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City Council votes to adopt Better Housing by Design

News Article

Adopted code amendments for new apartment buildings and multi-family development will provide better housing options for more Portlanders to live close to services, with design that supports active living and connected communities.

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On Wednesday, Dec. 18, City Council voted to adopt the Better Housing by Design proposals. With this vote, Commissioners approved new zoning code and map amendments to multi-dwelling zones, ensuring that new apartment buildings and multi-family development will meet the needs of Portlanders now and in the future.

The Better Housing by Design amendments will:

- **Expand housing options by providing more flexibility for numbers of units, with new incentives for affordable housing.** City Council added a new bonus option for ownership housing and expanded affordable housing parking exemptions in both the multi-dwelling and mixed-use zones.
- **Address needs for residential outdoor space** with new requirements for outdoor areas in higher density zones and common areas for large sites. Council exempted indoor common areas from building floor area limits, which means no net loss of space for residential units.
- **Ensure new development contributes to pedestrian-friendly streets and relates to the context of the neighborhood.**
- **Provide development standards specific to East Portland and help create needed street connections**, in partnership with the Portland Bureau of Transportation's Connected Centers Street Plan.
- **Change the Zoning Map and higher density zoning in historic districts to balance historic preservations goals with incentives for affordable housing.** Amendments allow for development bonuses, primarily for affordable housing, to be used in historic districts in both the multi-dwelling and mixed-use zones. To discourage demolition of older buildings, Council added limitations to bonuses on sites where historic buildings have been demolished.

Together, these code amendments will provide more and better housing options for more Portlanders to live close to services, with design that supports active living and connected communities.

The details of the code and map amendments adopted by City Council are now available online:

 [Better Housing by Design Project Documents](#)

You can view City Council's final vote on Better Housing by Design [here](#), starting at 1:08:47.

Next Up – Implementation

The adopted BHD code and map amendments will become effective on March 1, 2020. Development applications submitted prior to that date will be subject to existing zoning code regulations. Prior to the effective date, the Bureau of Development Services will be able to provide early assistance meetings for projects seeking to use the new BHD regulations.