



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

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July 22, 2020

Portland Design Commission
1900 SW 4th Ave
Portland, OR 97201

Hello Chair Livingston and members of the Design Commission,

We are pleased to be returning to you with changes to the Macadam Character Statement after a very thoughtful discussion last week. This memo packet provides a draft of the Macadam Character Statement (Attachment A), with all Commission proposed changes highlighted in yellow. To assist your understanding of where the amendments came from, a separate detailed table (Attachment B) lists all of the amendments, either proposed by the Design Commission on the July 16th hearing, or suggested by staff as response to community feedback. We are also including one additional attachment (Attachment C), which is a comment emailed to staff from Jeanne Galick after the July 16th hearing.

Summary of changes

Overall, there are 23 amendments to the document. This includes amendments resulting from both Commission and Survey feedback. The summary table (Attachment B), has organized feedback and staff responses into the following sections:

Table 1: Amendments which reflect Commission feedback on July 16.

- (1) Background Section.
- (2) Community Character.
- (3) Architecture and Urban Design Character.
- (4) Natural and Scenic Resources

Table 2: Amendments discussed and tentatively approved on July 16.

- (1) Background Section.
- (2) Diagrammatic Map
- (3) Community Character.
- (4) Architecture and Urban Design Character.
- (5) Natural and Scenic Resources

During the work session on Thursday, we will review Table 1 only and discuss amendments 1b, 2a and 3b, focusing our time on the substantive changes highlighted in the table.



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Aside from the more specific changes to language made in the document, staff wanted to specifically address 3 larger issues raised on the document's tone and content:

1. *Clarify purpose of background section and how it is used as a tool.* To address this, staff included more direct/active language at the end of the first three paragraphs. The intent is to clarify why this history is being provided and how it has contributed to the existing conditions that we are asking development to respond to. This allows the section to still act as an informative narrative but underlines why the document focuses on issues of large irregular block sizes, connectivity throughout the district and river responsive design.
2. *Provide a clear statement that this is the context being responded to in the hearings room.* The new Appendix language that introduces Character Statements is provided in the new *Portland Citywide Design Guidelines* recommended by Design Commission on June 18. The text is copied and pasted below:

Character statements supplement Guideline 01: Build on the Character, Local Identity, and Aspiration of the Place within the Portland Citywide Design Guidelines. The statements do not repeat the goals and values of the other guidelines, because those guidelines will also apply. Instead, they describe a brief history of the area and the local character as it relates to community, architecture and nature. They provide a richer, more specific context description that guides how new development should address the area's character-defining features, ecological context, resources, and social and cultural values.

The changes proposed in the Macadam Character Statement in the Background, along with the framing already provided by the Appendix provide the Commission, staff, applicant and the public a clear link between the Background section and how it relates to Guideline 01.

3. *Provide more specifics on how architecture should respond to context.* To address this, staff has added in more specific language on how buildings can respond to adjacent context throughout the district (See 3a. and 4b in Table 1, within Attachment B). This combined with the other proposed changes have improved and clarified direction for future development, on top of the specific direction on building practices and techniques that come from the guidelines themselves.

As a reminder, the Design Commission will be recommending the repeal of the Macadam Corridor Design Guidelines, and the adoption of the Macadam Character Statement to be applied with the *Citywide Design Guidelines*. These design recommendations will be included in the River Plan/South Reach Recommended Draft that will go to the City Council at a public hearing in early September.

We look forward to discussing this work more with you at the coming briefing. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.



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Thank you,



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Links:

[Macadam Corridor Design Guidelines \(1985\)](#)
[draft Design Overlay Zone Amendment \(DOZA\) Citywide Design Guidelines](#)
[River Plan/South Reach Proposed Draft](#)

Attachments:

- A. Draft Macadam Character Statement (word document)
- B. Table Summary of Amendments (word document)
- C. Emailed_Comment_20200717 (PDF)



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