

## Outdoor Space Requirements: Background

Comprehensive Plan policies call for housing to include features supportive of healthy living, such as usable outdoor spaces that provide opportunities for activities such as recreation or gardening. Currently, most of the multi-dwelling zones require outdoor space (48 square feet per unit), which can be provided as private spaces, or combined into larger shared spaces, such as courtyards.

### Issues include:

#### **No residential outdoor space required in the RH zone.**

The high-density residential zone (RH) requires no outdoor spaces. In some situations, such as in East Portland where the RH zone is located close to light rail stations, parking lots are the only places for children to play.

#### **Shared outdoor spaces.**

Past projects that involved apartment residents in discussing their perspectives on housing identified the need for having usable outdoor spaces located close by for activities such as children's play and growing food. Currently, shared outdoor spaces that can provide these opportunities are not required and often not provided with new multi-dwelling development.

### Types of Residential Outdoor Spaces

**Private spaces,** such as patios, balconies, or small yards.



**Private Spaces**



**Larger shared spaces,** such as courtyards, children's play areas and other shared recreation space.



**Shared Spaces**



Requirements can also be met by **indoor community spaces** in the mixed use zones






**High-Density Residential Zone (RH)**

- No outdoor space required




**Shared outdoor spaces** - interest from:

- Healthy Active Living projects
- East Portland community discussions

# Outdoor Space Requirements: Concept Direction

*Concept objectives: provide usable outdoor space for residents, facilitate healthy eating / active living amenities, and provide opportunities for innovative approaches to green site design.*



Examples of private and shared outdoor spaces included in development typical of the RH zone

## Concept 1. Require residential outdoor spaces in the RH zone

- **Require 48 square feet per unit** (36 square feet for small sites under 20,000 square feet) – consistent with standards in other multi-dwelling and mixed-use zones. This outdoor space can be in the form of private outdoor spaces or combined into shared outdoor spaces.
- **Indoor community facilities.** Allow indoor recreation facilities and other indoor community spaces to be used to meet outdoor space requirements in all the multi-dwelling zones.

### Shared Outdoor Space - Examples



Respite (15,000 SF site)



Gathering (27,000 SF site)



Growing food (44,000 SF site)



Play and trees (61,000 SF site)



Urban space (40,000 SF site)

## Concept 2. Require shared outdoor spaces for larger sites

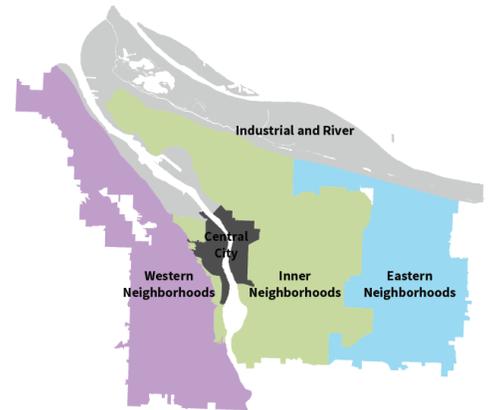
- Apply this requirement to sites 20,000 square feet or larger. Larger sites can more easily accommodate shared outdoor spaces than can smaller sites.
- Provide flexibility for a range of shared outdoor space arrangements, such as spaces designed for children’s play, gathering, and gardening.

**Concept 3. Allow alternatives to conventional landscaping**, such as raised courtyards and stormwater planters, eco roofs, etc., to be used to meet landscaping requirements. Also, consider limiting the amount of site area that can be devoted to surface parking lots, potentially to 30 percent.



# Eastern Portland Development Standards: Background

Comprehensive Plan policies call for development in East Portland to be responsive to the area’s distinct characteristics, including its stands of Douglas firs and positive aspects of its large blocks, while creating new street connections to make it easier to access community destinations. New multi-dwelling development in the area has contributed to meeting housing needs, but has not always met expectations in terms of their design, and few new street connections have been created.

