January 26, 2001

Dear Fellow Portlander,

Imagine a vibrant city centered on a healthy Willamette River. Look ahead to the future of Portland where natural river systems thrive and link major parks, industry, trails, neighborhoods, and neighborhoods. The future can be achieved through River Renaissance.

River Renaissance is a partnership for the revitalization of the Willamette River. This comprehensive, cooperative effort involves the city and community to integrate the river as a vital public space that connects the Willamette River to vital public spaces, neighborhoods, and regions. River Renaissance was founded by a group of people committed to revitalize the River.

This River Renaissance Vision violates three and more than four a broad community dialogue and from the vision of several including leading firms, regional and progressive. More than river Renaissance Vision a series of people, workshops, and community members have shaped many. The process has been participatory and inclusive.

A collaborative partnership of citizens, community, city, and region will transform the Willamette Vision into a reality. Together we will plan and ensure the future of the river and community engagement on both banks of the Willamette River.

I invite you to join River Renaissance. Use the following vision sheet, share it with your friends, neighbors, and associates. Get involved!

With warm regards,

[Signature]

Vera Katz
Mayor
City’s Return to the River

Fifty years ago the water was fouled. Toxic substances penetrated the sediments on the river bottom, the fish were unhealthy to eat, and the banks were lined with concrete and construction debris. Due to overflowing sewers, ‘no swim’ days were regular occurrences.

Early in the century, major investments were made to clean up the toxics in Portland Harbor and all but eliminate sewer overflows into the river.

The Willamette River in Portland is one of the earliest examples of the international trend in managing urban rivers so that watershed health and human activities co-exist and are mutually supportive. Portlanders are committed to planting native vegetation in their yards. Productive aquatic and riparian habitats throughout the city have been restored and are now protected natural areas. The river and tributaries connect these pockets of greenspace.

On any given day, children and adults assemble at the river to play soccer, fly model airplanes, throw frisbees, study the natural environment, or just doze off on a blanket. The city’s green infrastructure also supports a clean river and a wide range of fish and wildlife species.

The completed Willamette River Greenway Trail connects adjacent neighborhoods to parks, natural areas, the Central City, and the larger regional trail system. Expanded public access, informational signs, and carefully placed viewpoints enhance the waterfront making it memorable and easy to navigate.

Bicycle transportation is thriving along the Willamette River Greenway Trail, mirroring the river’s traditional function as a transportation corridor. This increased bicycle use helps to reduce our reliance on the automobile in the river corridor and reduce the toxicity of roadway runoff reaching the river.

River taxis, ferries, tour boats, and cruise ships have also made the waterfront more accessible and popular. Convenient boat access from waterfront destinations and neighborhoods is provided by access ramps, boat slips, docks, and marinas. Wake-free days and zones have made the river inviting for kayaks and canoes.

New and expanding neighborhoods and business districts along the river, especially in the Central City, have become centers of economic vitality. The river is a major contributor to the appeal, activity, and urban design of these districts.

Reconfiguring the I-5 Freeway liberated the east bank of the Central City for other uses, including the extensive Eastbank Park and a growing district of cultural institutions along Water Avenue. Reminiscence of efforts in the 1970s that replaced Harbor Drive with Tom McCall Waterfront Park, these bold initiatives have reclaimed the Central Eastside as a vibrant waterfront district.

Today, the river and tributaries are nurturing clean. The popularity of wading, swimming, and fishing in the river is a source of pride to Portlanders. City planners and resource managers now protect water quality through a watershed and regional approach. Green corridors and an extensive tree canopy absorb and filter rainwater before it reaches the river. The wooded corridors of Johnson, Tryon, and Fanno Creeks, the Columbia Slough, and smaller west side streams drain cold, clean water into the river.

The waterfront is now one of the best venues to learn about and appreciate Portland and its evolution. Early use of the river by indigenous cultures is honored at sites along the waterfront. Replicas of early Portland ships and maritime museums connect Portlanders to the city’s river and economic heritage. Remnants of historical uses and activities, such as bargeways and dock structures, are integrated into waterfront development.

Sustained leadership during the last 50 years has enabled the impressive strides made in River Renaissance. Government, business, and public collaboration have emphasized cost-sharing, local control, and certainty, encouraging reinvestment in industrial and transport facilities.

Today, the riverfront offers a rich variety of tranquil places and bustling activities that satisfy our spiritual desire to see and touch the water. Our efforts have generated true awareness and respect for nature in the city and for Portland as a city in nature.

CITY’s 200th Birthday

City’s Return to the River

Continued from Page C1

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River Renaissance 2001

A CALL TO ACTION

ren • ais • sance (rēn’-ə-sāns’, -zāns’, rē-nā’-səns) n
1. A revival: rebirth. 2. A period of revived artistic, scientific or intellectual achievement or enthusiasm

River Renaissance encompasses new initiatives and efforts already underway, including the City of Portland’s Clean River Plan, the Endangered Species Act Program, the update of the Willamette River Greenway Plan, urban renewal plans, and others. Led by the Bureau of Planning, this multi-objective initiative will align city work plans, and generate opportunities to reap multiple benefits from our investments.

