

City Council approves a new land use and transportation plan for Lower SE Portland

Changes will allow for more neighborhood businesses and housing; address gaps in transportation infrastructure

On May 2, City Council voted unanimously to approve the [Lower Southeast Rising Area Plan](#). The plan's land use amendments will allow for more neighborhood businesses and housing opportunities in Brentwood-Darlington and parts of nearby neighborhoods, including Mt Scott-Arleta, Woodstock and Lents. The [adopted ordinance](#) also calls for the plan's transportation projects to be included in an update to Portland's Transportation System Plan.

A joint effort of the bureaus of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) and Transportation (PBOT), the LSER Plan was jointly sponsored by Commissioners Carmen Rubio and Mingus Mapps, the commissioners in charge of the two bureaus, respectively.

Council's May 2 vote followed public testimony on the plan during their April 25 meeting. The plan's land use amendments will be effective Oct. 1, 2024.

What commissioners said

During closing comments on May 2, Commissioner Rubio thanked community members for their involvement in the plan over the past few years. Commissioner Mapps praised the plan's combined land use and transportation approach, noting the plan was "responsive to the reality that living in a community is both about where you go and how you get there."

Commissioner Gonzalez highlighted the underinvestment in infrastructure in the plan area and acknowledged that "the plan is a good step forward to starting to bridge the gaps."

Commissioner Ryan highlighted the plan's safety improvements, important for "creating a great place for families."

What community members said

At the April 25 public hearing on the LSER Plan, the majority of testifiers supported the plan. Pamela Hodge, a long-time Brentwood-Darlington resident and a member of the LSER Community Advisory Committee, testified that — almost 40 years after annexation of the area into the City of Portland — "The Lower Southeast Rising Plan will finally establish the framework for [the area] becoming a 'complete' neighborhood, with ... amenities common to most [other] city neighborhoods ... and, ultimately, create a more livable neighborhood where residents can thrive."

[Watch the April 25 City Council hearing](#)

[Watch the May 2 City Council decision](#)

What's in the Lower SE Rising Area Plan

City Council adopted the following zone changes to expand opportunities for more neighborhood businesses and affordable housing, supported by future transportation improvements to make it easier for people to meet their daily needs close by:

- **Designation of a Brentwood-Darlington neighborhood center**, with zone changes to allow for a neighborhood business district to serve as a hub for commercial services, along with expanded multi-dwelling zoning nearby to allow for more people to live close to services.
- **Zone changes along transit corridors**, including SE 52nd and SE 72nd, to allow more small businesses and a greater range of housing, including more affordable options. Proposed zone changes *do not* require any changes to existing houses and other development; rather they allow more options for future property uses.
- **Transportation improvements** to make it safer and easier to walk, bike and take transit in the area, such as adding pedestrian crossings and filling in sidewalk gaps along major corridors. The plan also includes neighborhood greenway projects on quieter streets to provide safer ways for people to walk and bike to parks, schools and other community destinations.
- **Community stabilization approaches** that protect the area's existing low-cost apartments and manufactured home parks. Zone changes are strategically focused along transit corridors and in mixed-use centers; the majority (71%) of the plan area will retain existing single-dwelling zoning, further contributing to community stability.