

Application: Improving Multi-Dwelling Development: *New Standards and Regulatory Improvement*

Project Narrative

A. Project Description

According to the new Comprehensive Plan, 80% of the approximately 120,000 new housing units developed in Portland by 2035 will be in multi-dwelling buildings. It is important for residents and neighborhoods and that we get this major addition to the city right, and that we meet city goals for equitable and complete, healthy neighborhoods, economic prosperity and climate resilience.

The proposed CPDG project will address barriers to achieving better quality multi-family development and healthy, connected neighborhoods. Barriers will be addressed through the creation of new, more effective and efficient development standards. This includes regulations that are clearer about desired design outcomes. These changes will ease the development process for property owners; provide greater certainty for neighbors and developers; increase clarity about site and building design outcomes; and support healthy living by design. To best manage growth in coming years, and to protect and promote livability for all, multi-dwelling development must serve Portlanders better than it does today.

The project description provided below identifies the geographic focus areas for this work, current barriers to development, why this project is significant, and contributing and related projects. It also includes a proposed scope of work and proposed project milestones.

Focus Areas

This work will focus areas on areas of Portland that are expected to see notable amounts of growth and include a significant amount of multi-dwelling zoning, and that have concentrations of low-income residents and households with children. This project will focus on multi-dwelling zoning in two large areas of Portland.

- *Centers and Corridors* – The 2035 Proposed Draft Comprehensive Plan for Portland expands on the regional centers and corridors growth strategy through the addition of a new Town Center at Division and 122nd Ave and multiple new Neighborhood Centers across the City. The plan also identifies a select group of major streets as Civic Corridors and Neighborhood Corridors. These four area types will support much of Portland’s population growth between now and 2035. While centers and corridors are generally zoned mixed use, some parts of centers and corridors are zoned for multi-dwelling residential. A map of Centers and Corridors is provided with this application.
- *East Portland Multi-Dwelling Residential Areas* – East Portland has larger concentrations of multi-dwelling zoning than any area of the City. Recent analyses completed for the Comprehensive Plan also show that it has significant growth potential. East Portland is home a significant percentage of Portland’s youth population, as well as concentrations of communities of color and low-income households.

Current Barriers to Development

There are many recognized barriers to quality development in multi-dwelling zones in Portland. A list of key barriers is provided below.

- Development standards that are inappropriate for the size and shape of sites commonly found in East Portland neighborhoods
- Impractical or difficult to administer connectivity standards that result in incomplete and/or unfairly levied infrastructure requirements
- Land division and other rules that result in poorly configured site plans
- Insufficient requirements for shared open space and other family-friendly amenities
- Standards that are both inflexible and off-target in terms of promoting site planning that can meet neighborhood and development needs.

Project Name: Better Multi-Dwelling Development Project

Applicant: City of Portland

- Development standards that do not promote articulated building designs with visual relief and variation.

These barriers reduce the quality and acceptance of multi-dwelling buildings in many parts of Portland. In East Portland, the barriers described above yield a haphazard pattern of development that does not support walkability. The results are a disconnected and incomplete street network, unnecessary loss of trees, and development that seems too dense. Poor connectivity makes it difficult for residents to access transit, education and commercial services; and increasing reliance on personal automobiles to conduct daily tasks and errands, which does not support regional goals for walkability and climate resilience.

In all parts of Portland other barriers result in housing that has few amenities for residents, including sufficient and individual common open spaces, sufficient storage, and other spaces that would improve the quality of life of residents. Development standards also often result in boxy buildings with minimal articulation and variation in the facades.

Project Significance

Portland is forecast to add at least 120,000 dwelling units by 2035. Projections indicate that 80 percent of these units will be in multi-dwelling buildings. Many of those buildings will be along mixed use corridors and main streets, but around one-quarter of that growth will be in multi-dwelling residential zones.

Centers and Corridors – These areas are the bedrock of the Portland Metro region’s growth plan. Portland’s Center and Corridors, including numerous historic main streets have seen significant development in recent years. While that development has successfully forwarded local and regional objectives for healthy, connected neighborhoods, the designs of the buildings have often resulted in notable community frustration. Portland remains deeply committed to the regional growth plan and would like to use this grant opportunity to refine the development standards in multi-family zones in Centers and Corridors to better meet community design desires, while supporting compact growth and main street investment. As the most populous city in the region and the state, Portland must figure out how to grow in these areas while maintaining livability and community satisfaction.

