



# Willamette River Central Reach

Workshop Summary Report  
December 4 and 5, 2013



January 2014



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability  
Innovation. Collaboration. Practical Solutions.

City of Portland, Oregon  
Charlie Hales, Mayor • Susan Anderson, Director



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# Acknowledgements

*Thanks to the workshop participants for providing valuable ideas and comments that will inform the update of the Central City 2035 (CC2035) and Willamette Greenway plans.*

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### **For more information visit the project websites:**

- **CC2035:** [www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/cc2035](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/cc2035)
- **River Plan/Central Reach:** [www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/riverplan](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/riverplan)

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# I. Introduction

*This report describes the December 4 and 5, 2013 Willamette River Central Reach Workshop and provides a summary of the comments received at the event and from completed questionnaires that will inform planning and implementation.*

## Project Overview

The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) is completing a comprehensive update to the 1988 Central City Plan called Central City 2035 (CC2035). At the heart of the Central City is the Central Reach of the Willamette River, stretching from north of the Fremont Bridge to south of the Ross Island Bridge. See map in Appendix A.

CC2035 is being created in quadrants: the North/Northeast Quadrant Plan was adopted as guidance for the CC2035 plan, and the West Quadrant and the Southeast Quadrant plans are under development. These three quadrant plans — and the update of the Willamette Greenway Plan — will be incorporated into an overarching plan for the future of Central City. The quadrant plans will be done by the end of 2014 and the Recommended CC 2035 Plan, including implementation actions and strategies, will go before the Portland City Council at the end of 2015. To learn more about CC2035, please visit [www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/cc2035](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/cc2035)

The December 4 and 5, 2013 Willamette River Central Reach Workshop marked the initiation of the Central Reach Working Group (CRWG). This open-membership group will convene periodically over the next two years for river-focused discussions,

which will holistically consider the river across quadrants and subdistricts, and inform Central City planning efforts. Building on previous work, the CRWG will offer suggestions for and provide feedback on CC2035 plan components, including updates to the Willamette Greenway Plan and code. See Appendix A for more information on the CRWG.

The Willamette Greenway Plan and its related zoning regulations and design guidelines have not been significantly updated for the Central Reach since the plan's adoption in 1987, except for the South Waterfront area. In the 2000s, the City of Portland worked with the public to develop a vision and strategy for the Willamette River through an initiative called River Renaissance. This effort set the groundwork for the City's update to the Willamette Greenway Plan. The City began its planning with the North Reach and is now focused on the Central Reach.

Through previous outreach and planning, BPS established that the Willamette's Central Reach has untapped potential for more activities, uses and habitat restoration, both on land and in water. The Willamette River Central Reach Workshop explored these opportunities.

## Workshop Description

The December 4 and 5, 2013 Willamette River Central Reach Workshop was divided into four discussion sessions, and drop-in and open house times for members of the public to talk with staff, review information and provide their comments.

Day One included topical sessions on a Robust River Economy, a Healthy River and Vibrant Riverfront Districts. Each session began with a PowerPoint presentation that provided a process overview, existing conditions and background information for the specific topic discussions. Participants formed small groups and used maps and trace paper to record ideas on chart packs.

Staff generated the small group discussion questions, which are listed in the Appendix B, an expanded workshop agenda. The questions were also available in written form at the workshop and online at the CC2035 Plan webpage as another way to provide comments.

On Day Two, planning staff synthesized all the comments received from Day One and produced summary illustrations by topic. See Appendices C–E. Each topical illustration included key themes and ideas from each session. Staff also developed three overarching questions to guide an integrated wrap-up discussion on the workshop's second evening. A consultant facilitated this conversation, and as with the first day, an interested and engaged public shared their thoughts on how to create a more robust river economy, vibrant riverfront districts and a healthier river.

Overall, about 70 people with diverse interests attended the workshop. Many attended more than one session. All participants brought unique insights and perspectives and offered ideas to improve and enhance the Central Reach for people, fish and wildlife. Ten people filled out workshop evaluation comment cards. All respondents agreed that the workshop was worthwhile and that the event added value to the Central City planning process.

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## Next Steps

- On January 21, 2014, River planning staff will present findings from the December workshop to CC2035 West Quadrant Stakeholder Advisory Committee as well as a first draft of an Urban Design Concept for the Willamette River Central Reach for review and comment.
- A similar presentation will be made by staff to the CC2035 Southeast Quadrant Stakeholder Advisory Committee at its March 2014 meeting.
- The draft concept will be posted on the CC2035 webpage starting on January 21, 2014.
- Comments may be provided at a SAC meeting or through written comments directed to staff.
- A follow-up meeting of the Central Reach Working Group (CRWG) will be scheduled in the next few months to receive additional feedback.

### Get Involved

*You can get involved in the CRWG in the following ways:*

- Sign up to receive email River Plan News with information and announcements that are timely to Central Reach planning, contact Debbie Bischoff, Senior Planner, River Planner, at [debbie.bischoff@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:debbie.bischoff@portlandoregon.gov) or 503.823.6946.
- Visit the project websites:  
CC2035 Plan: [www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/cc2035](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/cc2035)  
River Plan/Central Reach: [www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/riverplan](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/riverplan)



## II. Workshop Session Highlights

*Summaries from Day One sessions and the Day Two integrated discussions.*

The summaries underscore the inter-related nature of the topics and the importance of economic, historic/cultural, natural and physical attributes of the Willamette River Central Reach overall. Key themes included:

- A keen interest in acknowledging and showcasing the past and present and improving and enhancing all aspects of the river for this generation and beyond.
- Participants encouraged “big ideas” and new ways of achieving a special central riverfront area.
- Stakeholder engagement in the Central Reach’s future through a variety of partnerships including but not limited to property owners, developers, business people, residents, recreation enthusiasts, Native Americans, visitors, and government officials is necessary for success.
- Participants also emphasized the need to improve human access to the riverfront and the river as a high priority.
- With more people experiencing the riverfront area and river, there will be more interesting activities and uses, resulting in more river advocates.

