

Education

Master of Urban and
Regional Planning,
Portland State University

B.A. Global Economics,
University of California
at Santa Cruz

Years at

ECONorthwest: 11

Years in Industry: 16

Areas of Expertise

Policy Analysis

Housing Analysis

Brownfields

Urban Renewal

Opportunity Site Analysis

Development Incentives

Downtown Planning

Public Markets

Emily Picha, Senior Project Manager & Chief of Staff

Since joining the firm in 2012, Emily has collaborated with local governments across the Northwest to assess opportunities and barriers to revitalization and outline how public policy choices can help development pencil. She has brought this approach to dozens of housing action plans, equitable development and opportunity site strategies, brownfields projects, and infrastructure funding strategies. In addition, she has co-authored reports evaluating policy tradeoffs for inclusionary housing, rent control, and anti-displacement programs. As Chief of Staff, she manages firmwide internal projects and communications, working closely with the President. Emily is on the Urban Land Institute's NEXT Committee.

REPRESENTATIVE PROJECTS

Emily has served as Project Manager on the following projects, unless otherwise noted:

Equitable Development and Housing Action Plans

- **Gresham Housing Production Strategy—Gresham, Oregon (2022-ongoing).** Developing a prioritized list of actions that the City can take to encourage new housing development that meets the needs of the City's residents.
- **Morrow County Housing Implementation Plan—Morrow County, Oregon (2022-ongoing).** Crafting a strategy to identify funding and other actions to implement wastewater infrastructure and other amenities that can help to support new housing in Ione, Lexington, and Heppner.
- **Hood River Affordable Housing Strategy—Hood River, Oregon (2022).** Developed and refined a set of housing-related actions that the City can use to address the shortage of affordable housing in the community.
- **Clark County Housing Action Plan—Vancouver, WA (2022).** Provided housing data analysis, input on code issues, and recommendations to feed into a broader project focused identifying opportunities to encourage creation of additional housing that is affordable to low and moderate-income households within the unincorporated Vancouver Urban Growth Area.

- **East Henderson Inclusionary Housing Analysis—Henderson, NV (2021). Project Associate.** Conducted development feasibility analysis to inform Council decisions on a policy framework and potential incentives for an inclusionary housing policy.
- **Wilsonville Equitable Housing Strategy—Wilsonville, OR (2020).** Conducted market analysis and developed a strategic plan that outlines City actions that advance equitable housing in the City of Wilsonville.
- **Gresham Housing Implementation Strategy—Gresham, OR (2019). Project Associate.** Provided policy analysis to support the work of a City-convened Task Force that identified a set of actions that the City could implement to support affordable housing.
- **Cottage Grove Housing Implementation Strategy—Cottage Grove, OR (2019). Project Associate.** Worked with the City to explore how changes to incentives and regulations could spur new housing development in the city, with a specific focus on a former elementary school near downtown.
- **Equitable Housing Strategy—Beaverton, OR (2018).** Assisted with the creation of new city-wide programs to mitigate displacement in Beaverton. This included stakeholder engagement, an inventory of multi-family housing stock, research on national best practices for preserving and creating affordable housing, application of a program evaluation framework to assess the potential impacts of each tool, and assistance in framing the program requirements for implementation.
- **Southwest Corridor Equitable Housing Strategy—Portland, OR (2018).** Identified funding, partnership, and implementation strategies to support the development of affordable housing along the corridor, in advance of a 12-mile light rail investment from downtown Portland, Oregon to Tigard, Oregon.
- **Oregon City Equitable Housing Strategy—Oregon City, OR (2017).** Developed a strategy to address development barriers and incentives to the creation of affordable housing in Oregon City.

Housing Policy Projects

- **Silicon Valley Foundation Bay Area Rent Control Analysis—Bay Area, CA (2021).** Worked with the Center for Community Innovation at U.C. Berkeley, led the creation of a research brief that detailed findings on how the stringency of different rent control policies impacts development feasibility and how developers perceive different types of policies.
- **Metro Affordable Housing Bond Policy Analysis—Portland, OR (2018).** Provided economic analysis to support Metro’s stakeholder conversations in advance of the 2018 ballot measure for a regional affordable housing bond.

