



PRESS RELEASE

NEW RESEARCH SPOTLIGHTS THE PROMISE OF SMALL-SCALE MANUFACTURING IN PORTLAND

FOURTH OF SIX-PART SERIES THAT DOCUMENTS STATE OF URBAN MANUFACTURING
ACROSS U.S.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 14, 2018

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A new piece of research from the **Urban Manufacturing Alliance** (UMA) highlights the growth potential of manufacturing in the city of Portland. The research, called the *State of Urban Manufacturing: Portland City Snapshot*, is the fourth of a six-city series produced by UMA that will provide first-of-its-kind data on city-based manufacturing across the country, with an emphasis on makers and small-scale manufacturers. Prosper Portland and Portland State University supported the project as local partners.

Click [here](#) for more information on the **June 18 release event**.

As Portland grows, larger manufacturers and small-scale makers alike continue to make up a vital part of the local economy. Manufacturing contributed \$8.76 billion in annual earnings to the Portland metropolitan area in 2015. One out of every eight workers in the region had a manufacturing job.

Further *State of Urban Manufacturing: Portland City Snapshot* research, which is based on interviews and surveys of more than 100 local manufacturers, found that **Portland makers and manufacturers are growing even as they struggle to find affordable real estate within the city.**

More than four out of every five firms surveyed for the *State of Urban Manufacturing: Portland City Snapshot* said their sales grew between 2015 and 2016. Nearly two-thirds of all firms said that their sales growth reached double-digit percentages over that same time period.

But companies preparing to relocate in the next two years said they found cheaper real estate elsewhere in the city, and in some cases outside the Portland urban area. The *State of Urban Manufacturing: Portland City Snapshot* notes that makers and manufacturers in Portland were more anxious about real estate challenges compared to other *State of Urban Manufacturing* cities.



Manufacturers also consistently said access to capital was a challenge they struggled to confront as they tried to grow their businesses. Portland is home to startup funds that can help entrepreneurs lift off the tarmac, but additional forms of capital are needed to support growing companies that want to start making and selling larger batches of their products. **One-quarter of surveyed companies that had foregone sales in the previous year said they did so because they couldn't access capital to meet greater production demands.** One out of every five companies of all sizes claimed that capital restraints were their number one barrier to growth.

The *State of Urban Manufacturing: Portland City Snapshot* outlines specific recommendations city officials and local stakeholders can heed to help manufacturers overcome these challenges going forward. With more small-scale manufacturers working to bring innovation and local production processes to the city of Portland, this new report captures what these entrepreneurs need today to keep growing alongside the city economy.

The *Portland City Snapshot* is also accompanied by two short-form, journalistic pieces that document the importance of an equity focus in efforts to assist local makers, featuring a [small manufacturer](#) (Brown Sugar Cooking & Catering Co.) and [Mercatus](#), an initiative funded by Prosper Portland to support entrepreneurs of color in the Rose City. These profiles were generously sponsored by Surdna Foundation.

The series' final two *City Snapshots* will be released in June 2018. They will culminate in a national piece of research, titled *The State of Urban Manufacturing*, that will look at the industry's promise in post-recession, urban America.

Quotes

"For this research we worked with manufacturers that usually aren't represented by traditional data sources, but carry the potential to spur job growth and new innovation in Portland neighborhoods," says **Katy Stanton, program director of the Urban Manufacturing Alliance.** "The *State of Urban Manufacturing: Portland City Snapshot* captures the strengths and needs of these entrepreneurs, and provides the groundwork for rich collaborations within the business community, local nonprofits, and public agencies in Portland."

"As a cornerstone of Portland's economy, manufacturing is a source of innovation and good jobs that support working families and shared prosperity," said **Kimberly Branam, executive director of Prosper Portland.** "The findings of the UMA survey and report will help us continue to develop effective policies, programs and investments that support our local companies, from small-scale entrepreneurs to global enterprises."

"We're pleased to support this research series by the Urban Manufacturing Alliance, which shines a light on manufacturers, small and large, in Portland," said **Bob Cook, senior vice president and market executive of the Oregon & Idaho market at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.** "As cities like Portland grow, manufacturers continue to play a vital role in the local economy, and the *State of Urban Manufacturing* provides the necessary data for city stakeholders to help them grow."



"Growing the region's manufacturing sector is a priority for the Port of Portland, as this industry offers higher wage jobs and career ladders for the region's workforce, particularly in disadvantaged, urban areas," said **Curtis Robinhold, executive director of the Port of Portland**. "Understanding the needs of both small and large manufacturers will help us identify opportunities for those businesses to grow or locate here."

"Manufacturing has been at the core of the Central Eastside's success. Where we see so many equity and wage disparities in the job market today, manufacturing remains a leveler providing sustainable, median wage jobs. As our global and local economies change, and as industry evolves through innovation, it is important for us to remain attentive to the needs of manufacturers and to gather findings that help us to support these businesses," said **Kate Merrill, executive director of the Central Eastside Industrial Council**. "The lack of affordable real estate comes as no surprise as industrial lands continue to disappear. The Central Eastside Industrial Council and the industrial sanctuary in the Central Eastside were founded on the presumption that industrial land is an invaluable commodity for our region's economy. We continue to work to preserve this district as a job center attracting small and large manufacturers, while building partnerships with the region's industrial districts to advocate for local manufacturers."

"The *State of Urban Manufacturing: Portland City Snapshot* provides invaluable insight into Portland's manufacturing economy and the dynamics shaping change and growth in this key sector," said **Erin Flynn, associate vice president for strategic partnerships, Portland State University and board director, Portland Innovation Quadrant**. "The findings and recommendations will be instrumental for city and regional economic development agencies, educational institutions, and workforce intermediaries as they take action to increase the talent pipeline and develop affordable industrial space for small, growing firms. The rich information contained in the study is particularly timely as Portland strives to establish an Innovation Quadrant in the city's Central Eastside Industrial District."

About UMA/The State of Urban Manufacturing

urbanmfg.org

The Urban Manufacturing Alliance is a coalition of more than 600 members across 150 cities that are building manufacturing economies fit for the 21st century. UMA shares and amplifies what works from city to city, and supports the implementation of local, regional, and national policies that encourage the development of environmentally sustainable, diverse, innovative, and equitable manufacturing in urban settings. We envision a future where urban manufacturing is thriving in our cities; creating dense, vibrant networks of businesses, talent, communities, and consumers; and reflecting the diverse communities in which it is located through the ownership and employment opportunities it offers.

For the *State of Urban Manufacturing* series, UMA partnered with manufacturing practitioners in Milwaukee, Detroit, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and Portland, Oregon, to collect local data and profile local manufacturing ecosystems in each city. In Milwaukee, UMA worked with



community-based organizations to tour manufacturing facilities, hold focus group meetings, and conduct surveys with more than 100 manufacturers between 2016 and 2017.

About Prosper Portland

prosperportland.us

Prosper Portland is the economic and urban development agency for the city of Portland. The agency carries out a comprehensive range of economic development programs that support small business, improve access to workforce training, and create jobs for Portland residents. Prosper Portland is committed to growing quality jobs, advancing opportunities for prosperity, creating vibrant neighborhoods and communities, and collaborating with partners to create an equitable city, with prosperity shared by Portlanders of all colors, incomes and neighborhoods.