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Planning and Sustainability Commission begins work sessions on proposed new rules for Portland's multi-dwelling zones

News Article

Commissioners will consider public testimony on proposed guidelines for new apartments, townhomes and other multi-family housing as they prepare their recommendations to City Council.

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In May and June, Portlanders reviewed and testified on proposed new rules for new construction in Portland's multi-dwelling zones. The Better Housing by Design proposals would expand housing options, provide incentives for affordable housing, improve design, and support active living and green elements for new apartments and other multi-family housing developments.

Project staff released the Better Housing by Design Proposed Draft on May 11. And on June 12, the Planning and Sustainability Commission heard public testimony.

[Watch the public hearing on video](#) (testimony on BHD begins at 56:38).

Portlanders also submitted written testimony via the online [Map App](#). Between the oral and written testimony, the Commission received 270 pieces of testimony on the Proposed Draft.

You can review what people said about the proposals in the [Testimony Reader](#).

Wait! Are townhomes considered "multi-dwelling" or "multi-family" housing?

Yes, townhomes are considered multi-dwelling development (especially because the ones in the picture didn't involve a land division, which creates separate lots for each unit). This project was built in a multi-dwelling zone. Townhomes, duplexes and other low-rise housing types are the most common types of development in most of the multi-dwelling zones. (Note: The proposed [Residential Infill Project](#) amendments would not typically

allow this type of townhouse development unless approved through planned development review.)

PSC Work Sessions

Now the PSC will begin work sessions on the Better Housing by Design proposals to prepare their recommendations to the City Council. Commissioners will not hear public testimony at the work sessions. However, staff-prepared work session material will be posted on the project website so you can follow along.

Four upcoming work sessions are tentatively organized by topic areas:

- **Tuesday, September 11 (12:30 p.m.)** – Overview and work session schedule
- **Tuesday, September 25 (5:30 p.m.)** – Development scale and bonuses
- **Tuesday, October 9 (1 p.m.)** – East Portland standards and street connectivity
- **Tuesday, November 13 (2:30 p.m.)** – Visitability, building design and parking

Please confirm dates, times and agendas one week prior by visiting the [PSC calendar](#).

All PSC hearings and meetings are streamed live on the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability [YouTube channel](#).