- **Austin CodeNEXT Density Bonus Calibration—Austin, TX (2016).** Developed a citywide development feasibility tool to determine how the City of Austin can best calibrate its density bonuses to produce affordable housing units.
- **Proud Ground Analysis of Demand for Affordable Homeownership—Portland Metro Area, OR (2016).** Led the creation of a report on existing conditions for affordable homeownership in the Portland region.
- **City of Ketchum Inclusionary Housing Analysis—Ketchum, ID (2016).** Managed an analysis of how Ketchum’s voluntary community housing program impacts the development feasibility of various development types.
- **Airbnb’s Impacts to Affordability—Portland, OR (2016).** Managed a team to produce a concise document summarizing existing host behavior and describe impacts of Airbnb’s platform on affordability in Portland.
- **Urban Land Institute Economics of Inclusionary Development Report—Nationwide (2016).** Developed an educational briefing book on the economics of inclusionary zoning.

Policy Analysis

- **Port of Portland Land Readiness—Portland, OR (2020).** Provided best practices research and policy analysis regarding an approach to improving development readiness of employment land properties in the Portland metro area.
- **Downtown Seattle Association Ground Floor Retail Strategy—Seattle, WA (2019).** Developed a series of case studies and worked with DSA as they refined their retail strategy.
- **OEDA Urban Renewal Research—Portland, OR (2018).** Provided research to support OEDA’s ongoing workplan, including gathering information on revenue generation to overlapping taxing districts, school funding issues, and return on investment to communities.
- **Willamette Falls Locks Economic Analysis—West Linn, OR (2018). Project Associate.** Studied the benefits of reopening the Willamette Falls locks to businesses, recreational users, local governments, and state agencies, with a particular focus on redevelopment impacts.
- **Beaverton Downtown Design and Development Readiness—Beaverton, OR (2017).** Provided development feasibility analysis and implementation assistance to support a downtown-wide project to fix the Development Code; removed obstacles to development; made sure density comes with design; and integrated thinking and actions about buildings, streets, parks, plazas and other essential urban elements to ensure a vibrant and livable Downtown.

- **Association of Oregon Renewal Agencies (AORA) Urban Renewal Best Practices Manual—Various, OR (2012). Project Associate.** Assisted with the development of a best practices manual for urban renewal in Oregon.

Redevelopment

- **St. Helens Millard Road RFP Development—St. Helens, OR (Ongoing).** Worked with the City to develop an RFP for a 23-acre site for medium density housing and will be helping the City to vet responses.
- **Hillsboro Block 67 Housing Market Analysis—Hillsboro, OR (2021).** Analyzed demand drivers and supply factors to help the City understand the feasibility for future development at the City-owned 3.8 acre site.
- **West Linn Urban Renewal Feasibility Analysis—West Linn, OR (2020). Project Associate.** Provided high-level feasibility analysis for a potential urban renewal area focused along the mill district in West Linn.
- **Port of Vancouver Terminal 1 Public Market Assessment and Strategic Advisement—Vancouver, WA (2019). Project Associate.** Completed a detailed market assessment, drafted a public market best practices guide, and developed materials for the Port to use in conversations with strategic partners.
- **Klamath County Fairgrounds Master Plan—Klamath County, OR (2019). Project Associate.** Created a market assessment of current facility usage and competitor facilities to inform potential new investments in the Fairgrounds Master Plan.
- **Lake County Fairgrounds Master Plan—Lake County, OR (2019). Project Associate.** Led the creation of a market assessment and implementation plan for the Fairgrounds Master Plan.
- **Clackamas County Fairgrounds Master Plan—Clackamas County, OR (2019). Project Associate.** Provided analysis of potential funding sources and governance models to support the Fairgrounds Master Plan.
- **Richland Columbia Point South Development Concepts—Richland, OR (2018).** Evaluated existing development opportunities and barriers on a large, undeveloped waterfront parcel in the City of Richland. The final deliverable was a high-level feasibility analysis on several potential development concepts to inform the City’s planning work and decision making for next steps.
- **Rockwood Rising Market Hall Business Plan—Gresham, OR (2018). Project Associate.** Provided strategic support and led the creation of a business plan for a multicultural food hall that would provide retail incubation support for emerging businesses.

