street, and by Union, Spring, Center, and Commercial Streets, it will be very important to weave the new building fabric to blend with the old. Especially, on Fore Street, a strong consumer-oriented retail focus must be created to link the Old Port with Gorham's Corner and with the expansion of the Downtown east of the Arterial near the waterfront.

Other important form and functions of new buildings relate to height, massing, and orientation to the street. In contrast to the spine of Congress Street and areas above Spring Street, the areas below Spring Street to the water and the historic district around Exchange Street are programmed for modest building heights. The principles of reducing heights of buildings as the peninsula land form slopes to the water, as well as of compatibility with the intact historic building fabric, call out for lower building heights in this neighborhood. Street orientation demands retail street frontages, with multiple entries and windows and with uses attractive to pedestrians. Cafes, clothing stores, restaurants, night clubs and other retail uses are desirable. Retail goods and services for city residents such as personal services, convenience groceries, hardware, and other necessities might find a ready market here. Upper stories could accommodate additional new office, residential, and hotel uses. A healthy mix of uses will contribute to the diversity and strength of the Downtown, maintaining and enhancing its cosmopolitan, urban flavor.

The Old Port is a special resource to the city and region. Its energy and charisma can support new development that will contribute positively to its atmosphere. Open spaces such as Lobsterman Plaza, Tommy's, the proposed Post Office Park, and historic Boothby Square could become a more prominent focus to its surrounding buildings, with additional landscaping and possibly restoring its water fountain. The adjacent waterfront provides recreational opportunities, waterfront walks, boat rides, as well as a glimpse of the activities of the working waterfront.

Figure ___: Old Port Exchange - Existing Conditions

Figure ___: Old Port Exchange Area Development Concept

The Civic Area

The Civic Area is defined by societal and governmental symbols – the County and Federal courthouses, and City Hall – that are clustered generally around Lincoln Park. Because City Hall sits at the head of Exchange Street rather than abreast of Lincoln Park, the image of civic institutional buildings framing the city common with great formality is not quite realized, but offers potential for future development which fully establishes a district of special public character.

As development takes place, the three blocks on the north side of Congress Street can be filled in to give form to and enliven both the street and Lincoln Park. Parameters for physical form have been established through the planning effort for the proposed Lincoln Square project. Special height and bulk requirements developed with that proposal, particularly in maximum street wall heights, reflect the location of these blocks on the spine allowing for the highest allowable limit near Franklin Street reducing somewhat in the block closest to City Hall.

While it is important for buildings to create a strong physical presence on the street, there is an important view corridor from Monument Square to the Portland Observatory that must be preserved. Because Congress Street has a subtle bend, buildings on the north side must set back up to approximately forty feet near Franklin Street.

In addition, over the next several years, the current site of the County Jail will provide an additional opportunity to reinforce this civic area with major development. While maximum building heights are lower than the north side of Congress Street, this site has similar opportunity to attract active pedestrian-oriented uses and to help to tie the civic area more intimately with the Old Port.

Factors influencing the character of potential new development in the civic area include excellent vehicular access, relatively large consolidated parcels made up of three city blocks, and a prominent location which demands 21st century landmark architecture. At present, these blocks are devoid of activity other than parking and the former Guy Gannett printing facility. Congress Street's retail life is effectively severed at Monument Square despite the potential of tying to the Exchange

Street retail life opposite City Hall, particularly along the north side of Congress Street. Introduction of major consumer retail functions at this end of Congress Street would serve to tie together Congress Street with Exchange Street, and would help to activate Lincoln Park, presently an underutilized public open space.

The recently proposed development for the two blocks bounded by Pearl, Cumberland, Franklin and Congress involved vacating Wilmot Street for a large office complex with a minor amount of first floor retail. By combining whole blocks for large-scale development, it is possible to accommodate building forms for office and parking most efficiently. A risk inherent in such scale, however, is a disruption of the building fabric and pattern that is most comfortable and negotiable to the pedestrian. Large scale can be mitigated by a sensitive and porous building form at the street, one which allows continuous flow of people in and out, with retail uses with attractive storefronts. With the required Congress Street setback which maintains the view corridor to the Observatory, an ideal opportunity is created for sidewalk cafes, push carts, flower stands in nice weather, and landscape and sculptural features to provide visual excitement year round. Thus a large project can successfully develop on

multiple blocks, but still function and interact with the Downtown at the street in much the same way the historic multiple building blocks work.

