



PORTLAND HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
STATE OF THE CITY PRESERVATION REPORT 2024

April 1, 2025

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The Historic Landmarks Commission (PHLC) was supported by Staci Monroe, primary staff to the PHLC, an expert team from the Portland Permitting and Development (PP&D), and Kara Fioravanti, supervising manager of the Design and Historic Review team at PP&D, as well as Brandon Spencer-Hartle, our liaison from the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS).

1.0 Message From the Chair

April 1, 2025

Dear Mayor Wilson and City Council Members:

The preservation field is evolving. In its early days, the preservation movement was largely grassroots activism centered around protecting and saving buildings of high architectural merit, or places of great historical significance. What was considered worthy of protection was mostly determined by white people, about white history. Unfortunately, that perception of preservation still persists today.

In fact, preservation has come to stand for so much more. It is about sustainability – conserving our energy and natural resources. It is about cultural memory – honoring and learning from the past. And, it is about inclusion – researching and landmarking places that tell all of our stories. The following report contains a primer on what the Historic Landmarks Commission does, who we are, and why it matters. As you read through it, there are a few points I ask you to keep in mind:

- Preservation is a value that the City of Portland has signed onto. There is **extensive overlap between the aims of preservation and the goals and policies in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan**.
- **Demolition review does not equal demolition denial.** On the contrary, demolition review is an important public process which allows Portlanders a voice in deciding whether the removal of an historic building represents a greater public benefit than retaining it. This was exemplified in the Type IV case earlier this year involving Ukandu's plan to redevelop a site in the South Portland Historic District. After hearing public testimony on both sides, the Landmarks Commission unanimously recommended demolition approval, subsequently granted by this City Council – concluding that the services provided by Ukandu on the site were of greater public benefit than saving the modest historic bungalow.
- The members of the Landmarks Commission are an **experienced and diverse group of volunteers**. We give our time for a variety of reasons, but we all share a desire to make Portland an ever better place to live, work and play. We are at your service - please use us as a resource!

I hope you find the information in this report timely and useful. My fellow Commissioners and I look forward to discussing it with you at an upcoming hearing.

Sincerely,



Andrew C. Smith, Chair

Juniper House, National Register of Historic Places



From 1987 to 1989, Juniper House provided essential end-of-life care for Portlanders with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), becoming the first dedicated facility of its kind in the Pacific Northwest. Though it operated for just over two years, it redefined local HIV and AIDS care by creating a compassionate, home-like environment focused on support, comfort, connection, and education. Juniper House also welcomed filmmakers, leading to the 1987 documentary *"AIDS... Close to Home"*, which shared the experiences of seven residents living with HIV and AIDS.

2.0 What We Do

The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission has a wide variety of tasks, goals, and collaborative partners. We are here as a resource for city officials and neighborhoods as well as applicants. We are professionals who believe in finding nuanced solutions that benefit all Portlanders, including future generations. Below is a list of some of the powers and duties afforded to the Commission by the Portland Zoning Code:

Make Recommendations to City Council

- Establishment, Amendment, or Removal of Historic Districts
- Adoption of New Design Guidelines for Historic Districts
- Type IV Demolition Reviews

Decide Land Use Applications

- Type III Reviews of New Construction in Historic Districts
- Type III Reviews to Establish or Remove Landmark Designations
- Type III Reviews of Alterations to Historic Resources
- Type II Appeals

Provide Advice

- Design Advice to Applicants for future Land Use Reviews
- Legislative Advice on Code Projects to the Planning and Sustainability Commission and City Council
- Policy and Design Advice to City Bureaus and Other Public Agencies on Capital Projects and Programs Collaborate with Portland Design Commission
- Collaborate with the Planning Commission and the Design Commission

Advocate

- Initiate and Coordinate Preservation and Outreach Programs within and outside of the City

COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS

Incentivising Reuse

The Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) supports development and accepts the Housing and Regulatory Reform Project (HRRP) zoning changes to help increase housing production in the city. As these changes are significant, we think it will be important to track results of projects using the revised standards to see what outcomes we see from HRRP as a way to continue to improve processes. We support the goals of the HRRP and look forward to working with teams to create the best projects possible. ***We encourage City Council to promote and incentive the reuse of existing buildings to aid in the production of new housing.***

Promoting Leadership and Funding

The HLC also heard a briefing related to the return of the Thompson Elk Fountain back to its original location and on its original fountain base. ***We applaud City Council's leadership and also for providing funding for the fountain and Elk statue to be returned to its original location!*** It has been sorely missed.