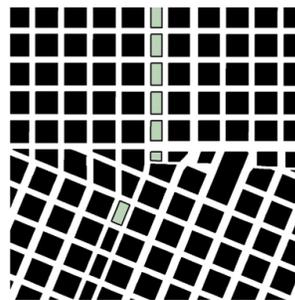


## Issues include:

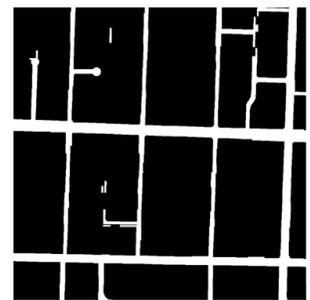
Large numbers of families, many of whom live in apartments.

Large blocks – often 400 to 600 feet wide (at their narrow dimension, compared to 200’ blocks in Inner neighborhoods), resulting in poor street connectivity, but also providing opportunities for new types of open space patterns and connections.

Downtown



East Portland

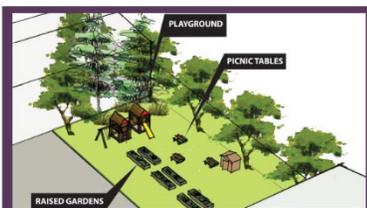


Groves of Douglas firs and other large trees that are valued by community members.

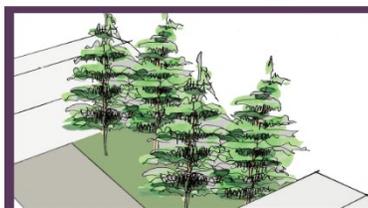
Big, multi-lane arterial streets, often lined by multi-dwelling zoning, with traffic that compromises residential livability.



Right -- Development on the area’s deep lots often leaves little unbuilt or unpaved space.



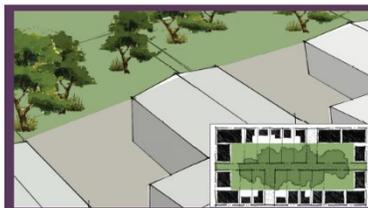
Common open space areas



Space for large trees



Landscaped front setbacks



Mid-block open space

Left – Elements that East Portland Community members indicate are important for multi-dwelling zone development to include.

# Eastern Portland Development Standards: Concept Direction

*Concept objectives: guide development to respond in a positive way to Eastern Portland characteristics, such as the area's large blocks and big streets.*

**Concept 4. Eastern Portland mid-block open areas.** Establish regulations that keep mid-block areas as less built up and with more open space, with development focused along perimeters of blocks.

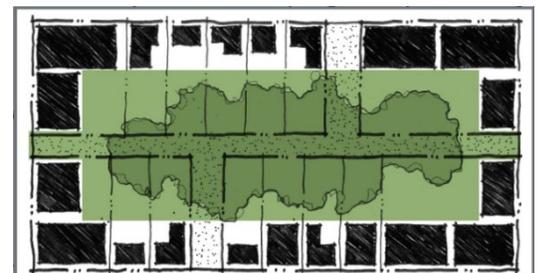
This would retain some of the areas' patterns of open spaces (sometimes the locations of tree groves), even as the area continues to see more urban development.

This concept responds to interest expressed by Eastern Portland community members, but some issues to consider include:

- Continues existing patterns of rear yards.
- Could help with preservation of existing trees.
- But, focusing open space at the rear of deep lots can be less convenient and less observable to the majority of residents, compared to having outdoor space in a central location on a site.

**Question: What is the greater priority?**

1. Keeping mid-block/rear yard open space patterns? Or,
2. Having open space be central to residences?

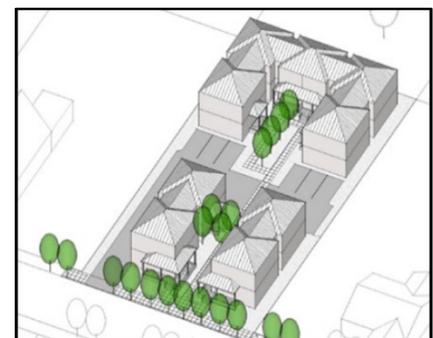


**Current approach**

Development extends to rear of lots



**Mid-block open space**



**Centralized open space**

## Other concepts closely related to Eastern Portland issues:

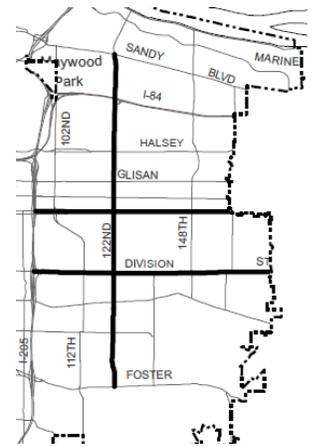
- Small commercial uses in multi-dwelling zones
- Outdoor space requirements
- Building setbacks and height transitions
- Connected Centers concepts