The River Renaissance Vision is a sketch of the Willamette River as Portlanders would like to see it in the future. Today’s Willamette faces diverse challenges. As we celebrate our 150th year as a city and approach the 200th anniversary of Lewis and Clark’s arrival by river, it is timely to invite Portlanders to imagine the river’s possibilities well into the future, and set forth a shared vision. The Vision is a general guide for creating and integrating future action plans. It is the foundation for the continuing activities of River Renaissance.

Over one thousand Portlanders participated in River Renaissance Vision events in Fall 2000, and have their fingerprints on this Vision. It will be further refined to reflect additional public comment before endorsement by City Council in March 2001. Successful implementation of this vision will require a long-term public commitment to resolving policy issues and balancing priorities.
Acknowledge the role of the watershed as a system of natural functions integral to maintaining the health of the Willamette River. Work with upstream and downstream communities and government agencies to advance and coordinate watershed protection, restoration, and cleanup.

Improve water quality in the river and tributaries through innovative stormwater management and control of sewage flows to the river.

Advance Superfund clean-up activities to remove or isolate pollutants in Portland Harbor and at their source.

Encourage environmentally-friendly building techniques and designs to use resources efficiently and minimize adverse impacts.

Do our part to recover wild native salmon populations in the river and its tributaries.

Restore and protect streamside habitat and floodplain areas. Plant native vegetation and control invasive species along waterways and throughout the watershed. Plan, restore, and maintain the Willamette River Greenway for fish, wildlife, and people.

Improve habitat conditions in Johnson, Tryon, and Fanno Creeks, the Columbia Slough, and the smaller westside streams.

Advance our scientific knowledge of clean and healthy river systems and their restoration in an urban environment.

Restore Ross Island as a natural area in the center of our city.
maintain and enhance our PROSPEROUS WORKING HARBOR

The Economy Matters

Promote Portland as a hub for ship, barge, railroad, highway, and air transportation and as a Pacific Northwest gateway to the changing global marketplace.

Provide efficient and economical freight movement for the region’s industries and commerce.

Invest in the harbor’s industrial districts — a cornerstone of our regional economy.

Explore and adopt new technologies, designs, and industrial practices that support habitat restoration and the improvement of water quality.

Integrate regional transportation objectives into river protection and enhancement activities.

Use the Portland Harbor Superfund listing as an opportunity to create new partnerships and environmental clean-up industries and technologies.
embrace the river as 
PORTLAND’S FRONT YARD

**Draw** on the river as a place to reconnect with our history and the soul of our city.

**Acquire** lands for new and expanded parks and natural areas. Assemble an open space system that focuses on, and radiates from, the river.

**Create** opportunities for access to the water’s edge, for boating, fishing, swimming, and other river recreation activities.

**Complete** the Willamette River Greenway Trail to provide a continuous recreation and transportation corridor along both sides of the river.

**Connect** new and existing neighborhoods to and across the river, through rails, trails, bikeways, streets, view corridors, and water taxis.

**Build** a world-class monument in a prominent riverfront location.
As redevelopment occurs along the river, establish a prominent greenway with public spaces and natural places. Orient new development toward the river, and infuse buildings and neighborhoods with inspired architecture.

Strengthen the Central City by focusing on the river as a unifying feature.

Reconfigure the I-5 Freeway to bring together both sides of the Central City and to revitalize the eastside waterfront.

Create new commercial and residential areas along the river connected by diverse transit options such as water taxis.

Dedicate more of the waterfront to museums, cultural institutions, outdoor learning venues, Native American history, public art, and the interpretation of history and natural science.

Establish festivals, regattas, and sporting events to build awareness of and celebrate the river.
Assemble the River Renaissance Partners, a group of government, tribal, business, neighborhood, and environmental leaders to advocate for implementation of the Vision.

Establish a multi-jurisdictional organization responsible for managing local river improvement efforts and coordinating with upstream and downstream communities.

Inspire long-term commitment through successful early actions.

Educate and involve our diverse community to promote stewardship of the river.

Involve the schools and draw upon the energy, thoughts, and dreams of our future leaders.

Recognize that neither the public sector nor private enterprise can implement the Vision alone. Foster collaboration between public and private entities.