Broadening Our Impact

Another highlight was a briefing on Bureau of Planning and Sustainability's Historic Resources Program, the LGBTQ+Historic Sites Project, a multi-year effort to identify, document, and ***preserve historic resources associated with lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer+ histories.***

2.1 Call to Action

Lobby Salem for a Rehabilitation Tax Credit to Revive Downtown, Repurpose Existing Buildings for Housing, and Hit Emissions Reduction Goals.

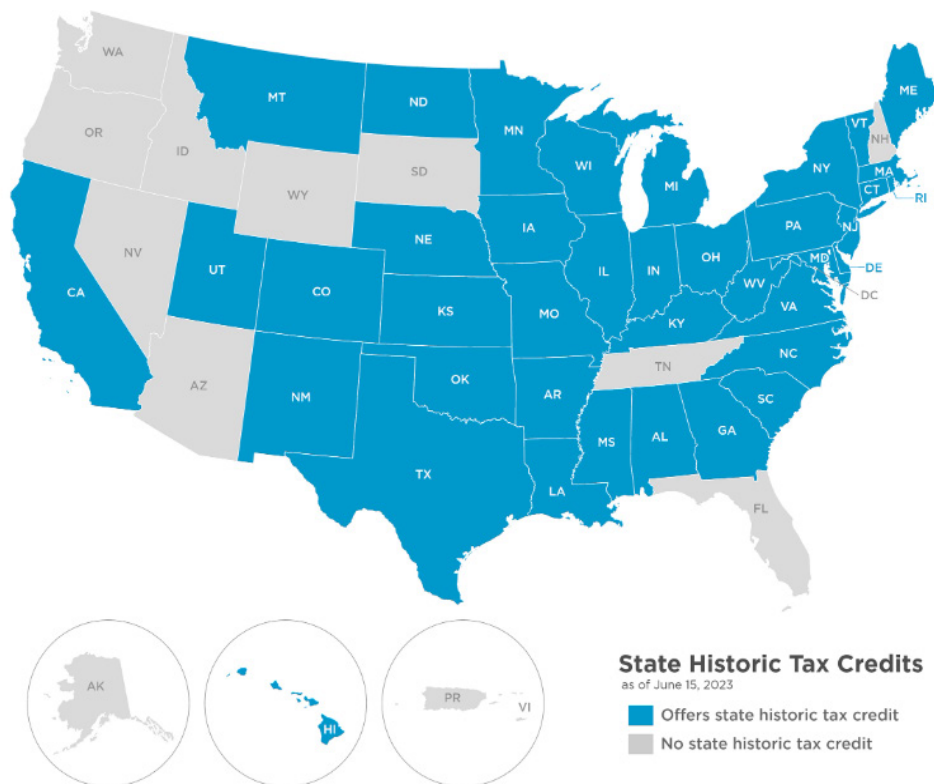
With the expiration of the Special Assessment program, Oregon is now one of the few states offering no economic incentives to rehabilitate historic buildings. This is a missed opportunity—our largest renewable resource is the buildings we already have.

We urge the City to prioritize and lobby for a state rehabilitation tax credit, which has proven effective in 39 other states. A typical 20% credit, when paired with federal incentives, can cover up to 40% of rehab costs. Programs like Illinois' Historic Tax Credit have demonstrated success, increasing funding from \$15M to \$25M and supporting affordable housing.

We don't need to start from scratch — the National Trust for Historic Preservation offers a roadmap with proven strategies!

Passage of a state rehabilitation tax credit is the single most important thing we could do. We would repurpose more buildings and significantly advance our goals to:

- Create more workforce and affordable housing.
- Revitalize downtown by closing the funding gap for conversions of commercial buildings to residential uses.
- Lower carbon emissions in amounts equal to pulling thousands of cars off the road.
- Dramatically reduce landfill waste.
- Seismically retrofit more buildings to improve public safety.
- Retain places that embody our diverse cultural heritage and neighborhood character.



States marked in blue offered a historic tax credit as of June 2023.

National Trust for Historic Preservation

3.0 Our Core Values and Areas of Impact

Cultural and Social Inclusion

Portland's history lives in its buildings and spaces, fostering identity and connection. The commission prioritizes recognizing and protecting BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ narratives within our shared heritage through thoughtful stewardship.

Economic Vitality

Portland's historic fabric drives economic vitality by supporting tourism, housing, and local businesses. Reuse invests in skilled labor, keeps dollars local, reduces waste, and builds a resilient, prosperous future.