Without this sensitivity, such large scale projects could contain hundreds of people who would come, work and depart without relating or contributing to the life of the city.

Beyond the desirability of a strong retail street presence, many use potentials exist for this area. For one, any expansion of city, county or state offices could occur here. Greatest potential for use would be general commercial offices. Some residential use could also be accommodated, oriented toward Cumberland Avenue and the Bayside neighborhood, although views of Lincoln Park and the waterfront would be available from south-facing units.

While Congress Street is clearly an important face of these blocks, it is important that Cumberland Avenue be treated with a front facade that relates to the more residential character of that corner of the Bayside area. Convenience retail might work on Cumberland Avenue, particularly to serve the Franklin Tower and Bayside

Figure ____: Civic Area Development Concept

residential neighborhood while shielding the neighborhood from a potentially overwhelming parking garage. Similarly, the Franklin Street face is important, from the perspective that it marks the northeasterly corner of the central business district. Development should make an appropriate declaration to the motoring public on Franklin Street as well as toward the Munjoy Hill neighborhood that Downtown begins at this corner. Suitable form, orientation and ornament should read well from the vantage of the passing pedestrian, motorist or Hill resident's more distant view.

Finally, the Franklin Street Arterial provides an opportunity for a major open-space connection linking the Back Cove and I-295 with this civic area and on the waterfront. With opportunities for pedestrian and bicycling activity the length of the Arterial, coupled with major pedestrian crossings at key intersections, a carefully and densely-landscaped open space could reinforce the Gateway character of this important entry to the Downtown.

Congress Street: Central Downtown Sub-Areas

This important area of the central Downtown contains three sub-areas: Monument Square, Congress Square and Upper Congress Street. The following narrative explores opportunities for future redevelopment within these areas.

The boundaries for the central Downtown sub-areas consist substantially of the portion of the Downtown business zone west of Monument Square, bounded generally by property fronting on Cumberland Avenue to the north and Pleasant/Fore Street on the south. The following objectives provide a framework for land use, development and redevelopment opportunities within this area, and speak to the area's long-term improvement.

- a. Encourage the re-use of upper story space between Congress and Monument Squares for office and commercial activities.
- b. Encourage the development of high intensity new office development on the interior of blocks including the high-spine Congress Street to Cumberland Avenue area, the interior of blocks between Congress and Free Streets, and between Free and Spring Streets.
- c. Reinforce and expand existing pedestrian-oriented, ground-floor uses throughout the area by substantial rehabilitation and infill development of retail and cultural uses directly adjacent to important pedestrian streets.
- d. Encourage the use of the Downtown by visitors to the City through the promotion of expanded convention facilities and the enhancement retail and visitor-oriented uses;
- e. Encourage the growth of substantial day and evening activity within this area of the Downtown through the promotion and encouragement of existing major arts and cultural institutions, coordination of this segment of the economy with Downtown retailing, and through the promotion of supporting ground-floor uses;
- f. Encourage residential living in the Downtown area, retaining existing residential units wherever possible, enhancing the character of existing residential areas, and encouraging new residential development particularly in the Upper Congress Street area and near Cumberland Avenue and Upper Bayside.

- g. Retain and enhance the existing scale and character of buildings as perceived from the pedestrian environment throughout this area by retaining significant buildings and by introducing new infill buildings and undertaking substantial rehabilitations which complement this scale and character; and
- h. Enhance and maintain the character and attractiveness of the pedestrian environment through improved maintenance, security, and activity programming, through greater attention to the character and attractiveness of the street environment, and through the encouragement of shared public and private responsibility for creating and maintaining a lively and exciting environment.

Susceptibility to Change

Properties have been identified throughout this area which are, over either the short or long term, most susceptible to substantial change. Such change may be as a result of broad changes in economics, the deterioration or lack of special character of existing structures, the underutilization of existing property, or as a result of changes caused by changing programs or uses on adjacent properties.

In excess of 40 properties have been identified within this area which offer opportunities to accommodate change through either substantial building rehabilitation or through compatible new construction. In addition, numerous buildings would benefit by substantial facade rehabilitation that would significantly enhance the character and attractiveness of the street environment.