East Portland – As noted above, 80 percent of Portland’s anticipated growth will be housed in multi-dwelling buildings that are located in both mixed use and multi-dwelling zoning. While mixed-use zoning is well-distributed along Portland’s major streets, nearly 35 percent of all multi-dwelling zoning, or nearly 3,000 acres, is located in East Portland. East Portland is also home a large percentage of Portland youth, communities of color and low-income populations. It is essential to improve regulations to support the development of neighborhoods that increase safety and access to opportunity in East Portland.

In the 1990s East Portland experienced a significant housing boom that radically altered the East Portland landscape. Across East Portland, narrow and deep lots were divided and developed to include a variety of multi-dwelling and single-family attached housing. Often, lots were divided into flag lots. Flag lots housed single-family, as well as large multi-family buildings. In addition, other properties were developed with private streets. These two development approaches, as well as a lack of minimum site size requirements and the interplay of myriad standards contributed to the perpetuation of a minimal pedestrian, bike and vehicle through routes in East Portland. In addition, the interplay of development standards often resulted in projects for which it was not defensible to require needed infrastructure improvements. Through this project, the City of Portland would like to take a deep look at how development standards work, or do not work together, to stifle the creation of complete, healthy and walkable neighborhoods in East Portland.

Barriers to development will be reduced through development regulations that lead to more efficient and predictable permitting, as well better design outcomes and buildings that are more pleasant and healthy to live in. Specifically, the new regulations will promote better design in terms of site planning, livability and safety. They will be written with the intention of better supporting the health of residents of the buildings and in the surrounding neighborhoods through

Project Name: Better Multi-Dwelling Development Project

Applicant: City of Portland

increased walkability, improved share open space, and through the creation of development standards that improve the relationship between buildings and the streets. These things will better support community health, and community acceptance of new development.

Scope of Work

The City's multi-dwelling development standards have produced successful results in some situations but have failed in others. While the same codes apply citywide, the conditions in multi-dwelling areas vary widely—lot patterns, lot sizes, topography, connectivity and other infrastructure. What might work in Inner Portland neighborhoods, with their uniform lot and block patterns, may not be as successful in East Portland, with its differing block patterns and often deep lots. Current code can also produce significantly different results on similar types of development based on how the land division code interacts with zoning.

The proposed project will review the results of application of these codes and develop recommendations to improve the site design, healthy living, connectivity and general quality of new multi-dwelling development. It will consider whether and how the code should vary in response to different conditions across the city. It will evaluate the impact any code changes may have on the likelihood and cost of development of new housing

1. Project Goals and Outcomes

- Establish project-specific goals and outcomes for the work funded by the grant, including a clear definition of what the concept document, regulatory changes and or guidelines are intended to achieve. Goals and outcomes may differ by geography.

2. Existing Conditions Assessment

- Review current outcomes and how they vary by geography. Design outcome assessments should consider building and site design and the relationship to the street; and how spaces are used.
- Use existing background information such as the Infill Design Toolkit, Courtyard Housing Design Competition, Comprehensive Plan Background Reports, the Powell-Division Housing Field Study (under completion), East Portland Review and documents developed to support the Mixed Use Zones Project.
- Assess the level of density developed by zone to determine if property owners are developing to maximum density, or if they are developing far below maximum density, and what types of buildings are being constructed in different zones.
- Assess the difference in standards for street connectivity, public improvements and parking for properties that are subdivided compared to properties that are developed as apartments or condominiums.
- Assess existing code standards and identify potential loopholes and conflicts between sections based on text and review of land development projects.

3. Block, Lot Pattern and Connectivity Assessment in East Portland

- Complete a thorough assessment of block and lot patterns in East Portland to understand challenges and opportunities to develop an approach to promote connectivity.
- Develop an understanding of which regulations most impact the block and lot pattern today.
- Identify and document barriers to achieving pedestrian, bike and vehicle connections through development.
- Identify potential new types of connections to help meet the area's needs for greater pedestrian and bicycle connectivity

4. Site and Building Planning and Design

- Identify setbacks and transitions between buildings of the same and different zones and in different geographies (for example, within residential areas versus mixed-use corridors), considering needs for

Project Name: Better Multi-Dwelling Development Project

Applicant: City of Portland

privacy, relationships to the street, CPTED issues and accessible design issues. Coordinate work with Age-Friendly Cities work.

