

Lloyd Vivola

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Testimony to the Planning and Sustainability Commission on the Floodplain Resilience Plan, Proposed Draft

Dear Commissioners: In December 2020, I watched as winter storm waters neatly coursed from a swollen Johnson Creek and into the calm of the central, wooded basin of the Foster Floodplain. Upstream, these voluminous currents dislodged a steel pedestrian bridge at the Leach Botanical Gardens. Prior to floodplain restoration, this neighborhood in Southeast Portland was plagued by the costly, recurring flooding of homes and businesses. Today, the 68-acre floodplain endures as a living lesson in ecological urban accomplishment. As a resident of the Johnson Creek watershed and long-time volunteer with the Watershed Council, I am writing to urge the Portland PSC to adopt the proposed Floodplain Resilience Plan in its entirety. Climate disruption and unpredictable hydrological events are no longer a matter of speculation and debate; they are happening across the United States and around the world with dire social, fiscal, and environmental consequences. Accordingly, full-spectrum floodplain resilience is a sane, long-overdue commitment, one that partners timely policy-making with the vital role natural systems play toward the goal of enhancing the life of a healthy, sustainable metropolitan area. Portland's world reputation as a vanguard "green" city should direct that we act accordingly with regard to this pressing concern. In particular, I want also to stress that I oppose the removal of Title 24 Amendments from the full plan. Developers must be required to protect small businesses, residential neighborhoods, and wildlife habitat by creating new, effective floodplain areas whenever, wherever, development projects have disturbed or removed current floodplains. Anything less than restoring Title 24 Amendments would undermine the comprehensive strategy of an effective Floodplain Resilience Plan. It would also risk doing future injustice to vulnerable human and non-human communities. Finally, I ask the Commission to move swiftly and address floodplain resilience in areas not covered by the current proposal, notably, the industrial areas and adjacent lands along the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. These riparian and floodplain venues are of significant importance to Portland's natural systems and so should be properly prioritized in the city's environmental policies. Enhancing protection for floodplains in and around industrial zones would mitigate the impact of potentially hazardous flooding. It would also provide an economic hedge against the costly industrial clean-ups that a catastrophic event might cause. Sadly, postponing action in these special interest domains has too often become the weak link of sound environmental policy in Portland. Attached is my comment of January 2022. Thanks for your ongoing effort. And please, restore Title 24 Amendments and adopt the Floodplain Resilience Plan in its entirety. Lloyd Vivola 6035 SE Knapp Street Portland, Oregon 97206

Testimony is presented without formatting.