

Portland is known for its green spaces and proximity to natural wonders like the Columbia River Gorge and Mount Hood. The city is also known as an incubator for progressive urban planning, environmentally conscious public policy, and the sustainable development movement. Following are examples of what makes Portland a success story among “green” cities worldwide.

Green Spaces

- Portland’s scenic Gov. Tom McCall Waterfront Park was once a four-lane highway. Civic leaders removed the freeway in the 1970s, reconnecting downtown to the Willamette River.
- Portland is home to both the nation’s largest urban wilderness – the 5,000-acre Forest Park – and the world’s smallest dedicated park, Mill Ends Park (24 inches in size).
- The Portland metro area boasts 37,000 acres of parkland.
- Portland has 288 public parks and 166 miles of trails.
- All Oregon cities have an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Portland’s UGB, which is managed by Metro, a regional government agency, is an example of successful urban planning.

Green Lifestyle

Recycling

- Oregon introduced the first bottle bill in the United States in 1971.
- Portlanders recycled 54 percent of their waste in 2001, more than any other U.S. city. – *Waste News*

Transportation

- More than 5,000 Portlanders commute to work by bicycle. (2000 U.S. Census)
- Portland boasts 246 miles of developed bikeways: 29 miles of bicycle boulevards, and 156 miles of lanes.
- Portland’s Airport MAX light rail was the first train-to-plane transportation option on the West Coast.
- The Portland Streetcar is the only modern streetcar system in the nation.
- Portland, through a grant with The Climate Trust, is retiming the traffic signals at 81 intersections to reduce fuel consumption by 470,000 gallons of gas per year and decrease carbon CO₂ emissions by more than 4,000 tons per year.
- Portland’s “smart” parking meters are solar-powered, accept credit cards and stand one per block. A sticker is issued for each vehicle and is transferable to other spaces.
- Portland is the birthplace of car-sharing in the United States. Today, Portland’s Flexcar members enjoy access to a fleet of vehicles located throughout the metro area. Each Flexcar replaces an estimated six cars on the road.

Sustainable Building Practices

- The Oregon Convention Center's "Rain Garden" collects storm water from the facility's roof and filters it through an attractive system of rock terraces, pools, and soil, helping to prevent environmental pollutants from reaching the adjacent Willamette River.
- Ecotrust's Jean Vollum Natural Capital Center is the first gold-rated LEED-certified building in Oregon and the first gold-rated LEED-certified historic restoration in the nation. Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design (LEED) certification is awarded under the strict standards developed by the U.S. Green Building Council.
- Portland currently boasts the most LEED-certified buildings per capita in the nation.
- In November 2004, Portland hosted the U.S. Green Building Council International Conference and Exposition. The exposition is one of the world's largest showcases of leading-edge technology, product, and services for the green building industry.

Green Accolades

- America's "Best running town" and "Best urban running trail: the Leif Erickson Trail" – *Runner's World* (May 2003)
- "America's most unwired city" (best wireless Internet accessibility in the nation) – Intel Survey (March 2003)
- "The City of Portland has a nationally recognized reputation for green building innovation and outreach." – U.S. Green Building Council (2003)
- "Top Recycler Among the Nation's 30 Largest Cities" – *Waste News* (2001)
- "North America's No. 1 Cycling City" – *Bicycling* magazine (2001)
- Portland's Forest Park ranked "Best urban park" in the nation – *Outside* magazine (Oct. 2001)

Green Portland Resources

Ecotrust, 503.227.6225, www.ecotrust.org

City of Portland, Office of Sustainable Development, 503.823.7222, www.sustainableportland.org

City of Portland, Office of Transportation, 503.823.5185, www.trans.ci.portland.or.us

Metro, 503.797.1700, www.metro-region.org

Oregon Convention Center, 503.235.7575, www.oregoncc.org