Potential Major Project Opportunities

The central Congress Street area offers opportunity for several major projects which could involve both rehabilitation of existing buildings and development of new infill construction. A general description of each opportunity site is provided below. It is important to assure that individual projects proposed within this area are integrated with the existing area in terms of coordinated and mutually reinforcing uses and compatible in terms of scale and character of the pedestrian environment and building form.

Civic Center to Chamber of Commerce

General Boundaries: From Free to Spring Streets, and from the Chamber of Commerce Building on the easterly side of the Portland Museum of Art to the Cumberland County Civic Center. A portion of Oak Street lying between Free and Spring Streets is included within this site.

Easterly of Oak Street, the site includes the existing Civic Center and a 532 car parking garage. Utilizing a portion of the parking garage and utilizing the site currently occupied by the Blue Cross/Blue Shield office building, new convention facilities are proposed as a major expansion to the County's Civic Center. Current facility feasibility studies project a total of up to 250,000 gross square feet of new exhibition, meeting, banquet, and support space making this facility the premier convention destination of northern New England. Important in the planning for this facility is the opportunity of carefully connecting this facility to surrounding pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns, and the importance of establishing a presence along Congress Street both at Oak Street and at a new interior mid-block connection in the vicinity of the Maine Savings Plaza which would connect through to entrances to the Civic and Convention Center. Street level uses, building access, and architectural design of the building facades of the new facilities would reinforce the growing importance of Free Street as a significant pedestrian route.

Westerly of Oak Street, the site currently includes a large surface parking lot with two multi-story mixed retail and office buildings. This area offers two broad opportunities for growth and development:

1. In the event expansion area is needed for the City's convention facility which could not otherwise be accommodated on the Convention and Civic Center site, this portion of the site could serve expansion needs of the facility.
2. This site, located within an area of increased building height (150 feet maximum), at the head of the Forest Avenue Gateway and view corridor, and along a view corridor extending to Longfellow Square, provides a prominent location for a major new office building.

While ground-floor, street-level uses must support and reinforce the pedestrian activity of Free Street, office uses on the next several floors, stepping back to an office tower on the interior of the site could be accommodated. Such an office tower, appropriately sited, could serve as a visual landmark in terminating Forest Avenue and the view down Congress Street. Development on this site could provide ground-floor retail uses, limited on-site parking, and an upper-story development of Class A office space.

Congress to Free Streets

General Boundaries: Between Congress and Free Streets from Monument Square to mid-block westerly of Oak Street.

This site, encompassing portions of four blocks in the heart of the Downtown, provide significant opportunities for both the rehabilitation and re-use of important buildings and for selective demolition and new construction which could together substantially re-establish the character and prominence of Congress Street.

West of Oak Street, the Baxter Building provides an opportunity for substantial rehabilitation in support of continued use for ground-floor retail and upper story office activities. Considerable attention to facade rehabilitation, including new orientation to both Oak and Free Streets will support pedestrian activity in this area as Oak Street becomes a major entrance from Congress Street to the Civic and Convention Center and Free Street serves as a very active connection to heavily-used, mixed-use activities of Congress Street.

Between Oak and Brown Streets, there are opportunities for both the rehabilitation and reuse of existing structures and, with selective demolition, the introduction of contemporary retailing activities at the street and perhaps second level. Large floor-plate office space could be introduced for the next several levels and major high-rise (9-11 stories) office development on the interiors of the block. The landmark Porteous Building presents a major challenge and unique opportunity for sensitive adaptive re-use. While a thorough market and re-use feasibility study is an important first step, the future re-use of the upper floors for office or other commercial space is encouraged.

Westerly of the Porteous Building, the sprawling J.J. Newberry's building provides long-term opportunity for creative intensification of uses, maintaining retail and pedestrian-oriented uses at the street level, perhaps introducing the same at the second level interconnected with the eastern portion of this block, and developing additional floors of office space above on the interior of the site. Easterly of the Porteous Building, a similar intensification could occur with possible selective demolition or re-use of some portion or all of the remaining buildings and the development of street-level and second story retail uses with substantial new office development on the upper floors of the interior of the site above.

As a part of major improvements within this block, an interior sky-lit galleria space would be developed which connects Congress Street with the Civic and Convention Center in the vicinity of the historic Mechanics Building, Maine Savings Plaza and the Center entrance. Located adjacent to the Porteous Building, such a new public open space could serve as a focal point for pedestrian-oriented uses and as a stimulus for re-use of the Porteous Building while providing an important and accessible linkage in the pedestrian circulation network.

