

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORTIF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, **PRINT** YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

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NAME (print)	ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE (Optional)	Email (Optional)
✓ Ian Johnson	Oregon SMO 725 Summer St NE Salem, 97301	ian.johnson@oregon.gov

Good afternoon,

I'm Wendy Rahm, board member of the Bosco-Milligan Foundation and West End resident.

First, I'd like to thank the Council for adopting the robust historic preservation policies in the 2035 comp Plan. And I'm happy to be here to support all the goals, policies, and recommendations contained in this report. I'm particularly appreciative of the inclusion of the West End neighborhood in the Portland Historic Watch List. I agree that the West End and the other areas on this list merit extra efforts both to raise awareness and to find better ways to improve our stewardship of these irreplaceable resources that give Portland its character.

Among the many solid recommendations in this report, I would like to highlight a few. I urge the Council to look for funding to support and update the 1984 HRI. The Landmark Commission is requesting an additional BPS staff member and seed funding. This is a critical first step. Second, I urge the council to support the Historic Resource Code Project which will help us all make better decisions in the long term. Third, crafting solutions for property owners to undertake the necessary seismic upgrades and to encourage rehabilitation rather than demolition will be crucial to saving our heritage. One such solution is to support the state rehabilitation tax credit. As the report recommends, targeting more modest resources and more modest neighborhoods can minimize displacement of vulnerable communities. One such area is the West End, densely populated with affordable housing today. Affordable housing and historic preservation should proceed hand in hand.

Finally, the Landmark Commission is hindered in accomplishing its mission by not being able to ~~independently~~ advocate on behalf of the City's historic resources. Allowing the Landmark Commissioners this ability will not only empower them to educate the public more effectively about the value of these resources, it will also allow them to testify in a timely manner in support of Portland's policies and regulations. Timely advocating should not be impaired.

I urge Council to adopt this report in its entirety.

Wendy Rahm
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November 29, 2017

Mayor Wheeler and City Council
City of Portland

Re. Testimony on the State of Preservation in Portland

Restore Oregon endorses enthusiastically the State-of-the-City Preservation Report submitted by the Historic Landmarks Commission. Today I'd like to provide expand on several issues noted in their report and add a couple of additional remarks for your consideration.

1. As Portland is faced with the competing demands of accommodating growth through increased density, while also retaining our character-defining historic fabric, it has never been more critical that we **take inventory of our historic assets**. We cannot make good choices about what to keep, and what to let go, if we don't know what we've got.
2. The Residential Infill Project (RIP) needs **better incentives to retain existing housing** – which is more affordable than what's replacing it – and to **ensure infill compatibility**.
3. The City must use its state lobbying muscle to address Oregon's profound lack of financial incentives for historic rehabilitation and reuse. The proposed tax overhaul in Washington DC may eliminate the federal Historic Tax Credit. This makes the need for a **state historic tax credit** even more acute, or we will not see more projects like the PNCA or Armory or conversions of the Erickson Saloon into affordable housing.
4. If we're serious about making our Unreinforced Masonry Buildings safe, Restore Oregon strongly urges the city to place a **state tax credit for seismic retrofitting** at the top of its legislative agenda. Its benefit would be profound for both preservation AND public safety. We can't expect property taxes to pay for everything, especially when our schools are such need. Many other cities across the state will certainly unite with Portland to create the needed political momentum.
5. **Historic preservation and affordability are NOT in conflict**. Preservation and the unfettered demolition of modest, more-affordable homes for replacement by incompatible, overpriced McMansions or tacky skinny houses is in conflict. We absolutely can add density and "middle housing" in older and historic neighborhoods through ADU's and the internal conversion of larger homes into multiple units. And of course we have proof all over town of historic buildings being repurposed as truly affordable housing, as evidenced by the former Erickson Saloon and Bronaugh Apartments.

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6. Something not noted on Landmarks' report, but very much needed in Portland, is a **demolition-by-neglect ordinance**. Many cities, including Salem, use this mechanism to help ensure public safety and prevent the loss of important historic resources. If one had been in place in Portland, we might not have experienced the outrageous loss of the Workmen Temple Building this year, and the important Wong Laundry Building in China Town might not be on Restore Oregon's list of Most Endangered Places. There should be meaningful penalties for property owners who let their buildings go to ruin and impose blight on their neighbors.

With that, I thank you for your work and all it takes out of you to wrestle with the many challenges facing our city. And I urge your continued best efforts to retain the places that make Portland, PORTLAND. The actions we take – or fail to take – now, will determine for better or worse what Portland looks like and feels like for generations.

Thank you.



Peggy Moretti
Executive Director