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# Robust River Economy

The Robust River Economy session participants had lively table conversations in response to specific questions. The first question was about achieving a successful Central Reach overall. The remaining questions sought input on enhancing commercial boating opportunities, promoting desirable commercial and cultural/historic/educational, uses and characterizing integrated riverfront commerce. See Appendix B for the workshop's agenda and questions discussed in the Robust River Economy session.

## Overarching Themes

*Six overarching themes emerged from session discussions and written comments:*

- 1. Promote the identity of the Willamette River Central Reach as the Central City's and region's major gathering place.** This starts with basic identification of the river. Many people who cross the river do not even know that it is the Willamette River. Others do not know that the Willamette River is cleaner than it used to be and is now swimmable. Additional promotional efforts are needed to welcome people to and in to the river. This includes: informational markers and displays along the greenway trail educating visitors about the Willamette River, and signage for swimming, boating and fishing opportunities.
- 2. Develop the Willamette River Central Reach's sense of place.** One participant said, "the river needs to be something we are all proud of." The Central Reach has a rich natural and cultural history from the fish and other wildlife that have traversed the area and the first Native Americans who used the river for transport, sustenance and commerce. This history is followed by European settlement and the continued and expanded use of the river for transportation, commerce and recreation. Many people want to see the history, culture, art and ecology of the river and river-related past displayed for all to learn and experience. One big idea is a permanent location for a maritime museum, as part of a larger maritime heritage center with historic boats, boat building displays and maritime artifacts.

- 4. Expand commercial boating in the Central Reach.** Many participants expressed a desire for commercial boating in the Central Reach, Commercial boating can be river transit, local excursion boats and cruise ships. These uses require infrastructure such as docks, restrooms, fueling stations, and nearby amenities including hotels, attractions, restaurants and transportation services to serve commercial boat patrons. To make this work, existing docks may need updating to provide for more diverse boat users. Specific suggestions as to how commercial boating could occur in the primary opportunity areas are mentioned below.
- 5. Support recreational boating.** There is an unmet demand for boating along the Central Reach and not enough amenities to support it. Recreational boating can play an important role in commercial success in the Central Reach with boaters visiting area businesses, events and attractions. Operators of motorized and non-motorized pleasure crafts want easy access to boat storage, vehicular parking, a central fueling station, more docks or places for boat tie-ups so that they can explore river front destinations and use boat rental services.
- 6. Refine and streamline regulations and permitting to allow more commerce in the Central Reach.** Examples include allowing cruise ship docking in the zoning code, the city taking an active role in helping to get permits for docks and floating use structures in the river, and restructuring the Greenway river bank planting requirements.



- 3. Preserve current commercial and recreational uses and promote new ones.** Focus activities in clustered areas (see location foci below) that are compatible with recreation and transportation within Tom McCall Waterfront Park or residences that are close to the riverfront. Promoting commercial success along the Central Reach will help to enhance the sense of place and identity.



## Location Foci

Session attendees identified three major opportunity areas along the river's Central Reach to help develop a robust river economy, as well as other locations where such economic growth could occur at a smaller scale. Clustering development and activities provides a synergy of human activity along/in the river that fosters commercial success.

The three primary places are the Rose Center/Convention Center and the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) areas on the eastside, and the Tom McCall Waterfront Park area on the westside.

Smaller, more concentrated areas of commercial activities are Centennial Mills to the northwest and Riverplace and the Zidell property to the southwest.

All of these places can be considered for possible river transportation hubs.

### A. Rose Quarter and Convention Center Area

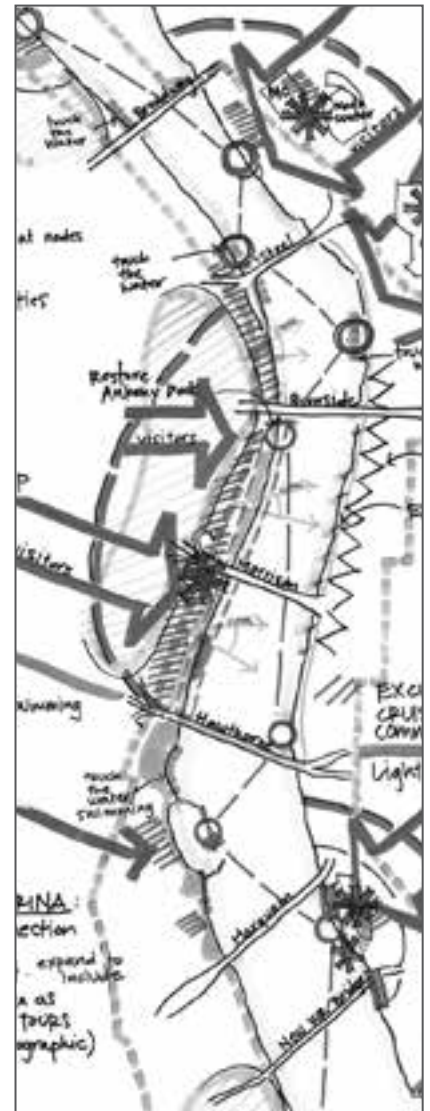
- Improve access to the riverfront's "back door" from the Convention Center.
- Provide more commercial and entertainment opportunities in the Rose Quarter, at the Thunderbird site and near the riverfront to draw people to the area and to the river.
- Enhance boat moorage so that boaters can access activities at this opportunity area.

### B. OMSI Area

- Provide more commercial uses and entertainment/activities in the area and close to the river.
- Split the greenway trail for pedestrian and bicyclists (due to heavy bicycle traffic) and provide quiet/contemplative gathering spaces.
- Add pedestrian/bicycle access to the light rail bridge from the greenway trail.
- Locate more cultural/historic attractions.
- Provide for light watercraft uses including a boat building school or boating center.
- Provide more boat access and mooring opportunities.

