

Heather Flint Chatto

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

Please see our proposed "Design for Affordability" - Optional Standard recommendation which draws heavily from the attached paper on Cost Efficiency for Affordable Design & Construction by Walsh Construction.

We have hosted multiple multi-stakeholder workshops on affordability and sustainability in our tenure as a pro-bono community education and design literacy boots on the ground advocacy organization and care deeply about this topic.

As a professional sustainability consultant, former government urban planner, and an environmental designer, I can attest that what we are building is un-necessarily made more unaffordable due to lack of attention to good time-tested design approaches that facilitate efficiency and which are seen in common taller buildings across our city prior to 1950. We have a city full of great density to study and learn from that is livable and beautiful and efficient. There are many lessons to be learned from the incredible "hidden density" along SE Madison, all throughout NW Alphabet District with great courtyard designs that support more access to light and air for occupants, minimize building bulk and use efficient stacking of floorplates, natural materials, artistic elements with low cost and craft, "human scale windows" that relate to the human body and make tall buildings feel more relatable and less dominating to people and place.

We encourage a much more open dialogue with leadership and communities who often lack the design language to articulate what is desired but they know that what we are building can be done better. Without the education and language of "how to talk about design" we end up in false divides of NIMBY/YIMBY shaming that is unhelpful and harmful to all. We work to be a bridge for communities to clarify their goals and priorities, so that they can create greater certainty and clear expectations with designers and developers that creates a smoother and faster process, saving cost and time. This creates a better outcome for all.

We strongly encourage you to extend the timeline of comments and consideration over the summer, to give more people time to understand the complexity of this policy (that lacks any digestible format of the standards for laypeople either in summary or graphics). We firmly support DOZA as a good step forward but needs better calibration for impacts to different scales of streets and contexts.

Consider a less rushed approach that ensures good participation for all our communities, walk the streets, talk to communities as we have done and you will see a common language (see

<https://www.tinyurl.com/mainstpatterns>), and you will hear as we have done in our 7 years of community engagement that communities want a voice in shaping the future of our City. We need more workshops that discuss the NUANCES of design and density so people feel part of the major changes recently and underway.

Thank you,

Heather Flint Chatto, 20 year urban planner and designer

Director, PDX Main Streets Design Initiative

Testimony is presented without formatting.