# Eastern Portland Development Standards: Concept Direction

*Concept objectives: guide development to respond in a positive way to Eastern Portland characteristics, such as the area's large blocks and big streets*

**Concept 5. Small-scale commercial uses in multi-dwelling zones.** Provide allowances for small commercial uses on major corridors (potentially Civic Corridors) and near light rail stations.

Providing allowances for limited ground-floor commercial uses, such as live-work spaces that combine business space with a housing unit, could help address the negative impacts from traffic to residents of housing in the multi-dwelling zones located along Eastern Portland's multi-lane corridors and provide additional opportunities for neighborhood commercial services in an area of Portland that lacks walkable access to services. Facilitating commercial services near light rail stations also responds to the areas need for commercial services.



East Portland Civic Corridors

These allowances could apply along major corridors citywide, although Eastern Portland has greater amounts of multi-dwelling zoning located in these types of locations.



Housing along outer SE Division



Small commercial uses at ground levels of rowhouses

# Scale-Based Zoning: Background



Comprehensive Plan policies call for a diverse array of housing options and a spectrum of development scale, with more intense development in centers and corridors. Lower-density multi-dwelling zones, such as the R2 and R3 zones, often serve to provide transitions in scale between these areas and single-family residential areas. Historically, these types of low-rise, multi-dwelling areas provided a diverse array of “middle housing” types, such as duplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, and courtyard apartments, whose 2 to 3 story scale is not much taller than single-family houses. Most of these housing types, however, could not be built in Portland’s most broadly mapped zone, R2, because they exceed unit density limits. Other issues include:

- Density-based regulations often result in large townhouse-type units whose multiple levels and stairs are not accessible to people with mobility limitations.
- The lack of housing unit variety also limits the range of affordability levels.
- Along transit corridors, where the R1 zone is often located, density regulations similarly limit housing diversity.



**Historic examples of multi-dwelling housing**  
- Wide variety of housing with a 2-3 story scale

### Pre-1959 Middle Housing

Wide variety of housing within a similar scale. This variety would not be possible within today’s zones.

### R1 zone development

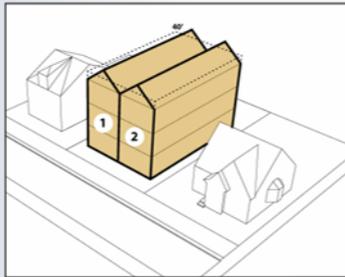
Streetcar-Era apartments and recently-built townhouses along transit corridors. Similar scale, but the older apartments far exceed current density limits.



# Scale-Based Zoning: Concept Direction

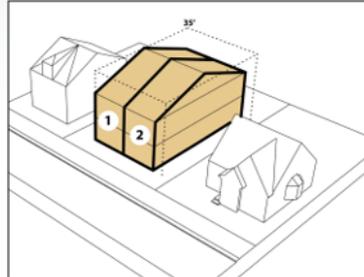
Concept objectives: Provide opportunities for greater housing diversity (including physically-accessible units), moderate allowed scale in zones that typically apply along neighborhood side streets, and expand housing opportunities in zones often located along transit corridors.

## Concept 6: Regulate by building scale/FAR, instead of unit density



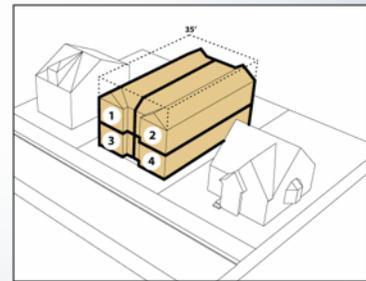
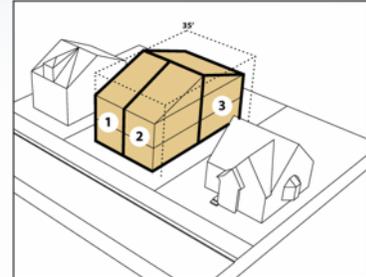
### Current Approach