### C. Tom McCall Waterfront Park

- Provide more activities and commercial uses in clusters like small retail kiosks, to enliven the park year-round and in the evening.
- Add infrastructure for and allow the docking of cruise ships and other commercial boats.
- Promote cultural/historic attractions and events including a boat festival and docking of historic vessels.
- Step down the seawall where feasible to create more access to the river and more riparian vegetation.
- Improve the Hawthorne Bowl for swimming and shallow water habitat restoration.
- Separate bicyclists and pedestrians along the greenway trail.
- Enhance park area by developing unique spaces with different functions.



## Other Ideas

Many interesting comments were shared during the Robust Economy discussion. Here are a few that don't fit within the overarching themes or aren't specific to a location:

- Leadership to advance a robust river economy is necessary.
- Close bridges periodically for events.
- Complete the greenway trail in Central Reach.
- Consider a location for water-based aircraft landing and docking.

# Healthy River Session

The health of the Willamette River has improved over the past 50 years. While people can now swim and fish in the Central City, there is still work to do. During the Healthy River session, participants were asked to discuss how river bank redevelopment and river-related uses can be compatible with fish and wildlife habitat. See Appendix B for the workshop's agenda and questions discussed in the Healthy River session.

## Overarching Themes

*There were four overarching themes that emerged from participant discussions at small tables and written comments received from the public:*

### 1. Human access and habitat can be compatible.

Swimming can be compatible with fish habitat in the Central City. Swimming generally occurs from July to September, which is in between fish migration. Simple in-water enhancements, such as removing old riprap/rocks and allowing sand and silt to accumulate, can improve both fish habitat and swimming. A suggestion was made that new or replaced docks used for launching boats, swimming platforms or as floating walkways be eight feet wide or narrower. Skinny docks allow light to penetrate under the structure and limit the ability of predatory fish to prey on juvenile fish.

2. **Maintain shallow water habitat for fish.** There are few existing shallow water areas in the Central Reach. Shallow water is very important for juvenile fish as they migrate out to the Columbia River. The Central Reach of the Willamette is a bottleneck between the upstream tributaries and the Columbia River. Juvenile fish need shallow water areas to escape the strong flows of the river, to rest and to rear. Participants recommended that existing shallow water areas at the Terminal 1 bay, Centennial Mills, McCormick Pier, I-5/I-84 interchange, Hawthorne Bowl and Riverplace be maintained. Maintaining shallow water areas means not dredging and not creating new over-water structures that significantly limit light. By allowing the natural processes of the river to deposit silt and sand in existing shallow water areas, these areas will continue to be used by fish. The design of development and planned uses needs to be supportive of shallow water habitat. For example, replacing docks, where possible, with docks that are eight feet wide or narrower, limiting use of riprap adjacent to shallow water and replanting river banks with native vegetation are habitat-supportive strategies.



### 3. Be strategic about river bank enhancement.

Where the river bank is not a sea wall or pilings, there is an opportunity for enhancement by replacing non-native and invasive plants with native plants. Session participants felt that in the Central Reach the majority of the vegetation should be native shrubs and native groundcover. Trees should be strategically planted, where appropriate. Plantings should also be done to correspond with the varying water levels. In some areas it may be necessary to reduce the steepness of the bank before planting. Ongoing maintenance of enhanced river banks is very important to ensure long-term success.

4. **Create upland wildlife movement corridors.** Although the focus of the session was the Willamette River and its bank, wildlife such as birds and butterflies also move through the developed landscape adjacent to the river. Enhancing two wildlife corridors, one from the west hills to the river and one along the park blocks through the Pearl District, is needed to make sure that wildlife can safely move through downtown. Enhancement should include planting street trees, adding more eco-roofs, planting native shrubs and groundcover plants within parks, and using bird-friendly building design.





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## Location Foci

The Healthy River session attendees reviewed and discussed specific locations that are likely to experience a lot of change over the next 25 years and offered the following ideas. These suggestions show how redevelopment and habitat enhancement might go hand-in-hand.

### A. McCormick Pier

- Maintain shallow water habitat.
- Move the greenway trail on to a floating dock that also provides in-water habitat.
- Add and maintain native shrubs and groundcover to the riverbank.

### B. Thunderbird Site (if the railroad line moves)

- Lay back the bank.
- Add and maintain native vegetation to the bank and strategically include trees.
- Improve public access with a new trail at the top of bank.

### C. I-5/I-84 Interchange

- Maintain shallow water habitat.
- Add and maintain native shrubs and groundcover on the bank.
- Create a connection from the river to a future Sullivan's Gulch Trail.
- Consider adding a floating artificial structure with in-water habitat.

### D. Waterfront Park

- Create a step-down to the river.
- Replace older trees with native trees.
- Add and maintain native shrubs and groundcover within the park.

### E. Hawthorne Bowl

- Maintain shallow water habitat by removing rocks.
- Allow some sand and gravel fill within the water for fish and swimming.
- Add permanent mooring structures for transient boats to reduce anchoring in the shallow water habitat.
- Consider adding a floating dock, 8 feet wide or narrower, for swimming and transient boats.
- Re-contour the upland portions to improve use for events.
- Strategically integrate native trees and shrubs into the riprap at the north and south ends of the bowl.
- Encourage swimming from July to September.

### F. Riverplace

- If the dock is replaced, a new dock should be eight feet wide or narrower to lessen the impact on fish habitat.
- Maintain recent riverbank plantings.
- Consider adding a floating artificial structure with in-water habitat.

### G. Eastbank Crescent/Light Watercraft Center

- Consider laying back the bank here to increase floodplain, create riparian habitat and make human access to the dock easier (less steep).
- Add and maintain native shrubs and groundcover to the bank.
- Encourage swimming from July to September.