Easterly of Brown Street, surface parking lots and potential re-use of existing buildings would allow the continuation of this scheme of first and second floor retail uses and upper story office uses. With interior pedestrian circulation running through these blocks and frequently connecting to Free and Congress Streets, a network of interior and exterior pedestrian paths would be created from Monument Square to Oak Street, lined with retail and other pedestrian-oriented uses and providing access to high-density office cores.

It is important that while interior pedestrian circulation is provided, the street-fronting perimeters of each building shall have a strong, outwardly-focused retail and pedestrian-oriented frontage, with shop windows and frequent entries into the buildings interior. The traditional pattern of multiple storefronts and entrances which maintain pedestrian interest and access should be continued.

Recognizing this as a scheme which could take a number of years to see come to fruition, interim uses of these buildings for incubator space for new retail and office uses, and for support space for the arts and cultural community would enhance this area greatly with limited short-term investment.

Congress Street to Cumberland Avenue

General Boundaries: Portions of several blocks between Forest Avenue on the west, Cumberland Avenue on the north, the Longfellow House and Maine Historical Society property on the east and Congress Street on the South. This site includes Shepley, Oak, Casco and Brown Streets.

Located within the high-spine area of the Downtown where maximum building heights are increased to 210 feet, this site provides substantial opportunity for intensive office development at the interior of several blocks. While establishing a major presence at the corner of Forest Avenue and Congress Street through either extensive renovation of existing buildings or new construction, retail and pedestrian uses can be maintained along street frontage while high-rise office development could occur mid-block, with frequent pedestrian access to surrounding streets. In order to accommodate a portion of the existing and increased demand for parking, multi-leveled parking structures could be integrated with the office development on the interiors of the block, with primary vehicular access from Cumberland Avenue.

Such development would reinforce recent major rehabilitation efforts in the immediate area, reinforce potential development in the blocks between Congress and Free Streets, and would provide a density of activity which would support retail and cultural uses throughout the area.

Along Shepley and Casco Streets, in the center of this area, are located several large residential buildings containing approximately 216 units of affordable housing. In an effort to reinforce the continued use of these residential properties, and to enhance their attractiveness as a Downtown neighborhood, there is an opportunity to enhance these two streets through sidewalk, lighting and landscaping improvements, the creation of a small park at Casco and Shepley Streets, and the development of additional housing units on two sites currently used for parking. Rehabilitation of property along Cumberland Avenue and ground-floor resident-oriented retail uses are encouraged. Additional parking serving this area and nearby Downtown commercial uses could be created easterly of Casco Street with the development of a parking structure.

Free to Spring Streets

General Boundaries: From Free to Spring Streets between Center and Cross Streets.

Substantial new development could occur on what are currently surface parking lots which are in both public and private ownership. Existing buildings along Free Street have for the most part been rehabilitated within the last several years and could be integrated sensitively into the development of new street-level retail and office space. Parking would need to be accommodated off-site in nearby expanded parking facilities as well as through the various alternative programs (in-lieu fees, shuttle lots, encouragement of public transit, etc.).

Spring to Fore Streets

General boundaries: From Spring to Fore Streets between Center Street and the Cross Street access and view corridor.

On property which has been assembled over an extended length of time, immediately adjacent to the One and Two Portland Square office/retail development projects, in excess of 2 1/2 acres of land under multiple ownership accommodates surface parking, marginal commercial uses, vacant buildings, and vacant lots. In concert with development of convention facilities across Spring Street, this site offers opportunity for a major convention-quality hotel with related retail activities. Around the

perimeter of the block, fronting along Center and Fore Streets and along the Cross Street pedestrian way, retail uses will reinforce the scale and character of the street environment, will support growing retail activities in the Gorham's Corner area, will reinforce the adaptive re-use of the Tracey Causer building, and will further integrate this block with the City's urban fabric. At the interior of

the block, a major parking structure serving existing office buildings as well as new retail, office and hotel uses, would complete the development of this area.

Figure ____: Congress Street Area - Existing Conditions

Figure ____: Congress Street Area Development Concept

PERIMETER AREAS OF THE DOWNTOWN

Three areas with significant development and redevelopment potential have been identified in areas that are on the perimeter of the Downtown but nevertheless crucial toward a coherent vision of a successful Downtown. These sites - Bayside, India Street and Gorham's Corner - each display characteristics that are colorful and truly unique. However, substantial properties in each area have increasingly experienced a deteriorating physical condition, with expanses of vacant and underused land and decaying infrastructure. Because market forces have not always produced beneficial results to both public and private interests, the City hopes to provide a design framework that would guide growth. The sections that follow sketch out a planning approach to each area, which should be subjected to an intensive public planning effort over the coming year or so.

