

Jennifer Shuch

#332588 | October 10, 2023

Testimony to the Planning and Sustainability Commission on the 2045 Portland Housing Needs Analysis, Proposed Draft

Hello, my name is Jennifer Shuch, I am a Northeast Portland resident and a member of Portland: Neighbors Welcome. I appreciate the work that BPS has done on the Housing Needs Analysis, and my testimony today is about where we go from here given the HNA's findings. Housing policy is personal to me. I live in half of a duplex, which I was only able to afford with help from my family, and even then housing prices caused me to move from an extremely walkable neighborhood in NW to a more auto-centered one in NE. I advocate for housing abundance because I don't think Portland should only be home to people like me, who benefit from privilege and generational wealth. The bottom line takeaway from the HNA is that Portland does have the capacity for accommodating needed new housing units over the next couple of decades. However, that is not the only, or even the most important, question we should be asking. As we move forward into the Housing Production Strategy, we must keep in mind that where new housing is located matters - from an equity standpoint, from an environmental resilience and sustainability standpoint, from a housing affordability standpoint, and from an anti-displacement standpoint. We need to make sure that there are enough opportunities for market rate and affordable housing developers to build new units in a dense, urban pattern in neighborhoods with proximity to jobs, amenities, and transit - not only along corridors where the impacts of traffic congestion and pollution are highest but throughout entire neighborhoods. There are high-opportunity areas in Portland - most notably the Inner Eastside - where current zoning is keeping us from meeting our stated environmental and equity goals, and where the density allowed by the Residential Infill Project is insufficient. I hope that the Commission and BPS can keep these important nuances in mind throughout the process of establishing land use strategies that will determine the urban pattern of our city for decades to come. Those of us representing Portland: Neighbors Welcome look forward to engaging with the Commission and BPS throughout the development of the Housing Production Strategy. As part of our engagement, we have included a letter signed by coalition partners as well as a FAQ that outlines our proposed strategy for urban growth in Portland. Thank you!

Testimony is presented without formatting.