Sustainability

Building reuse should be central to Portland's sustainability goals, aligning with Oregon's planning goals. Reuse cuts carbon, conserves resources, and reduces waste—equivalent to removing thousands of cars from the road.

Livability and housing

Portland's historic fabric boosts tourism, housing, and businesses. Restoring old buildings invests in local labor, strengthens the economy, reduces waste, and creates a resilient, prosperous future for all.

Democracy and Community Engagement

Preserving Portland's historic fabric fosters community pride, supports local jobs, and strengthens the economy. Restoration reduces waste, enhances livability, and ensures a resilient, thriving future shaped by engaged residents.

Fight Climate Change with Restoration & Reuse

Oregon's existing buildings are among our greatest renewable resources.

THE HIDDEN COST OF DEMOLITION & RECONSTRUCTION



**126
METRIC
TONS
OF CARBON**

Renovating a 1,500 SF older home, instead of tearing one down and replacing it with 3,000 SF of new construction, reduces CO₂ emissions by 126 tons.



**1,383
METRIC
TONS
OF CARBON**

Renovating a 10,000 SF commercial building versus replacing it with a 20,000 SF structure, which uses more energy-intensive materials, reduces CO₂ emissions by 1,383 tons.

RENOVATION & REUSE PREVENT EMISSIONS



**44,048
GALLONS
OF GAS**

A savings of 126 tons of embodied CO₂ is roughly equivalent to preventing the emissions from 44,048 gallons of gasoline.



**464,127
GALLONS
OF GAS**

The carbon savings for a commercial building is equivalent to preventing the emissions from 464,127 gallons of gasoline.

LOOKED AT ANOTHER WAY...



**93
CARS
OFF THE ROAD**

The average car uses 474 gallons of gasoline per year. Renovating just one older home, vs. demolishing/replacing it, equates to taking 93 cars off the road for an entire year.



**1,028
CARS
OFF THE ROAD**

Renovating an existing commercial structure makes an even bigger impact as its renovation equates to taking 1,028 cars off the road for an entire year.

DO THE MATH: IT REALLY ADDS UP!



From 2016-2020 in Portland, over 823 houses were demolished. That's equivalent to annual emissions from **76,480 cars!**



Over the same five years, 376 of Portland's commercial structures were razed. That's equivalent to annual emissions from **386,528 cars!**

Embodied energy is all the energy used constructing a building, including the creation of materials and building components as well as their transportation of the site.

Originally published in Restore Oregon's Field Note's magazine, from a study conducted by ECONorthwest

WE ARE A RESOURCE TO YOU AND YOUR CONSTITUENTS

4.0 Our Expertise and The Commission

To ensure we address the needs of our city's historic building resources in a way that creates a meaningful sense of place, we have created a commission that has a holistic approach to evaluation, advocacy, and impact. Our commission is made up of members with a diversity of expertise, and we serve as a (free!) resource to our City Council and our community.

- **Design**
Building design shapes the way people experience spaces, blending functionality, aesthetics, and maintains our city's rich character.
- **Materiality**
Evaluation of physical and architectural value is crucial to preserves architectural integrity, ensures structural longevity, and maintains the cultural and aesthetic authenticity that connects the past with the present.
- **Policy and Advocacy**
Advising on and endorsing for historic buildings is essential to preserving the cultural heritage and ensuring that historic sites remain valuable assets.
- **Community Impact**
Plays a vital role in advocating for preservation while thoughtfully considering community impact, ensuring that development honors the past, serves present needs, and fosters a sustainable, culturally rich future.
- **Environmental Impact**
Advocates for preservation by promoting building reuse, reducing embodied carbon, and ensuring sustainable development that respects both cultural and ecological heritage.
- **Economic Implications**
Endorses preservation while considering economic impacts, ensuring that adaptive reuse, heritage tourism, and economic policies drive long-term community investment and growth.

Anna Mann House, National Register of Historic Places



Located in Portland's amenity-rich Kerns neighborhood, near Laurelhurst, the redevelopment of the Anna Mann House provides 128 affordable rental units for low-income households, including immigrants, refugees, and communities of color. This project offers residents access to essential amenities such as grocery stores, top-rated public schools, three city parks, and the Northeast Community Center. Conveniently situated near the high-frequency Sandy bus line and just three-quarters of a mile from the station, the development enhances accessibility and connectivity of the neighborhood for its residents. Beyond addressing the urgent need for affordable housing, the project significantly increases neighborhood density and helps mitigate the effects of gentrification.