Figure ___: Perimeter Areas

Bayside: Current conditions and uses.

Bayside comprises over 100 acres within the area bounded by I-295, Franklin Arterial, Cumberland Avenue and Forest Avenue. The blocks along Cumberland contain the fragments of the residential neighborhood that predominated here in the early part of this century. There are presently 590 housing units in Bayside, many of which are in a deteriorated condition. Erosion of the residential neighborhood has occurred gradually with disinvestment and removal of buildings over time to make way for parking lots to serve offices in and around the neighborhood. Suggesting a possible reversal of this trend is the development of Back Bay Towers, a 115-unit mixed-income apartment building on Cumberland Avenue.

Along Franklin Arterial to Myrtle Street, the post-war era has brought substantial change. Franklin Towers, with 192 units of elderly public housing sits at the Franklin Arterial-Cumberland Avenue intersection. Below Franklin Towers are a number of industrial warehouse buildings that are a product of urban renewal redevelopment that, along with the construction of the Franklin Arterial, replaced the pre-existing residential neighborhood there.

Closer to Forest Avenue is the Federal Building with the U.S. Post Office and related parking lots. The Parks and Public Works Operations Center with the Central Maintenance Facility and related buildings are tucked in below Portland Street. Clustered around Lancaster and Oxford Streets, numerous low-rent offices have been established in former commercial and industrial buildings. Typical tenants here include the City's Department of Human Services, the Greater Portland Council of Governments, United Way and several state and private social services. This area has become known as the social service center of the City. There is a total of approximately 150,000 square feet of office uses throughout the Bayside neighborhood.

Marginal Way, with its excellent highway visibility and access, has a pronounced retail character. The predominance of auto sales and service facilities has given way to a wide mix of retail uses extending from AAA headquarters in the east and Bubble Up Car Wash at Forest Avenue to computer sales, home improvements, sports and recreation, and, of course, the historic Miss Portland Diner. A total of approximately 50,000 square feet of retail uses are located in Bayside.

Figure ___: Bayside Area - Existing Conditions

A Vision of Bayside in the Year 2020

Through public and private initiative over the next 30 years or so, this neighborhood 's strength can be reinforced to realize the potential in this centrally-located 100-acre tract. Major patterns to be built upon include strong retail along Marginal Way, conservation of mixed-income housing along Cumberland Avenue, and a knitting together of the residential and commercial uses through focused redevelopment.

Currently, the area lacks internal appeal and focus with large-scale industrial buildings occupying major blocks, scrap yards blighting surrounding blocks and inhibiting investment, and deteriorated housing giving way to unkempt vacant lots and parking lots.

City initiative can provide an internal focus and eliminate the blighting influence of the scrap metal yards. Historically, public parks have served as both a neighborhood focal point as well as a catalyst for development. The megablock at the base of Chestnut Street, owned by Portland Terminal Company, has been suggested as a site for such a park. This park might, as well, potentially relieve some of the festival and carnival activity that Deering Oaks Park bore in the past. Chestnut Street, extended through the park to Marginal Way, would pro-

vide a visual and access corridor from Congress Street at City Hall, past the historic Portland Stove Foundry to an obelisk, monument or landmark fountain in the park, and Back Cove in the distance beyond.

The blocks directly south of the park would be designated as mixed use office/retail/residential, with a focus on pedestrian-oriented retail serving Chestnut Street and on infrastructure improvements.

Marginal Way would cater to large-scale commercial use that is recreation- or service-oriented in nature. This development - perhaps 3 to 4 stories in height - would be pulled up to the street line, thus presenting a positive architectural image of the City to travellers along I-295. Ample parking would be provided in the rear of these buildings.

In order to improve circulation between Forest Avenue and East Bayside on the other side of the Franklin Street Arterial, and to enhance activity in the newly-created park, Somerset Street could be extended through to Kennebec Street. As well, a green belt would be created along Kennebec to provide a connection between Deering Oaks and the new park.