- Develop recommendations for open areas, landscaping, tree preservation, on-site stormwater management, storage, and parking/vehicle areas, based on geography.
- Consider options for minimum site development sizes in different geographies.
- Assess master planning options.

5. Process Assessment

- Review current amenity bonus program to assess which bonuses are used and where they are used, building on recent research completed for the Mixed Use Zones Project and work completed by BPS' Central City team.
- Develop recommendations for revisions to the amenity bonus system.
- Assess the process for completing a multi-dwelling development project, including the existing of special overlays, plan districts or other processes that alter the basic approval process.
- Assess whether it may be beneficial to recommend discretionary processes or specific community design standards for multi-dwelling zones.

6. Real Estate Analysis

- Assess concept and draft code proposals for changes to identify likely real estate impacts, including potential costs to development and increased marketability of units as a result of proposed amendments.

7. Concept Development and Proposed Draft Code Amendments

- Based on items one through six, and informed by public engagement, develop a concept plan for the multi-dwelling regulatory changes. The concept plan should include detailed recommendations for changes to City regulations.
- Based on feedback on the concept plan, develop proposed code amendments and guidelines for consideration for the public and the Planning and Sustainability Commission.

8. Public Engagement

- Establish a project advisory committee with clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Engage residents in focus areas to understand specific needs and concerns, but build upon extensive outreach that has already been completed in the past for projects such as The Portland Plan, the Comprehensive Plan and East Portland Action Plan. Outreach should focus on developing solutions to identified concerns.

Work completed for this project will result in a package of development standard amendments that will be presented to the Planning and Sustainability Commission. This project will lead up to, but will not include the formal legislative approval process. The formal legislative approval process will continue after July 2017.

B. Project Site Description

The project site includes all multi-dwelling designated properties in East Portland, multi-dwelling properties within the proposed and existing Neighborhood and Town Center boundaries in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan, and all multi-dwelling designated properties on proposed Neighborhood and Civic Corridors on the proposed 2035 Comprehensive Plan. A project site map is provided in the Supplemental Attachments section of this application.

The site area for this project is large and varied and covers areas with demographic and economic conditions that reflect the variation throughout the city. These properties are currently designated residential and have development of a wide range of ages, densities and quality. East Portland was identified as an area of specific focus because the area is home to

Project Narrative

Project Name: Better Multi-Dwelling Development Project

Applicant: City of Portland

many households with children, low-income households and communities of color; and there is significant growth potential in East Portland. Centers and Corridors were selected as the other focus area because they are locations for future growth.

C. Project Background

This project will build on recent projects such as the Comprehensive Plan; and the Mixed Use Zones Project and the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project, which were both funded through Community Planning and Development Planning Grants.

East Portland Action Plan – It will also help implement actions to the following support strategies in the East Portland Action Plan:

- HD.1 Improve the design and quality of new housing structures
- HD.5 Improve regulations and implementation of City code to increase benefit and reduce impacts
- T.2 Increase safety and convenience of walking throughout East Portland
- T.5 Improve the unimproved local streets in East Portland

Powell-Division Transit and Development Project – Through the Community Planning and Development Grant for the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project, the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability was able to conduct an in-depth housing field survey of multi-dwelling buildings within walking distance of major station opportunity areas. This research documents existing conditions of multi-family buildings along the Powell-Division corridor and will provide valuable background information that will inform the creation of new multi-dwelling development standards.

Mixed Use Zones Project – A core component of the Mixed Use Zones Project, which was also funded by a Community Planning and Development Grant, was the development of building standards that promote community-accepted designs on Centers and Corridors. Lessons learned and work completed through the Mixed Use Zones Project can, in part, be applied to multi-dwelling development on Centers and Corridors. This will provide the space needed to focus deeply on creating East Portland-specific revisions to the multi-dwelling development standard, while still meeting community needs for multi-dwelling designs in other areas of Portland.

D. Evaluation Criteria

Expected Development Outcomes – This project will encourage the development of better multi-dwelling buildings and complexes. These improvements include useable outdoor space, basic on-site amenities to help residents meet their daily needs and site designs that promote a walkable and bikeable public realm. The project will also identify ideal minimum site sizes for different multi-dwelling zones to promote the development of a more regular streetscape and to minimize flag lots and other development patterns that inhibit the development of a permeable street grid in East Portland.