- 40' height limit
- Density limited to 2 units on 5,000 square foot site
- Often results in 2 large townhouse units



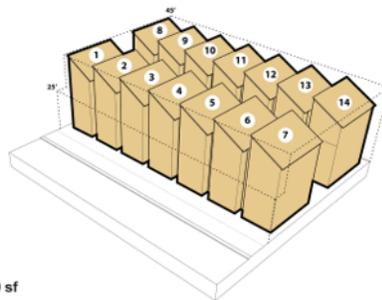
### Potential New Approach

- Reduce allowed height to 35'
- Provide flexibility for what happens inside a defined building scale (potentially a floor-to-area ratio of 1 to 1)



### Potential New Approach - R2 zone

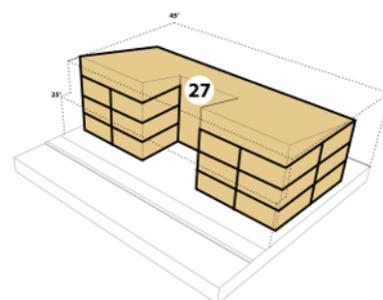
- Require accessible units along with greater density



Zone: R1  
 Lot size: 15000 sf  
 Height: 45 ft  
 Density: 1 unit per 1,000 sf  
 Units: 14 units

### Current Approach

- 45' height limit
- Density limited to 1 unit per 1,000 square feet of site area
- Often results in townhouse units



Zone: R1  
 Lot size: 15000 sf  
 Height: 45 ft  
 Density: 1.5:1 FAR  
 Units: 27 units

### Potential New Approach

- 45' height limit (same as corridor commercial zones)
- Provide flexibility for what happens inside a defined building scale (potentially a floor-to-area ratio of 1.5 to 1)

### Potential New Approach - R1 zone

- Require accessible units (25%)

Sidebar: Requirements for 25% of units to be accessible (visitable or adaptable) for higher density development

# Building Design and Transitions: Background

Comprehensive Plan policies call for development to be designed to respond to context, contribute to pedestrian-friendly street frontages, and provide transitions in scale to lower-density zones. Examples of issues related to these topics include:

Multi-unit buildings especially should contribute to the street.



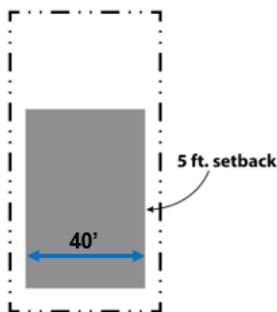
Plans and policies call for street frontages that enhance neighborhood context and the pedestrian environment, but there are few limits on front garages in the multidwelling zones.



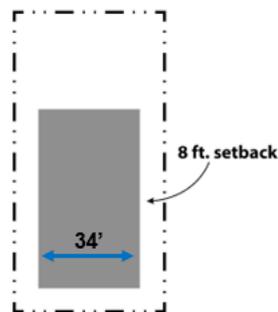
Lack of front setback requirements in the higher density zones (R1 and RH) sometimes result in abrupt transitions to existing development, and compromise residents' privacy.

Also creating abrupt transitions, buildings of four or more stories can be built next to properties with single-dwelling zoning.

Single-Dwelling Development  
Height: 30 ft.



Multi-Dwelling Development  
Height: 30 ft.



Existing side setback requirements in the multi-dwelling zones are complex and often require deeper setbacks than similar scale development in single-dwelling zones, making it difficult to do small site development that can continue neighborhood patterns.

# Building Design and Transitions: Concept Direction

## Design of Street Frontages

*Concept objectives: foster design that contributes to pedestrian-friendly street environments, with buildings oriented to streets and minimizing blank walls and other building features that do not contribute to an inviting street environment.*

**Concept 7. Limit garages along street frontages to 50% of ground levels of buildings. Require parking to be accessed from alleys, where these exist.**

This would promote arrangement such as the following:



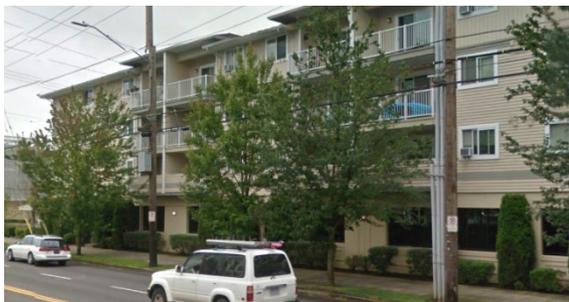
**Rear parking arrangements**, or options with no off-street parking in areas close to transit.