At the head of Portland Street, an existing parking lot could be transformed into an urban plaza. Such an open space would preserve the view corridor to City Hall and serve as a focal point for more intensive office and retail development on surrounding sites. Portland Street, as well, would become a retail corridor serving both automobile oriented and neighborhood needs.

The residential, social service, and municipal-oriented uses in the western end of the site would be maintained. Residential use in the eastern area would remain with substantial improvements to building stock and infrastructure. Potential infill and redevelopment opportunities would provide new housing in buildings ranging in size from modest 8-10 unit buildings to prominent 4-5 story apartments of up to 50 dwelling units.

Gradually the industrial uses along the Franklin Arterial would relocate to industrial parks and an extension of the Downtown office core could be established with prominent Franklin Street building forms.

India Street: Current Conditions and Uses

Nestled between the central Downtown to the west and Munjoy Hill to the east and bounded by the Franklin Arterial, Congress, Mountfort Street and the waterfront, this 35-acre area is a mix of residential, retail and industrial uses. What has impacted the site most recently is the creation of the Franklin Arterial which cleared several blocks of residential neighborhoods. This demolition destroyed the urban fabric that connected the area to the Downtown. Besides creating a physical barrier to the Downtown marked by chain link fences and lack of sidewalks, the thruway greatly inhibits pedestrian circulation on account of its tremendous width and the fast-paced vehicular traffic.

The India Street area, nevertheless, acts as a surprisingly vital community within itself. An active retail base along India Street serves the residential enclaves tucked away on either side. Services on this street range from Amato's Bakery and Port City Glass to various grocery or clothing stores and design services. Middle Street - also with a relatively strong retail and office base - has more recently attracted trendy eating establishments such as the Pepperclub, Cafe Always and Luna D'Oro. Congress Street also has substantial retail such as the thriving Levinsky's Clothing, Paul's Foods, Wellby Drug and a hair salon. Altogether, the site comprises approximately 85,000 square feet of retail and 55,000 square feet of office space. The residential base, though drastically reduced with the construction of the Arterial, nevertheless persists and displays approximately 280 units, some found as upper story units above retail on the main roads.

Industrial use almost wholly characterizes the property south of Middle Street, with companies such as Jordan's Meats, IDEXX Corporation and The Maine Shipping Room. But, the industrial base in this area is becoming obsolete with the closing of other large manufacturers such as Crosby Laughlin. Decaying infrastructure and a preponderance of vacant or overgrown lots mark this transition.

A Vision of India Street in the Year 2020

Redevelopment would focus on strengthening the vitality of the community within and establishing clearer connections to the Downtown and Munjoy Hill. India, Middle, and Congress Streets would reinforce their identities as active retail corridors, through building infill along the streetlines and through encouraging small businesses to relocate to the area. As well, infrastructure

improvements and landscaping would make these corridors pedestrian-oriented spaces. It is critical to retain the residential enclaves east and west of India Street, with special attention to the upper story residential along retail corridors in order to maintain a certain level of activity.

Franklin Street Arterial, now a major barrier between the Downtown and the India Street area, would require improvements in landscaping and infrastructure - conceivably even narrowing - to create a more pedestrian-oriented and hospitable space.

The Crosby Laughlin property has tremendous redevelopment potential in which the terminus of Middle and Hancock Street would be the site for a new office/retail complex with parking to either side and building access on both Middle and Fore Streets. This site has special significance as a visual corridor from the Old Port, so that the terminus of Middle Street would be the focal point for an architectural landmark of some form. The successful Village Cafe across the street might be integrated as a retail anchor for the new project. A small pocket park on this site would serve the residential neighborhood to the north and well-defined pedestrian access would serve the site to create a link between Fore and Middle Streets.

As well, Fore Street would be revived as a pedestrian link from the Eastern Promenade and Munjoy Hill to the Downtown. Across Fore Street toward the waterfront, the expansive areas owned by Canadian National and others have potential for mixed-use or waterfront-related redevelopment. This area also serves as a link in the shoreway trail connecting the Eastern Promenade with the Downtown waterfront.

As industrial use becomes less evident in the area, attention also needs to be given to the two block area that includes Jordan's Meats and that is bounded by India, Middle, Franklin and Commercial Streets. This would become an extension of the downtown business district that could entice the commercial fabric across the Arterial. The historic rehabilitation of buildings such as W.L. Blake warehouse and the Galt block could provide the needed catalyst for new development on the remainder of blocks.

