

Terry Parker

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Testimony to **Portland City Council** on the **Design Overlay Zone Amendments, Recommended Draft**

To Members of the Portland City Council, It has been said Portland is a collection of neighborhoods. Portland is also a collection of local identity main streets within those neighborhoods. Throughout the inner and central eastside of Portland, there are short stretches of community main streets that were originally built up during the streetcar era. This streetcar type of development usually consists of a few blocks of one, two or three story buildings clustered together that have first floor storefronts with high ceilings, some with recessed doorways, that directly adjoin the sidewalks. There are pockets of this type of development all along Sandy Boulevard including in the Hollywood District, between 51st and 54th and near 72nd; on NE Broadway, on NE Glisan Street at 47th, and 60th; and on SE Hawthorne West of 38th and near Ladd's Edition at 20th. The intersection of streetcar lines paved the way for this type of main street development at SE Milwaukie Avenue and Bybee Boulevard, and contributed to the storefront developments on SE 12th Avenue near Tacoma Street. There are also pocket examples of streetcar main street development elsewhere on the central eastside and in North Portland. In some areas, the streetcars did not even run on the same street where the development occurred. They only connected to it. Two examples include on NE Fremont at 42nd where a streetcar line branched off from Sandy on 42nd ending near Fremont, and on SE Stark Street in Montavilla where a streetcar line branched off from Glisan Street on 80th and ended at Stark Street. Additionally, the name Montavilla was penned by the streetcar system because the original name of the community "Mount Tabor Village" would not fit on the streetcar destination signs. Discussions of safeguarding these of historical streetcar main streets took place at a transportation summit at Benson High School which I believe occurred in 1993. The public comments were compiled in a report to the City Council titled "The People Speak". As quirky as it may sound both then and now, for the health and diversity of the city as a whole, these neighborhood main street communities need to be preserved. DOZA on the other hand creates a possibility for the demolition of these community main street treasures and their small business gathering space assets. If the local design character and structure of these main streets are demolished, once they are gone, they are gone forever. The streetcar era main streets need to be protected and have design standards of their own that must include preservation. Any new development needs to fit in and match the local character of the existing older structures. It must include community led planning to help shape the design of any new development. Setbacks need to be required for the upper floors of new buildings that are taller than the surrounding structures. This could allow for exterior dining or exercise areas on the terraces. My purpose for providing this

testimony is for you the City Council to say yes to design justice and harmonizing scale development by adopting the PDX Main Streets Design Guidelines that are part of the Portland Main Streets Design Initiative for complementary scale place making as an amendment to DOZA. The Portland Clinic building on the North side of Sandy between 50th and 51st with tuck under parking in the rear is a good example of a building when it is specifically designed as being iconic to fit in with the close by streetcar era structures. Additionally, I am asking you say yes and officially adopt the vintage building study for place keeping while also requiring it be inclusive of mid-rise buildings and city blocks with single special character buildings. Hopefully we can all agree that we don't want the entire city to be built up like deep dark Canyons of Lower Division. Respectively submitted, Terry Parker Northeast Portland Also see the attached picture page.

Testimony is presented without formatting.