**Front parking that takes up no more than 50% of street frontages**



**Options for alternative garage arrangements** that limit impacts on the pedestrian environment (such as tuck-under garages set below entry porches)



This limitation would also apply to large ground-level parking garages.

**Concept 8. Require building entrances to be oriented to public streets or pathways, or to courtyards connected to public streets.**

This would:



Prevent this



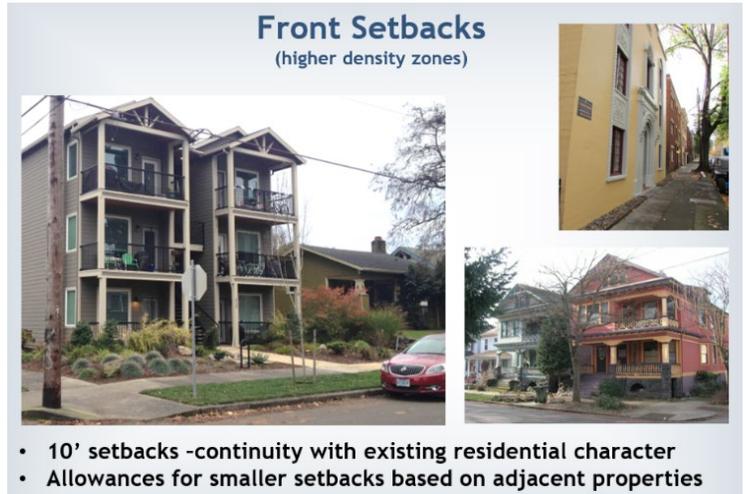
Promote entrances oriented to streets, public pathways, and courtyards

# Building Design and Transitions: Concept Direction

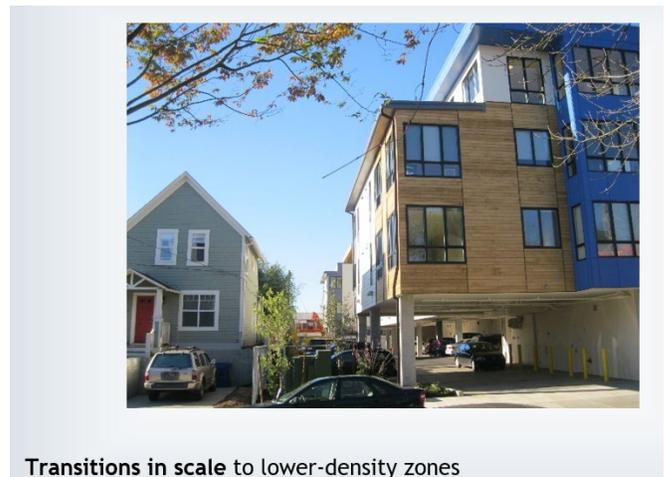
## Building setbacks and height transitions

*Concept objectives: integrate larger scale buildings into residential areas through greater continuity in front setbacks and providing transitions in scale adjacent to single-dwelling zoning, while facilitating compact development on small sites.*

**Concept 9. Require 10' front setbacks in R1 and RH zones,** to integrate with established residential characteristics, with allowances for reduced setbacks to match adjacent existing buildings (the most intensely urban RH zoning [allowing FAR of 4 to 1] would continue to not require front setbacks).



**Concept 10. Require height transitions.** Require taller buildings to step down in scale adjacent to single-dwelling zones, with building heights limited to 35' (three stories) within 25 feet of properties with single-dwelling zoning.



**Concept 11. Simplify side setback regulations.** Require 5' minimum setbacks (as applies in single-dwelling zones) to facilitate development on small sites and leaving space for more usable outdoor space, such as central courtyards.