Because of the large number of vacant lots, infill of buildings on all streets is needed to make India Street a more vibrant and continuous community.

Figure ___: India Street Area - Existing Conditions

Figure ___: India Street Area Development Concept

Gorham's Corner: Current Conditions and Uses

Its role as a transitional area between Downtown, a residential neighborhood on one side, and the waterfront on the other largely defines the present condition of this 30-acre area. Almost a triangular form, it is bounded by High, Commercial and Center Streets. The Spring Street Arterial to the north creates a barrier separating it from the functions above, but at the same time focuses its qualities to make a unique and individualistic neighborhood.

The Portland School of Art sculpture studio, directly below the arterial on Pleasant Street, gives this area some of its character, as do other prominent buildings such as the University of Southern Maine building and various converted brick warehouses. Adjacent to the Portland School of Art is a modest neighborhood park, ignored for many years but recently cleaned up.

Although displaying many vacant and underutilized lots, Gorham's Corner contains some surprisingly successful retail pockets. At the focal point of this area - the irregularly-shaped intersection created by the meeting of York, Danforth, Pleasant and Fore Streets, one finds the popular restaurants Hi Bombay, Giobbi's and Alberta's, as well as an art gallery and a career center. On the lower corner stands an old warehouse that has converted to an offbeat yet thriving retail and office center. It houses the colorful Cafe No and Yes Books, as well as studios, galleries and the Maine People's Alliance. Radiating out from the intersection are other uses ranging from used clothing stores, realty and law offices, design professionals or antique shops along Pleasant Street, to an imported car repair specialist, rigging and general contractors on Danforth. The unfortunate recent closing of the Tree Cafe on Danforth clearly slowed activity generated by this "SoHo-like" community. Altogether one finds approximately 28,000 square feet of retail and 55,000 square feet of office space. This commercial base supports a residential neighborhood that comprises approximately 320 units.

York Street acts as an important connector between the Downtown and South Portland across the river, and thus witnesses relatively heavy traffic at all times of the day. Thus, one finds a Mobil gas station at the intersection of High and York, and the Rufus Deering Lumber Company directly below it, with easy access in and out of the city from many directions. However, with vacant warehouses, expanses of land given over to truck storage and parking lots and the decaying condition of the road, this stretch suffers from a lack of focus and identity. This is the case with Fore Street as well, with parking lots encompassing entire blocks on the way to the Old Port, that

gives the impression of "dead" space. High Street on the western edge, in contrast, is a well-lined avenue that services the residential neighborhoods on either side and provides easy access between the waterfront and the West End of the City.

A Vision of Gorham's Corner in the Year 2020

Redevelopment would focus on and radiate from the intersection created by the meeting of York, Danforth and Pleasant Street. A small square and monument would be created on the southern corner, at York and Center Streets, to serve as a visual anchor from many standpoints. To define and enliven the streets feeding into the corner, infill of buildings would be developed on all corners surrounding the square, leaving ample room for backside parking. A first floor retail corridor would be established along Pleasant, Fore, Danforth and Center Streets to increase activity and to create the necessary linkages to Downtown and the Old Port. In keeping with commercial activity that exists presently and in order to preserve the unique flavor of the community, attention would be given to attracting art or design-oriented services.

The west side would retain its residential and professional character. The playground would remain but would be much improved. The Portland School of Art sculpture studio would open its walls facing the park to create a dynamic setting in which the park users and art students could interact. Artworks would be displayed in the park on a rotary basis.

Here, too, industrial and large-scale commercial activity is either closing down or relocating to nearby industrial parks. As this occurs, development closer in scale and architectural style with the area would take its place. Mixed uses including retail/residential such as Baxter Place, or retail/office, would occupy new buildings designed to reinforce the street walls of Commercial, Center and Fore Streets. Substantial opportunities for intensive infilling of residential uses on vacant sites and in upper stories would intensify activity in this neighborhood and reinforce the nearby Downtown area as well.

Commercial Street calls out for infill and extension of the powerful building form of the historic warehouses that line this wide thoroughfare. York Street, with its heavy traffic and steeply sloped edge, would probably not be conducive to continued first floor retail. A small upscale hotel might find its niche in this distinctive neighborhood.

Figure ___: Gorham's Corner Area - Existing Conditions

Figure ___: Gorham's Corner Area Development Concept