## H. OMSI Area

- Consider laying back the bank south of OMSI.
- Take advantage of views downstream to Ross Island and Holgate Channel.
- Add and maintain native shrubs and groundcover to the bank.
- Consider adding a floating laboratory.

## I. South Waterfront

- Maintain riverbank vegetation.
- Consider adding a new dock, eight feet wide or narrower, for light watercraft access to the river.

## Other Ideas

Many interesting ideas were brought up during the Healthy River discussion. Here are a few that don't fit within the overarching themes and are not specific to a location. Some of these ideas are also related to next steps in the CC2035 process.

- Create a habitat enhancement fund in-lieu of continual replanting within the Greenway.
- Consider a speed limit in the Central Reach of the Willamette River.
- South of Marquam Bridge/OMSI needs to have more concentration on small watercraft, passive recreation and less commercial uses.
- Explore use of innovative filtration techniques to remove soil pollutants.



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# Vibrant Riverfront Districts

Participants in the Vibrant Riverfront Districts session engaged in small table mapping discussions about the following three topics: 1) Connections and Open Spaces; 2) Culture, History and Attractions; and 3) Bridges and Riverfront Development.

For Connections and Open Spaces, people identified opportunities for additional open spaces and places to touch the water, as well as where to improve connections to the river and from the bridges. Discussions ensued as to how and where the historic and cultural significance of the Willamette River could be emphasized and where new river-related historic and cultural attractions might be located. Then attendees identified development opportunity areas and where changes to development allowances might be considered along the riverfront.

## Overarching Themes

*A number of overarching themes emerged (some of which echoed discussions from earlier sessions):*

**1. Increase human access to the water.** When people have more opportunities to physically touch and swim in the water, they will be more likely to advocate for river health and to invest in the waterfront's future. While there are currently areas where swimming and wading in the water is possible, these places should be enhanced with infrastructure that supports and encourages human access. Ideas included floating structures or buoys, restrooms and changing areas, and replacing portions of the seawall with physical steps into the river. Some places devoted to swimming could also support light watercraft launch areas and community boathouses, where appropriate.



**2. Cluster commercial uses and attractions to concentrate waterfront activities.** More retail businesses and other activities, such as swimming and light watercraft launches, and cultural and historic features are desirable if clustered with existing or planned attractions at key destinations. Co-locating is recommended to ensure visibility and long-term business and activity success because these places already attract or have the potential to attract visitors. Spatially distributed use/activity areas would also help support a future water transit system. See locational foci.

**3. Resolve difficult pedestrian and bicycle connections in key places or create better connections to the river.** Several areas along the waterfront suffer from poor connections that result in fewer visitors, both to and from the water. A few new/enhanced connections could catalyze more activities, especially where high visibility and visitor traffic already has potential to increase.

Currently the Willamette Greenway Trail connects Riverplace Marina to points north but does not yet connect to South Waterfront. Access from Riverplace Marina west to PSU and downtown is constrained by steep slopes and heavy traffic along Harbor Drive, Naito Parkway, and SW Harrison Street. In addition, the Steel Bridge ramps are a barrier at the northern edge of Tom McCall Waterfront Park and for east-west pedestrian and bicycle access to the Steel Bridge and the greenway trail from NW Flanders. These ramps may be underutilized and could potentially be removed. More deliberate east-west connections shown in recent West Quadrant concepts would help to support access and visibility to these locations.

On the east side, workshop participants proposed three potential key connections to the riverfront: Access from the Rose Quarter to the Thunderbird site and down to the river, a "back door" from the Convention Center to the river, and a Greenway Trail connection to OMSI's new streetcar bridge. Connecting areas visited by out-of-towners to the waterfront is a key opportunity to bring more people to the river.

**4. Make the Central Reach more attractive.** While many workshop attendees stated that the Willamette River lacks a recognizable identity, many participants saw the central core of the Central Reach — the area between the Steel and Hawthorne Bridges — as particularly unattractive. The Eastbank Freeway on one side and the seawall on the other were seen as “eyesores” that often get “cropped out” of photos when visitors and residents try to capture the essence of the Willamette River from the downtown or the greenway trail. Some participants expressed that when visitors come to the water’s edge from close-in tourist destinations, they “turn back around” because there’s “nothing to look at.” Potential solutions ranged from cutting into the seawall with steps down to the river, and using art, historic or cultural artifacts, or landscape to screen either the seawall or the freeway. The most frequently mentioned ideas focused on cutting back the bank where possible to bring people closer to the river and the river closer to people, so that the water’s edge doesn’t feel so far removed or ugly.

**5. Incorporate new open spaces with future riverfront development.** The most frequent opportunities for new open spaces are directly related to potential new riverfront development — including Centennial Mills, the Zidell site in South Waterfront, OMSI, the ODOT blocks and the Thunderbird site. As these areas begin to fill in, new open spaces with a direct relationship to the river — with human access, where possible — can be a part of the mix.

**6. Increase bridge function and access.** Bridges are not only historic gems but may offer activities, focus, and additional function. Periodic weekend closing of bridges could provide event space with a more river-centric focus. In addition, many bridges lack bank access on both sides, resulting in a missed opportunity for increased trail entrances and riverfront activity. The notion of allowing more flexibility within new bridgehead development in exchange for increased bridge to bank access is a potential solution. On the Eastside, increasing access using the viaducts by providing more upper story access where buildings abut the bridges. Underneath the viaducts, ideas for more river-related storage, such as kayaks and canoes, could meet the needs of light watercraft users and increase the visibility of river recreation. There was a call for the Central Reach process to identify barriers to increase bridge function and find ways to celebrate bridges through lighting, greenery and signage, and provide more access.



