



[Home](#) / [Planning and Sustainability \(BPS\)](#) / [Making multi-family housing work better for Portland residents](#) / [Making multi-family housing work better for Portland residents](#)

Making multi-family housing work better for Portland residents

News Article

Better Housing by Design project will share concepts and solicit community feedback at June open houses.

Published: May 10, 2017 4:00 pm

As Portland grows and more people need places to live, the demand for more housing will continue to increase. Greater numbers of people will be living in apartment buildings and other higher density residential units, such as fourplexes, townhouses and rowhouses in Portland's multi-dwelling zones throughout the city.

But not all multi-dwelling development is created equal. Some apartment complexes, for instance, have very little open space for children to play and people to gather outside. Accessibility may be difficult for people with disabilities or older adults. And safe and convenient connections to local destinations may be nonexistent.

Improving housing through better design

In response, the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability launched the Better Housing by Design (BHD) project to improve the design of new multi-family development for current and future residents. While the project covers all multi-dwelling zones (R3, R2, R1 and RH) outside the Central City, BHD pays closer attention to neighborhoods in East Portland, where a large number of families live in multi-family housing, and the area lacks good street connectivity and access to outdoor spaces.

Project staff have been meeting with community members to discuss development issues and potential solutions. These discussions have informed staff's work on a range of concepts for improving multi-dwelling design and development outcomes, including concepts for Zoning Code regulations that would:

- Strengthen requirements for outdoor spaces, including shared spaces on large sites for play areas and gardening.
- Promote pedestrian-friendly streets by encouraging street-oriented buildings with fewer front garages.

- Encourage a range of housing options in medium-density zones, such as fourplexes, courtyard apartments and compact apartment buildings.
- Change existing development bonuses to prioritize affordable housing.
- Provide new approaches for street and pedestrian connections in areas that need them, such as East Portland.

Learn more and talk to project staff at June open houses

Project staff will share these and other draft code concepts at two open houses in June. Interested community members are invited to learn about and provide input on these concepts. The information presented at the two events will be the same, so there's no need to attend both. Feedback collected at these events will be reviewed as staff finalize the Concept Report, which will be released at the end of June.

Code Concept Open Houses

[Thursday, June 1, 2017, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.](#) (presentation and Q & A at 6 p.m.)

1900 SW 4th Ave, 7th floor

[Saturday, June 3, 2017, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.](#) (presentation and Q & A at 10:30 a.m.)

Portland Community College SE Campus

2305 SE 82nd and Division, Portland, OR 97216

Community Hall Annex (in rear of campus)

What's next?

Staff will release the final Code Concept Report in Summer 2017, when Portlanders will be able to provide comments on the document. After that, staff will develop draft code language to submit to the Planning and Sustainability Commission sometime in the Fall of 2017.