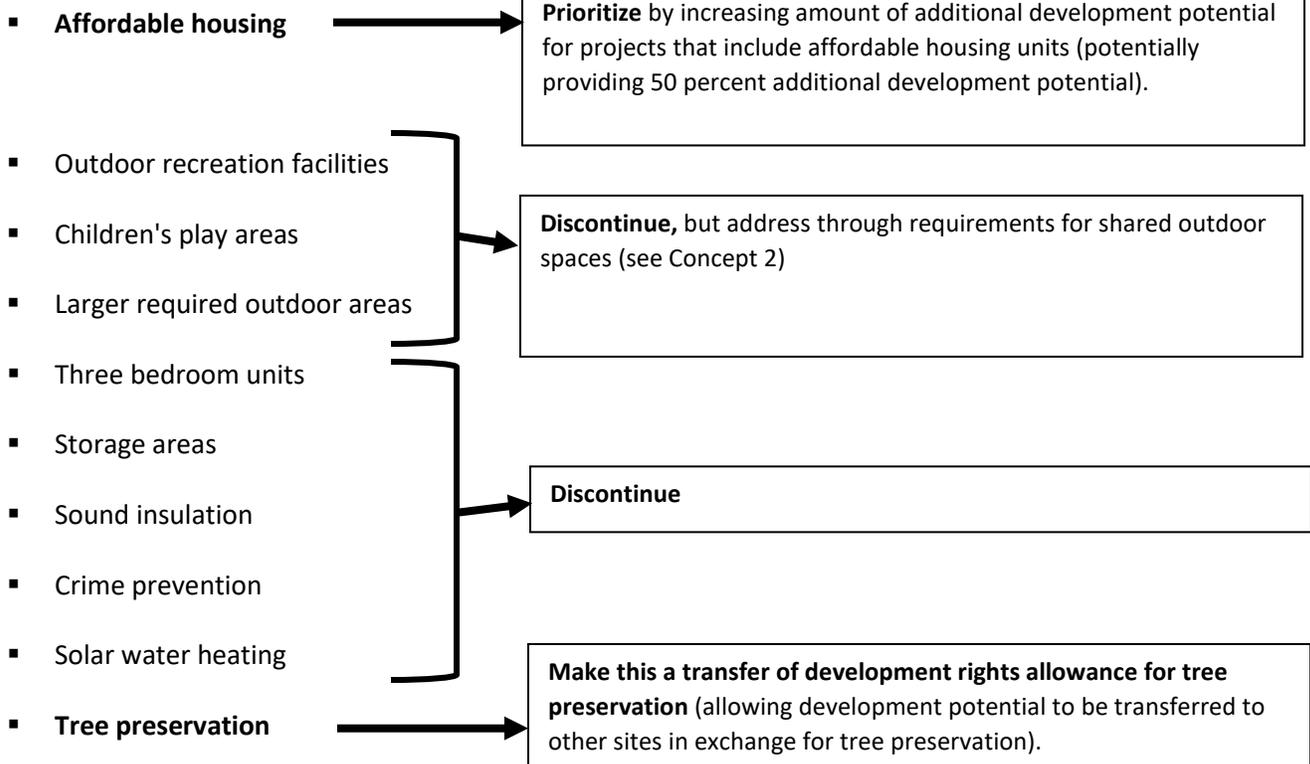
# Development Bonuses and Density Transfers: Concept Direction

*Prioritize affordable housing as a development outcome, and provide incentives for historic preservation and tree preservation.*

**Concept 12. Prioritize affordable housing by increasing inclusionary housing development bonus beyond current 25% density increase (possibly to 50%), and by discontinuing all other development bonuses.**

Background: Currently, projects can achieve additional development potential if they provide certain amenities or affordable units. The amount of additional development potential for providing affordable housing units is limited to 25 percent (compared to more than 60 percent in the mixed use zones), while the other development bonuses can be combined to provide up to 50 percent more development potential than normally allowed.

## EXISTING DEVELOPMENT BONUSES



**Concept 13. Modify allowances for transfers of development rights to prioritize historic preservation and tree preservation.**

**Board 7 (plus others?): Connected Centers (TBD)**

*Provide more effective ways to achieving needed street and pedestrian connections when development occurs.*