The project will leverage community support that can help it show results more quickly. The East Portland Action Plan (EPAP), which has active on-going community support, calls for the City and developers to improve the design and quality of new housing. This project will be developed in close coordination with East Portland residents and will help achieve outcomes identified in EPAP. The project also helps will draw on the community through the Neighborhood Prosperity Initiatives in the Jade District and Division Midway Alliance. These groups have been able to grow their capacity to mobilize local residents to participate in projects that will affect their neighborhoods.

The project will affects a good deal of new development forecast by 2035, Especially in East Portland, much of this land is near existing or future high capacity transit. The Blue and Green MAX lines provide excellent transit oriented development opportunities, as will the new Powell-Division high capacity bus service, which will provide direct access to

Project Narrative

Project Name: Better Multi-Dwelling Development Project

Applicant: City of Portland

the Jade District and Division-Midway, further supporting economic development and increasing access to services in these two neighborhood hubs.

City of Portland, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability staff will be responsible for working with the community, the consultant team and other City bureaus, such as the Portland Bureau of Transportation to create new development standards and regulations. City of Portland staff will be responsible for taking the new regulations through the legislative process.

Regional Significance – Portland is projected to grow by approximately 120,000 households between now and 2035. Single-dwelling zones, including single-family attached housing will only accommodate about 20 percent of that new growth. The rest of the projected household growth will be in multi-dwelling and mixed use buildings. It is crucial to make sure that the development of those new residential buildings support health and livability through good quality site and building design. Similarly, it is important to ensure that the standards that govern site design are closely coordinated with transportation plans, so that residents have walkable and bikeable neighborhoods that promote active living.

Thoughtfully governed and developed multi-dwelling zones will foster a more pleasant public realm, which will help people feel more comfortable walking, biking and taking transit. This in turn, will contribute to reductions in carbon emissions and other pollutants. Better walking, biking and transit environments will translate to a greater number of pedestrians and bicyclists in commercial districts, which will help support the expansion and development of local commercial districts, promoting business district success.

This project focuses on improving the quality and design of multi-dwelling neighborhoods in East Portland. East Portland is home to many families with children, lower-income households and concentrations of communities of color. Improving the indoor and outdoor environment is critical to promoting equity in the city and the region.

Centers, Corridors and Station Communities and Main Streets in the 2040 Growth Concept – Work completed through this project will directly help further development in Gateway Regional Center, Lents Town Center and Station Area Communities along the Blue and Green MAX lines, and along the Division St and 122nd Ave Main Street and Corridor segments, Stark St, Glisan St and Powell Blvd Corridor segments in East Portland. There are also multi-dwelling zones adjacent to the 82nd Ave Main Street and Corridor, which, when developed will help make 82nd Ave a more vibrant Main Street and Corridor. Real estate market analyses and economic assessments completed for the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project will be used to inform the proposed project.

Other Locations – One primary objective of this project is to support the development of healthy multi-dwelling housing for households of all incomes. Much of Portland's multi-family zoning is concentrated in East Portland, which is home to concentrations of communities of color, low-income households and a large youth population. However, many of the housing developments in East Portland do not include outdoor play areas and are not designed to promote health. Portland staff recently worked with Multnomah County and health partners to develop the Healthy Housing Handbook (www.healthyhousingpdx.com) to provide recommendations for how to improve the quality of existing multi-dwelling housing, particularly in East Portland. This project provides an opportunity to evaluate how and to what extent those recommendations can be codified in the City development standards. This project does not affect any employment or industrial properties.

The City of Portland is addressing gentrification and displacement through avenues such as scoping a multi-dwelling and upgrade preservation program, exploring the implications of supporting just cause over no cause evictions, and is seeking to capitalize a housing land bank. This project is focused on improving the outcomes and livability of multi-dwelling development. While the project will assess likely implications for housing construction cost, a specific

Project Name: Better Multi-Dwelling Development Project

Applicant: City of Portland

affordable housing development task is not included in this work. Affordability impacts will be considered during the assessment of potential new standards and very likely affordable housing will be supported through revisions to amenity bonuses.

This project does not directly interface with the N/NE Community Development Project, although in places where multi-dwelling zoning exists in the N/NE Community Development Project, regulatory changes that result from this project may alter development standards. The N/NE Community Development project will be focused on delivering needed housing as quickly as possible, while meeting community needs and supporting desired social and economic outcomes.

