



Commissioner Carmen Rubio
City of Portland

Planning Commission Members:

I would like to personally welcome you as the inaugural members of the newly established Planning Commission. The Planning Commission was created to have a dedicated body focused on the important land use and planning issues facing Portland. The city is in a period of significant change and transformation. It is in the midst of changing its form of government and is grappling with unparalleled challenges—the houselessness crisis, the city’s chronic housing shortage, navigating post-pandemic economic recovery and revitalization, addressing persistent racial inequities, and planning for a more inclusive and resilient future in the face of climate change. As we move to a new form of government and address these challenging issues, land use planning has a defining role to play in creating a more equitable, livable and resilient city for all its residents.

The City of Portland is honored to have you, a distinguished group, to be part of the solution. The distinct makeup of this commission—from its varied professional expertise and lived experience to its representation of the city’s diverse communities of color—ensures that you as a body are equipped to deliberate on the wide-ranging policy questions that will be before the Commission in the year ahead. The City Council looks to you in your role as advisors and through your formal authority as a recommending body to the City Council on long range land use legislative matters to apply your experience and expertise to shape city policies that will affect future generations.

The current and pressing priorities of the City Council include providing temporary shelter and services to houseless members of our community; identifying and removing barriers to housing production for households of all income levels; advancing economic opportunity for all residents and ensuring that BIPOC communities share in future prosperity; and advancing numerous sustainability objectives. The work program for the year ahead will be reflective of these priorities. In the Fall, the Planning Commission will deliberate on updates to foundational Comprehensive Plan documents that ensure that Portland continues to have sufficient zoned capacity and strategies to meet its housing needs and to accommodate the range of businesses and industry sectors that provide valuable jobs and economic prosperity.

Maintaining the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code are core functions of the Planning Commission, and the Commission will also have the opportunity to deliberate on a number of code amendments that implement state law and make process improvements and technical fixes to the code to facilitate development; in the near term, those will include changes to parking provisions, rules that govern the division of land and a variety of amendments that are a part of the City’s Regulatory Improvement Code Amendment Package (RICAP). Through these efforts, the Commission will be guiding housing and economic development policies that will see the city through this important transitional period and position Portland for a stronger future.

The Planning Commission is also a critical forum for public engagement on land use policies that affect the day-to-day lives of our residents and business owners. It plays an important role in advancing the core values of the city and has the opportunity to center equity and climate considerations when making its recommendations. I look forward to supporting the Commission as it defines itself as a body and creates a culture that is welcoming and inclusive, where important public conversations can take place.

BPS leadership and staff will be orienting you and providing a variety of trainings over the coming months to help prepare you for the projects that will come before you, and I look forward to collaborating with you to conduct the important work that lies ahead. Thank you for your service to the City of Portland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carmen Rubio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carmen" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Rubio".

Carmen Rubio
Commissioner-in-Charge