- **Port of Hood River Property Asset Strategy—Hood River, OR (2018). Project Associate.** Assessed the economic value of current real estate assets and evaluated debts and other financial obligations to help develop a strategy for property disposition, leasing, and acquisition.
- **St. Helens Waterfront RFQ Development—St. Helens, OR (2017).** As follow-on work to the waterfront framework plan and urban renewal plan, helped the City of St. Helens recruit a developer for the waterfront site by developing a request for qualifications document and working with the City staff to run a selection process.
- **Lincoln High Site Development Feasibility—Portland, OR (2015).** Provided project management related to redevelopment of the high school and options for alternative funding streams.
- **Archdiocese of Portland Master Plan—Portland, OR (2015).** Provided project management related to redevelopment of the key parcels in the area, alternatives for funding streams.

Corridor & Small Area Action Planning

- **Pittsburgh Hill District Master Plan Update—Pittsburgh, PA (2022).** Working with the Hill District CDC to develop and prioritize a set of actions that can advance the community's priorities around community wealth generation, placemaking, and anti-displacement.
- **Astoria Waterfront Master Plan—Astoria, OR (2022).** Analyzed the economic and development implications of different investments that the Port of Astoria could make on its waterfront.
- **Ellensburg Pearl Street Activation Analysis—Ellensburg, WA (2022).** Conducted stakeholder engagement and case study research to analyze the impacts of partial or full closure of a key downtown street.
- **Newport South Beach / US 101 Refinement Plan—Newport, OR (2021).** Working with the City's Urban Renewal Agency to identify and prioritize a set of infrastructure and placemaking investments for the remaining life of the urban renewal area.
- **East Henderson Investment Strategy—Henderson, NV (2019). Project Associate.** Assisted the Henderson Redevelopment Agency to assess the area's conditions and identify clear strategies for implementation.
- **Hood River Industrial Demand Assessment—Hood River (2019). Project Associate.** Assisted the Port of Hood River with understanding the level of demand for industrial development within their region to support conversations regarding future development at Lot 1 on the Hood River Waterfront.

- **Coos Bay Front Street Action Plan—Coos Bay, OR (2017).** Managed a multidisciplinary team to develop a vision and series of next steps to address infrastructure and market challenges on the historic waterfront of Coos Bay.
- **OnBoard - Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada High Capacity Transit Plan—Las Vegas Region, NV (2018).** Evaluated the market for transit-oriented development and land use scenarios as part of a regional transit system plan for the Las Vegas region.
- **St. Helens Waterfront Framework Plan—St. Helens, OR (2016).** Provided analysis to inform potential use types, disposition approaches, and develop a series of implementation steps for the City to attract development to the site.
- **Maryland Parkway Environmental Document—Las Vegas, NV (2015).** Analyzed market feasibility for transit-oriented development on key areas along a proposed high-capacity transit corridor in the Las Vegas region.
- **South Central Waterfront Initiative—Austin, TX (2015).** Provided analysis to inform a framework plan and implementation strategy for 90-acre South Central Waterfront that builds on previous visions and plans.
- **Broadway Corridor Framework Plan—Portland, OR (2015).** Researched feasibility assumptions and the development pipeline for a proposed multiblock development in northwest Portland.
- **Madras Urban Renewal Action Plan—Madras, OR (2015).** Led the creation of an action plan for the City of Madras' urban renewal area to guide future public investments in the area.
- **Tillamook Hoquarton Area Plan—Tillamook, OR (2015).** Completed a market analysis and implementation strategy for a predominantly industrial area that fronts the Hoquarton Slough in Tillamook.
- **Southern Nevada Strong Regional Plan and Opportunity Sites Analysis—Henderson, NV (2015).** Conducted policy analysis and led the creation of regional plan elements to support the creation of the area's first regional plan. In addition, coordinated the development of four opportunity area studies in the Las Vegas Valley that built upon a regional plan that focused on economic resiliency. Worked with the team to develop the market analysis, outreach strategies, and implementation options.