Best Practices – The lessons learned through this project can be applied to multi-family areas in other parts of Portland and throughout the region. For example, the methodology used to create context-responsive development standards in East Portland could also be applied to areas in other parts of the Portland and the region. Additionally, the conditions in East Portland are similar to conditions in West Gresham and in Aloha in Washington County. The process methodology and findings could be shared with Gresham and other agencies in the region that have semi-rural properties that are transitioning to a more urbanized residential development pattern.

Leverage – New, East Portland-focused multi-dwelling development standards will provide a clear community vision for the multi-dwelling housing. These new standards can be used to guide housing development in station area communities in East Portland, particularly in conjunction with the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project. The Powell-Division Transit and Development Project is about to enter the Project Development phase with the Federal Transit Administration. The City of Portland will soon allocate \$1,000,000 in City funds to support this regional transit project. Additional funds will be provided by other agencies involved with the project.

Matching Fund/Potential – The City of Portland will provide a more than ten percent local match with in-kind support in the form of staff hours and materials and services.

Growth Absorption – Portland is projected to grow by 120,000 households, much of which will be in multi-dwelling housing. This project provides a means to accommodate that growth in a way that forwards growth absorption in and near centers and corridors in Portland.

Public Involvement – Given the diversity of households in the project area, public involvement for this project will take a non-traditional approach. Staff will actively with community organizations that are active in the area, including the Jade District and Division Midway Alliance, IRCO, Latino Network, PAALF, Russian Address LEP and neighborhood outreach. Outreach will include focus groups with translated materials, and information provided at community events and discussions, in addition to larger workshops.

Governing Body – The City of Portland will implement this project through the legislative process. Concept and discussion drafts will be shared with the community and the Planning and Sustainability Commission at meetings, events and at work sessions. Following this outreach, the Planning and Sustainability Commission will receive a Proposed Draft for review and discussion at a minimum of one public hearing, which would follow additional outreach. After Planning and Sustainability Commission review, the City Council will review and decide upon the Recommended Draft at a public hearing. Standards developed through this process will be implemented through City Code and the Zoning Code or through guidelines, as appropriate. No outcomes associated with this project are subject to public voting requirements.

Capacity of Applicant – The City of Portland and the Bureau of Planning and Sustainable has a successful track record of completing work supported through Community Planning and Development Grants, including the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project, the Barbur Concept Plan and the Mixed Use Zones Project. The staff and consulting skills



Improving Multi-Dwelling Development

Images of Existing Conditions: Site Design, Building Orientation and Open Space

Examples of Poor Site Design and Building Orientation Outcomes in East Portland



Common East Portland lot layout – variety of lot sizes and mix of old/new development with minimal amenities.