## Location Foci

### A. Centennial Mills

- A clustered mix of uses and activities and access to the river.
- Showcase marine and cultural artifacts.

### B. Thunderbird site

- A clustered mix of uses and activities and access to the river, Memorial Coliseum and the Rose Quarter.

### C. ODOT Property in Central Eastside

- Opportunity site for a cluster of mixed-uses and activities and access to the riverfront.

### D. Tom McCall Waterfront Park

- A prime location for a Maritime Center and festivals, including wooden boats and a cultural center that features the Oregon Maritime Museum's Steamer Portland, the PT Boat, and small wooden boats or antique classic boats. This area would need adequate dock space to accommodate these attractions and other commercial boats.
- Separated bicycle and pedestrian pathways along the greenway trail and/or using cobblestones to slow bicyclists down when sharing the trail with pedestrians.

### E. Morrison Bridge

- Future public market at bridgehead presents an opportunity to cluster additional uses and activities near the riverfront by the Morrison Bridge.

### F. Hawthorne Bowl

- A clustered mix of uses and activities including access to the river.

### G. OMSI

- A clustered mix of uses and activities including enhanced access to the river.
- Split paths are envisioned — one that is quiet and contemplative, with spaces for gathering and another that is more active-recreation and cyclist-oriented.
- Showcase marine and cultural artifacts.

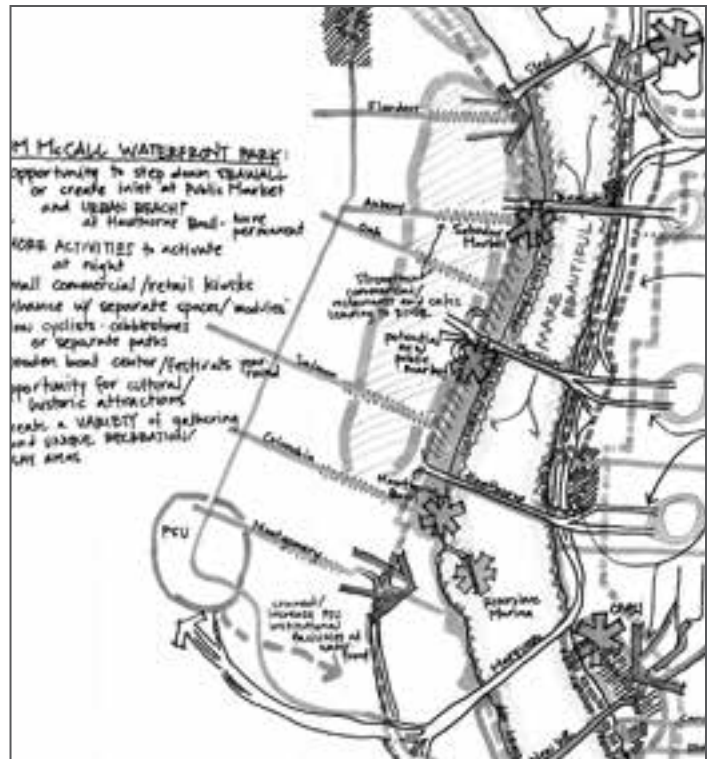
### H. South Waterfront

- A neighborhood and employment center with a clustered mix of uses and activities highlighted by a model greenway corridor along the waterfront.
- Zidell development as a cluster of uses and activities.
- Access to the river for swimming and light watercraft.
- Showcase marine and cultural artifacts.

## Other Ideas

Other ideas discussed during the Vibrant Riverfront Districts session include:

- Green Fingers: Participants generally supported the westside location of "green fingers," a few east-west streets terminating at the river with increased tree canopy and features that are more pedestrian and bicycle-oriented. On the eastside, several streets were discussed that could be explored further: Ankeny, Salmon, and Clay.



# Open House and Integrated Topics Discussion

Planning staff spent most of workshop Day Two reviewing and visually compiling the public comments received at the Day One sessions described above. Staff prepared mapped illustrations of key ideas from the topical sessions and then developed three questions to further investigate with participants at the Integrated Topics discussion. See topical thematic illustrations in Appendices C, D and E. This session was preceded by an Open House where participants could see the results of Day One, talk with planning staff and provide additional comments for consideration. The Integrated Topics conversation centered on Central Reach-wide focus areas for activities, improving visual appeal and interest in river banks and riverfront, and invigorating the eastside riverfront between Burnside and Marquam bridges. Participants also provided other reach-related suggestions. The following summarizes what staff learned via the group discussion and written comments provided by participants:

- 1. View Central City and the river banks from the river's perspective and celebrate the river** as the city's major natural feature as opposed to concentrating on the bridges that cross the Willamette. An idea brought up to celebrate the river is to have play structures, (e.g. dugout canoe) for children or river-related art work at locations where "green fingers" meet the river front. Also, develop an iconic skyline over time and have historic vessels docked along the riverfront along with other interesting elements, for those on the river to behold. Finally, "green" the river banks with native vegetation and provide nodes of trees to provide resting areas for birds and humans.
- 2. Address the needs of watercraft users** with amenities such as boat storage for light watercraft under bridges, off-street parking for boaters to access stored boats, and more multi-use moorage and tie up opportunities. Also provide other amenities such as shelters, restrooms and commercial uses like coffee shops and cafés to supplement in-river activities. Non-motorized watercraft owners raised the need for an expanded speed limit area or no wake zone in the Central Reach. Currently the only area with a speed limit is Holgate Channel. Boaters also requested a boat docking area near the Rose Quarter and Oregon Convention Center .
- 3. Take advantage of environmental commerce opportunities (e.g. ecotourism) and be vigilant of environmental impacts** that new development and uses might bring to Ross Island and the Holgate Channel area. Be aware of the potential loss of quiet contemplative spaces.
- 4. Improve the central eastside riverfront area** (between Burnside and Morrison bridges) by increasing native vegetation along banks and establishing vertical "green walls" along the sides of the Interstate-5 structure. Also, improve human access from the east to the Eastbank Esplanade and to the river. There is the potential for swimming, watercraft rentals or a boat school in this vicinity. In the future, bury Interstate-5 on the Central Eastside to improve on-street access to and the quality of the riverfront area. The ODOT property can bring increased access, views and activities when redeveloped.