- **City of Salem Portland Road Action Plan—Salem, OR (2015).** Created an action plan to maximize private investment, job creation, and economic vitality on the Portland Road Corridor, an arterial industrial corridor located in one of Salem’s oldest urban renewal areas.
- **Creekside Master Plan—Beaverton, OR (2015).** Served as project manager to provide market analysis and help to guide implementation for the Creekside Master Plan by developing and organizing a framework for how the City should invest its resources to catalyze new transit-oriented development at the Beaverton Central Station.
- **Southern Nevada Strong Opportunity Site Strategies—Las Vegas, NV (2014).** Managed a multi-disciplinary team to create realistic, implementable transit-oriented development strategies for four opportunity sites within the Las Vegas Valley.
- **Olympia Opportunity Areas Assessment and Community Renewal Feasibility Analysis—Olympia, OR (2013).** Led a comparative redevelopment assessment for five key subareas and assisted in the creation of a community renewal feasibility study for downtown.
- **Hillsboro Old Town Community Reinvestment Strategy—Hillsboro, OR (2013).** Managed a cross-jurisdictional advisory team to develop a community reinvestment strategy for “Old Town,” an employment area in southwest Hillsboro.

Infrastructure Funding

- **Albany Waterfront Infrastructure Plan—Albany, OR (Ongoing).** Led an infrastructure funding plan for the revitalization of Water Avenue, the Dave Clark Trail, and Monteith Park.
- **Columbia County Development Agency Administrator—Columbia County, OR (2015–Ongoing).** Serving as administrator for the Port Westward Urban Renewal Area, an industrial area near Rainier. This includes managing required annual reporting, ongoing board meetings, financial consultants, implementation of urban renewal projects, and interactions with overlapping taxing districts.
- **St. Helens White Paper Site Framework—St. Helens, WA (2021).** ECONorthwest developed an infrastructure funding plan for a former paper mill site in St. Helens as part of an overall redevelopment strategy for the proposed St. Helens Industrial Business Park. ECONorthwest conducted an updated market analysis to assess possible users of the proposed industrial park, worked with the City to identify a sequenced package of infrastructure investments, and identified funding sources to support phased redevelopment of the site.

- **St. Helens Industrial Business Park Infrastructure Funding Plan (2020).** Analyzing industrial market conditions and developing an infrastructure funding plan for road and utility infrastructure to serve new development.
- **Seattle Department of Transportation Coordinated Streetscape and Infrastructure Funding Options—Seattle, WA (2015).** Provided analysis related to alternative funding tools for the purpose of bridging the \$100M local gap for streetscape and transit enhancements in Seattle's core.
- **Seattle Pike-Pine Streetscape Strategies—Seattle, WA (2014).** Interviewed stakeholders and developed a series of alternative financing options to fund substantial improvements to the area's streetscape environment.
- **Metro Community Investment Initiative—Portland Region, OR (2012).** Analyzed of regional infrastructure priorities and provided policy analysis for governance alternatives for a potential regional investment entity.

Brownfields Analysis

- **North Oregon Street Brownfields Reuse Analysis—Ontario, OR (2020).** Completed an industrial market analysis to support the revitalization of a key commercial corridor adjacent to downtown Ontario, as part of an EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant.
- **Oregon Brownfield Commission Development Feasibility of Brownfields in Oregon—Portland, OR (2014).** Worked with a team to estimate the potential redevelopment value and cleanup costs for existing DEQ-identified brownfields in Oregon.
- **City of Beaverton Area-Wide Brownfields Planning Grant—Beaverton, OR (2015).** Developed a set of evaluation criteria to guide the team on determining which sites should be eligible for future study.
- **Maryland Parkway EPA Brownfields Grant Application Assistance—Clark County, NV (2015).** Led the creation of a successful \$300K grant application for area-wide brownfield assessment and subsequently provided market analysis on the assessment project.

AFFILIATIONS

Urban Land Institute—NEXT Member (2020-present)

American Planning Association—Emerging Planners Group Founding Chair (2013–2015)

Urban Land Institute—Young Leaders Group Leadership Co-Chair (2016–2018)