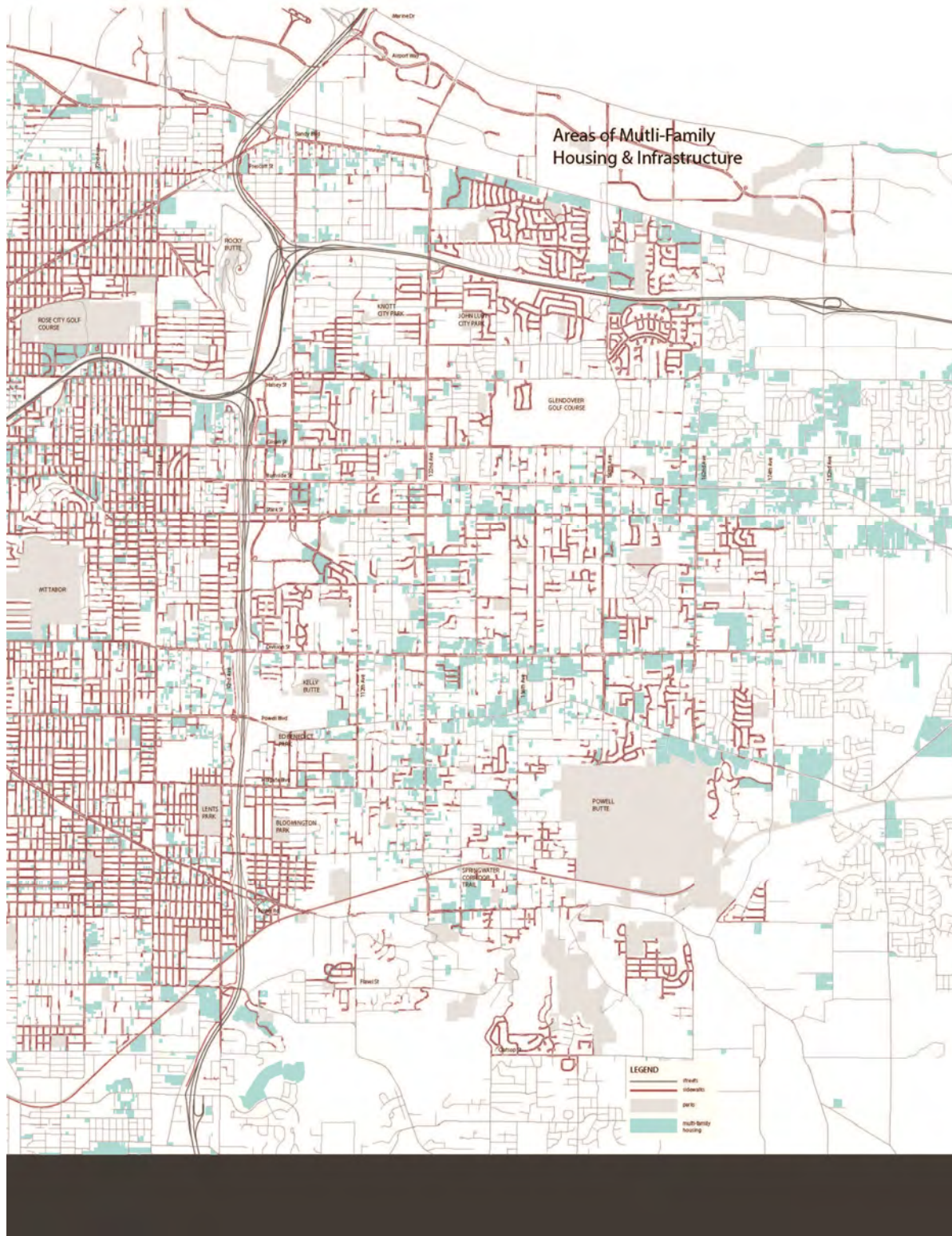


Above: Multi-dwelling development approved through the Community Design Standards. These standards require pitched roofs and front porches, but do not address site design issues such as connections to open space and privacy.



Multi-dwelling development on SE 122nd Avenue accessed by shared driveways instead of streets. Similar development involving a land division would trigger requirements for street-oriented entrances, street trees and other features. Also note lack of useable open space (unbuilt green area is a fenced stormwater facility).

Multi-dwelling Development and Street/Sidewalk Layout in East Portland
(Areas in red denote streets with sidewalks. Many streets in East Portland lack sidewalks.)



Examples of Limited Open Space in Inner Portland



Multi-dwelling buildings throughout the city often lack sufficient private and shared open space. Many new code standards are being developed through the Mixed Use Zones Project. Those concepts can be incorporated into multi-dwelling zone regulations throughout the city.



Healthy Housing Solutions – Open Space Layout

Healthy Housing Solutions

- A** Pedestrian paths create linkages throughout the site, not just from the parking lot to units.
- B** Fencing and benches create privacy and provide a transition between public and private areas.
- C** Pervious pavers help with natural stormwater filtration.
- D** Existing unused grass areas are transformed into private garden plots and/or community garden plots.
- E** Slatted wood fences and vegetative living walls screen outdoor spaces to allow some visibility and light.
- F** Operable windows and skylights provide daylight to the community room and visibility to the common open space.
- G** The community room is a large flexible space for cooking, doing laundry, holding meetings or hanging out.
- H** A variety of benches are scattered throughout the apartment site.
- I** Common open space adjacent to apartment buildings allows parents, older siblings, and other community members to watch over youngsters while attending to other activities.
- J** The common open space is located along the pedestrian path and close to the driveway.
- K** The common open space is fenced and separated from auto traffic to provide a safe and manageable play area. Bollards, trees and bioswales separate pedestrians and automobiles.
- L** Large canopy trees and vegetation provide shade, habitat and air filtration. Bioswales capture roof stormwater and surface runoff from impervious surfaces.