# Appendix A. Willamette Reach Central Reach Working Group Handout



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability  
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## Willamette River Central Reach Working Group Central City 2035 Plan October 21, 2013

### Purpose

The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) is completing a comprehensive update to the 1988 Central City Plan called Central City 2035 (CC2035). At the heart of the Central City is the central reach of the Willamette River, stretching from north of I-405 to south of the Ross Island Bridge (see map).



Project staff are forming a Central Reach Working Group (CRWG) to augment other public involvement activities. This open group will provide opportunities for river-focused discussions that consider the river holistically across subdistricts, and inform the larger planning efforts. Key topics are:

- Water-based recreation and activities.
- Access to and along the river.
- Fish and wildlife habitat.
- River commerce.
- River transit and associated infrastructure.
- New development and uses close to the river.
- Educational and cultural opportunities.

Currently, planning staff are developing quadrant plans for the west side and southeast (Central Eastside) parts of the Central City. Staff recently completed the North/Northeast Quadrant Plan. The quadrant plans include goals, policies and actions, including potential zoning changes that will be integrated into an overarching CC2035 Plan. Public involvement processes for the West and Southeast quadrant plans are underway with Stakeholder Advisory Committees (SAC) and other input opportunities and events. Comments from the CRWG discussions will be shared with project staff and the SACs to inform group discussions and help shape planning products.

Building on work that has already been done, the CRWG will help frame key issues and opportunities, as well as offer suggestions that will contribute to broader public discussions and products for each quadrant plan and the CC2035 Plan. Working group participants are encouraged to bring information back to organizations they might represent and/or participate in the larger Central City planning efforts to provide Willamette River-related perspectives. CRWG input will also inform future work on CC2035 implementation.



## **Composition**

The CRWG is open to interested members of Central City stakeholder advisory committees, the 2035 Concept Plan and symposium participants, and other members of the public. People who are interested in and have expertise in the following areas (with examples provided) are especially encouraged to participate:

- Water based-recreation and activities (boating and docks or ramps, swimming and docks or beaches).
- Access to and along the river (trails, street connections, etc.).
- Fish and wildlife habitat (in-water and riparian enhancement, restoration, mitigation).
- River commerce (river-dependent industries, tour boats: day tours, and longer term).
- River transit and associated infrastructure (taxis, ferries, docks).
- New development and uses close to the river (river-related or river-enhanced development, such as restaurants, etc.).
- Educational and cultural opportunities (OMSI, tribal, etc.).
- Public agencies and nonprofit organizations associated with any of the above topics.

## **Meetings and Timeline**

The CRWG will meet periodically throughout the Central City 2035 planning process. Staff expects to hold a minimum of three gatherings in fall/winter/spring 2013-14. The *initial concept for upcoming meetings is:*

### ***Two-Day Central Reach Workshop (December 4 & 5, 2013):***

Two-day event to build on work and comments received related to the Willamette River and more closely analyze river-related topics and issues, opportunities and themes; generate ideas and suggestions about how to optimize the Willamette River as the heart of the overall Central City. A detailed agenda will be available prior to the event. Day One will include specific public discussions on a robust river economy, a healthy river, and vibrant riverfront districts; along with drop-in times for review and input. Day Two will be a staff working day to process Day One feedback and will culminate with an open house and facilitated public conversation integrating all river-related topics. For those new to Central City planning, there will be an opportunity to learn more about the CC2035 projects and planning processes.

### ***Follow-up Meeting (Spring 2014)***

Reporting out results from the December workshop and subsequent follow-up with West and Southeast Quadrant Stakeholder Advisory Committees; group discussion about how to best integrate these results into the quadrant plans and/or the CC2035 Plan. Meeting discussion will also identify topics and issues for further work.

### ***Ongoing***

This CRWG will be invited to participate in the process as the quadrant plans are finalized, the Central City 2035 Plan is developed and staff move into plan implementation.

## **Learn more about and follow Central City Planning**

For more information about the Central City 2035 planning effort, including the current West Quadrant and Southeast Quadrant processes; please go to:

<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/CC2035> .

## **You're Invited**

Come join the Central Reach Working Group at the Central Reach Workshop, on December 4 & 5, 2013, at the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, 1900 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 7100, Conference Room 7A (7<sup>th</sup> floor). Contact Debbie Bischoff (see her information below) to receive the workshop agenda when available.

You can't make the first event? No problem. Just let Debbie know you'd like to be informed of future meetings. She can be reached at [Debbie.bischoff@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Debbie.bischoff@portlandoregon.gov) or 503-823-6946.





# Appendix B. Workshop Agenda with Session Questions



## **Willamette River Central Reach Workshop - December 4 & 5, 2013** **1900 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, 7<sup>th</sup> floor, Conference Room 7A**

### AGENDA

#### ***Workshop Purpose***

- To holistically examine issues and opportunities related to the Willamette River in the Central City, building upon work and comments received to date.

#### ***Desired Outcome***

- Develop a Willamette River concept layer to fold into the Central City 2035 (CC2035) quadrant planning processes and upcoming work products including revisions to the overall CC2035 Plan and Willamette Greenway Plan and code.