**PARTNERSHIP, LEADERSHIP, AND EDUCATION**
River Renaissance

LEADERSHIP

PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Vera Katz, Commissioner-in-Charge
Commissioner Jim Francesconi
Commissioner Charlie Hales
Commissioner Dan Saltzman
Commissioner Erik Sten

BUREAU DIRECTORS COORDINATION TEAM

Gil Kelley, Director, Bureau of Planning, Chair
Deborah Stein, Principal Planner, Bureau of Planning
Susan Andersson, Office of Sustainable Development
Tim Green, Office of Management and Finance
Charles Jordan, Bureau of Parks and Recreation
Marge Kallury, Office of Government Relations
Mark Kneeler, Bureau of Police
David Lane, Office of Neighborhood Involvement
Margaret Mahoney, Office of Planning and Development Review
Dean Marriott, Bureau of Environmental Services
Felicia Traide, Portland Development Commission
Vic Rheodes, Office of Transportation
Mike Rosenberger, Bureau of Water Works
Steve Rudman, Bureau of Housing and Community Development
Robert Wall, Bureau of Fire

INTERBUREAU RIVER RENAISSANCE TEAM

Sallie Edmonds, Bureau of Planning, Project Manager
Betsy Ames, Office of Mayor Vera Katz
Larry Brown, Portland Development Commission
Roger Geller, Office of Transportation
Kate Green, Office of Planning and Development Review
Barb Groover, Bureau of Planning
Barbara Hart, Bureau of Planning
Roberta Jortner, Bureau of Environmental Services
Steve Kountz, Bureau of Planning
George Lozovoy, Bureau of Parks and Recreation
Brian McMenemy, Urban Forestry Program
Jim Middaugh, Endangered Species Act Program
Kermit Robinson, Office of Planning and Development Review
Susan Schneider, Office of Government Relations
Dan Simo, Bureau of Planning
Steve Wills, Bureau of Planning
Fred Weism, Portland Development Commission
Karen Williams, Portland Development Commission

RIVER RENAISSANCE PARTNERS

Mayor Vera Katz, Chair
Rick Applegate, Consultant
Hank Ashforth, Ashforth Pacific Development, Inc.
Spenne Beebe, EcoTrust
Nina Bell, Northwest Environmental Advocates
Amanda Black, Southwest resident
Earl Blumenauer, US House of Representatives
Tim Boyle, Columbia Sportswear
David Braden, Metro
Marty Bratfield, Portland Development Commission
Margaret Carter, Urban League
Karl Chisholm, X-PMC
Wendy Dunner, RiverScape Mural Project
Jim Ellis, Wacker Siltronic
John Emrick, Norm Thompson, Inc.
John Gray, John Gray Foundation
Jerry Grossnickle, Columbia River Toxboat Association
Mark Hatfield, former US Senator
Mike Houck, Audubon Society & Coalition for Livable Future
Wallace Huntington, Huntington & Kiest
Nelson Jones, Eastbank Riverfront Project
John Kitzhaber, MD, Governor of Oregon
Tom Kloster, North Portland resident
Paige Knight, Open Meadow Learning Center
Peter Kohler, Oregon Health Sciences University
Wayne Lee, Portland General Electric
Mothe Lenske, Southeast resident
Karen Lewotsky, Oregon Environmental Council
Mike Lindberg, former City Commissioner
Diane Linn, Multnomah County Commissioner
E. Kimbark MacColl Sr., Historian
Larry Martin, Portland Trail Blazers
Rod McDowell, Central Eastside Industrial Council
Jack McGeorge, SOUL
Dave Monrich, US Army Corps of Engineers
Bob Naito, Naito Family
Janet Neuman, Lewis & Clark Law School
Ken Novack, Schnitzer Family
Robert Pampaini, Ross Island Sand & Gravel
George Passadore, Wells Fargo
Dick Reiten, Northwest Natural
John Russell, Business Leaders Roundtable
Open Meadow “Saving A Forgotten Environment” Class
Donald Sampson, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
Gene Spina, ATOP/FINA Chemicals, Inc.
Don Stephens, Brooklyn Neighborhood Association Board
Mike Thome, Port of Portland
Bennie Thurber, Portland/Vancouver Rowing Association
Jean Vollum, Vollum Family
Barbara Walker, 40 Mile Loop Trail
Tom Walsh, Lewis and Clark 2005, Inc.
Bicentennial
Gil Williams, Atlas Landscape Architecture
Travis Williams, Willamette Riverkeeper
Beverly Wilson, League of Women Voters
Jay Zidiell, Zidiell Family

get involved!

Experience the city from the river!
Participate in upcoming discussions and events.
Take part in restoration and stewardship activities.

Contact
Barbara Hart, Public Involvement Coordinator
503.823.5839 river@ci.portland.or.us

SEND US YOUR COMMENTS ...

on this Vision by March 7, 2001. Share your thoughts about priorities and next steps.

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1900 SW 4th Ave., Ste. 4100
Portland, Oregon 97201
Fax: 503.823.7800
www.planning.ci.portland.or.us

schedule

Spring 2000 - to present ➤ Define the project and gather participants
October - December 2000 ➤ Invite the public to shape the Vision
January - March 2001 ➤ Share the Vision
➤ Community meetings
➤ Commission meetings
March 21, 2001 ➤ Endorse the Vision
➤ City Council Hearing
Beginning April 2001 ➤ Convene community work groups
➤ Analyze issues and opportunities
➤ Develop policies and action strategies
➤ Promote stewardship and education
➤ Organize river-centered events
➤ Identify and initiate collaborative projects
➤ Mobilize resources
➤ Finalize long-term implementation strategies

Finalize long-term implementation strategies
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Identify and initiate collaborative projects