Meet the Commissioners



Andrew Smith, Chair – Commissioner Smith is an historical architect with 30 years of experience working on preservation and rehabilitation projects, including many utilizing historic tax credits. He holds a Master of Architecture from Tulane University, and has practiced in Chicago, New Orleans and St. Louis prior to coming to Portland in 2015.

"I serve on the Landmarks Commission because I recognize that protecting our built environment is at the nexus of sustainability, diversity, and cultural memory."



Kimberly Stowers Moreland, Vice Chair – Commissioner Moreland is the owner of Moreland Resource Consulting and has over 25+ years of public sector urban, historic preservation, community development, and urban planning experience. She worked as an Urban Planner for Portland, Tacoma, and Salem. She is actively involved with several cultural, historic preservation, and heritage boards.

"I serve on the HLC to assist with efforts to maintain and protect our remaining historic places and elevate the importance of preserving historic resources that tell a more inclusive history."



Peggy Moretti – Commissioner Moretti is Executive Director Emeritus of Restore Oregon, a nonprofit working to preserve, reuse and pass forward the places and spaces that reflect Oregon's diverse cultural heritage and make communities inclusive, vibrant, livable and sustainable. She also serves on the Portland Development Review Advisory Commission

"I serve on the Landmarks Commission because I love the historic fabric of our city and the unique sense of place it creates. I believe we can accommodate growth without sacrificing our heritage, and that building reuse is one of the keys to achieving our housing and sustainability goals."



Cleo Davis - Commissioner Davis is a social design artist whose work bridges the disciplines of cultural and creative arts with design, historic preservation, economic development, and city policy. Commissioner Davis previously served as a co-instructor at Portland State University's School of Architecture, where he guided students in the initial development of an Albina Monuments Plan—an ongoing project focused on honoring the cultural history of the Albina community. He is currently working with Albina Vision Trust on their Community Investment Plan and running a design-oriented business, Black Aesthetic Studio (BAS). Commissioner Davis also works as an embedded consultant with the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, where he continues to advocate for transformative city development.

"I serve on the Historic Landmarks Commission because I believe in the power of preservation to honor and elevate the rich history and cultural legacy of our communities. It is an opportunity to ensure that historic landmarks not only reflect architectural significance but also tell the full story of the people, cultures, and narratives that shaped them. My goal is to advocate for inclusive preservation practices that celebrate diverse histories, support equitable development, and contribute to a more just and vibrant future for all."

Meet the Commissioners



Maya Foty – Commissioner Foty is a historic architect and principal at Architectural Resources Group. She leads the Architecture and Conservation sectors in their Portland office. With over 25 years' experience as a preservation architect working exclusively on landmarked properties, she specializes in projects with complex seismic and material conservation issues.

"I joined the Historic Landmarks Commission to share her professional experiences and perspectives in the Historic Land Review process."



Hannah Bronfman – Commissioner Bronfman has 20 years of experience as a sustainability and green building expert, including a background in program implementation and mechanical engineering with a special focus on deep retrofits historic reuse.

"I serve on the Landmarks Commission because I have a personal passion for existing building reuse and how to tie the carbon impacts of reuse to the maintenance of the urban experience."



Hugo Hamblin-Agosto – Commissioner Agosto is an Urban Planner and amateur preservationist with a deep passion for community advocacy and historic preservation. A dual citizen of Mexico and the United States, he hails from Southern Oregon's Rogue Valley. He began his career in the nonprofit sector, focusing on capacity building within Latino and Native communities. Previously he served on the Board of Directors for Rogue Advocates, a Southern Oregon nonprofit geared towards the preservation of productive rural land and cultivation of vibrant Urban Centers.

"I serve on the Landmarks Commission to help preserve and celebrate Portland's diverse history. It is essential that underrepresented communities have a voice in shaping the narratives of their neighborhoods. By amplifying these stories, we bring greater visibility, depth, and dimension to our shared heritage."

Ukandu Demolition Review



Land Use Review to demolish a contributing structure in the South Portland Historic District. UKANDU is a non-profit serving families impacted by childhood and adolescent cancer, proposed the construction of a campus expansion and demolition of an existing contributing building. This was approved on February 10, 2025.

The structure posed for demolition was approximately 930 SF one-and-a-half-story bungalow style house built in 1908 whose historic name is the Lucretia Nasts House. The adjacent non-contributing building to which the addition would be added sits to the east of the Lucretia Nasts House. It is an approximately 4,405 SF, two-story brick building built in 1978.



THANK YOU