### **December 4**

**7:30-9:30 AM**

#### **Robust River Economy Topic Discussion**

*Exploring how and where to support and enhance existing and future in-water and rivers-edge businesses*

#### **Questions Posed at Session:**

1. Robust River Economy – We’ve heard that a robust river economy in the Central Reach means promoting water-based and land-side activities related to: tourism, commerce, education/culture and transportation. Do you agree with this notion? What’s missing?
2. Commercial Boating – Where does it make sense to locate the following: river transit stops, local excursion boats, small-medium size cruise ships and water craft rentals?
3. Commercial Boating – What do these attractions and uses (from question 2.) need to be successful?
4. General/Supportive Commercial – Where does it make sense to encourage additional river-related businesses: restaurants/cafes and shops?
5. Cultural/Historic/Educational – How might we highlight the culture and history of the river in a way that would educate the public and might also enhance the economy?
6. Integrated Central Reach Commerce – What would help “knit” together businesses and attractions in the Central Reach?
7. Commercial Success – Are there actions related to zoning uses/regulations, partnerships, investments and other strategies that could help facilitate a robust river economy?



10-11:30 AM Public Drop-in Time

**11:30 AM–1:30 PM Healthy River Topic Discussion**

*Exploring the integration of habitat restoration with uses, including recreation, boating and development*

Questions Posed at Session:

For each of the following four locations, please answer these three questions:

1. What kinds of development and uses might be compatible with habitat restoration? (development is docks, buildings, trails, etc.; uses are swimming, parking, boating, etc.)
2. What are the minimum requirements for habitat restoration that should be considered when developing new or expanding existing uses?
3. What are the minimum requirements for development that should be considered when restoring habitat?

Location 1: I-5/I-84 Interchange

Location 2: Hawthorne Bowl/Riverplace

Location 3: West Bank Connectivity (South Waterfront, Riverplace, Hawthorne Bowl, Waterfront Park, McCormick Pier to Centennial Mills)

Location 4: Southeast Bank (Eastbank Crescent, OMSI Station to Holgate Channel)

4. Additional Questions: Are there habitat enhancement projects that would have a larger bang for the buck than other projects? Are there projects that would have a multiplier effect in terms of watershed health?

1:30–2 PM Public Drop-in Time

4–5 PM Public Drop-in Time

**5–8 PM Vibrant Riverfront Districts Topic Discussion**

*Exploring ways to enliven the riverfront through connections/access, culture/history, attractions and open spaces, and nearby development*

Questions Posed at Session:

1. Where are opportunities for additional gathering and open spaces and places to physically touch the water? Where and how can existing open spaces be enhanced?
2. How and where can connections to both sides of the river, especially the Eastbank Esplanade, be improved?
3. How and where should connections from on and off the bridges be added?
4. How and where can the historic and cultural significance of the Willamette River be emphasized along the riverfront?
5. What new or enhanced river-related historic and cultural attractions could bring more people to the river front? (e.g. center for wooden boats, riverfront/maritime museum or displays, Native American interpretive center, new works of art, regularly-occurring bridge event, etc.)



6. How can development at bridgehead locations enliven the riverfront?
7. Where might more development flexibility be considered along the riverfront areas?
8. What/where are the riverfront development opportunities to help create "vibrant riverfront districts" on the east side of the river?
9. What are the biggest opportunities and priorities for activating the riverfront and bringing more people to it?
10. What are the short-term "early wins" to add more vitality to the riverfront?

### **December 5**

4-5 PM                                      Open House to Showcase Workshop Materials from  
December 4

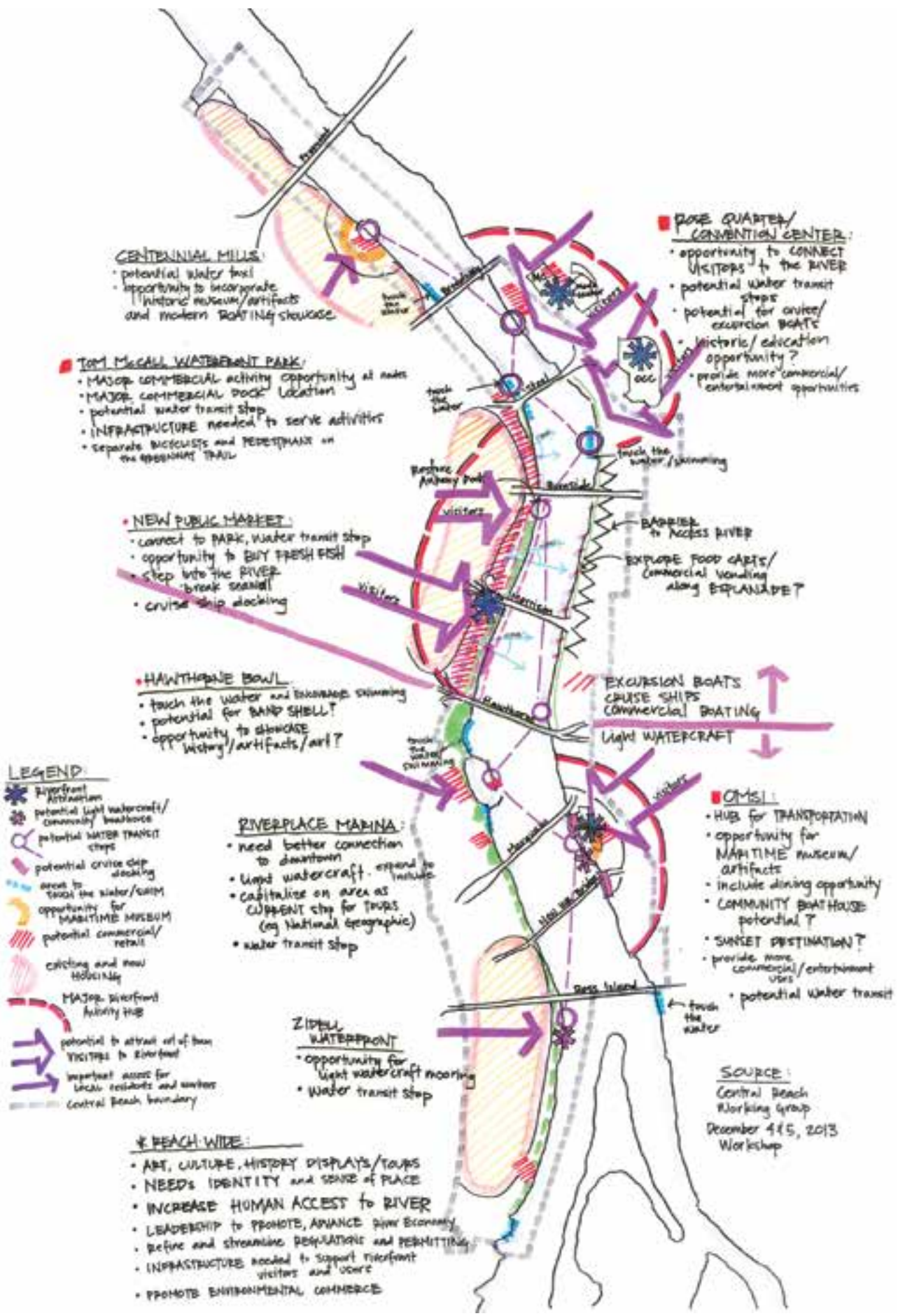
### **5-7 PM                                      Facilitated Conversation Integrating All Topics**

#### Questions Posed at Session:

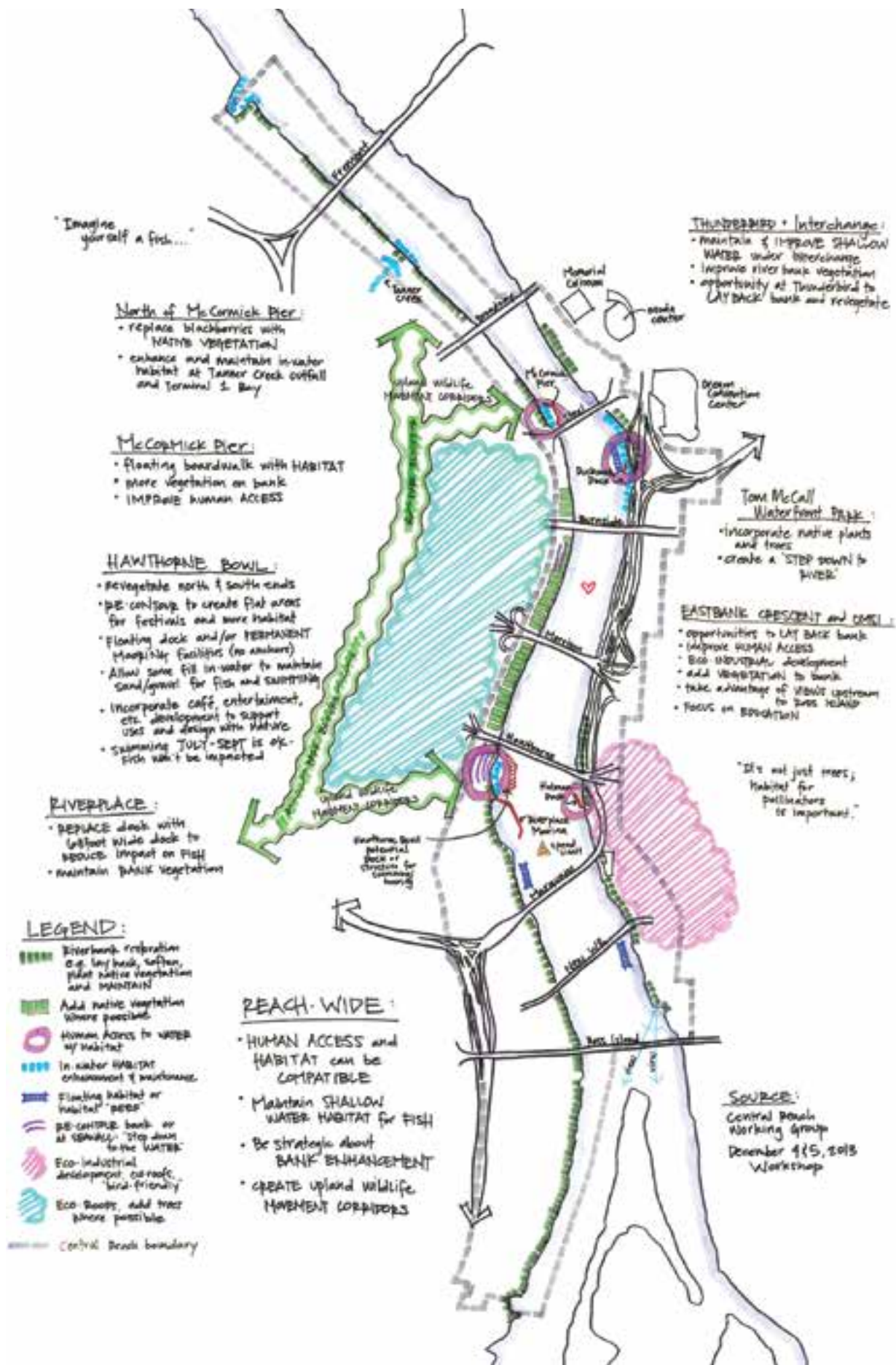
1. The maps in the room show desired focus areas and activities. Are these the right focus areas and activities? What kinds of infrastructure and amenities are needed to realize this vision?
2. How can we make the riverfront and river banks more visually appealing and interesting? This is a city of bridges. How can we best celebrate them?
3. How can we invigorate the central eastside riverfront between the Marquam Bridge and the Burnside Bridge?
4. Other ideas?



# Appendix C. Robust River Economy Summary Illustration



# Appendix D. Healthy River Summary Illustration



# Appendix E. Vibrant Waterfront Districts Summary Illustration

