

11/23/14

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

My name is Ally. I am a sixth grader who goes to Arbor School of Arts and Sciences, where we've been learning about our city. I live by Tryon Creek, which is a good neighborhood, but, sadly, not all neighborhoods in Portland are as prosperous as ours is. Portland needs more access to fresh food, access to transportation and more funding to public schools.

Portland is a wonderful city, but I think it struggles with providing its citizens with nutritious, fresh food. A lot of families in East Portland don't have enough money to buy food that is fresh and nutritious, and they might be compelled to buy the less expensive food from a fast-food restaurant. Fast-food restaurants are cheaper because the food isn't as nutritious and people who are only eating there won't be able to get the food essentials they need. There are places like large areas in East Portland that don't have access to good, fresh food like you might get at Farmer's markets, so if they wanted fresh food, it would be hard to get. Having no access to good, fresh food is also known as a food desert, because fresh food is to those areas as water is to a desert. I looked at a map of how much of Portland was in a food desert, and almost all of East Portland fell into that category. But food isn't the only problem in Portland.

If Portlanders don't have a bus or MAX service by their house, they have to walk for a while, trying to get to where they need to be. If people who need to go a long way don't have a car, they could get really tired. This is especially difficult if they're carrying something that's especially heavy, like groceries. When they get home, the parent might just want to rest but they have little kids who are vying for attention. Parents might have no energy for their jobs because they used it on travelling from place to place, trying to put up with their kid's needs and even bringing their kids with them.

I think that Portland also struggles a lot with funding public schools. When I went to a public school, we didn't have enough supplies, teachers, or space to have regular science, music and art classes, and we didn't know that much about the classes we didn't have. Our school also didn't have enough money to provide us with a nice, safe, private playground for recess. We stayed in a public fenced-in area, and we dreamed of having our private playground that was undisturbed by people who seemed to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when we were at recess. The financial situation didn't just affect the students that went to the school, it also affected the teachers. Some teachers didn't have enough money to only teach, and had to get an extra job in the summer to support themselves. That's really hard on the teachers, and this extra labor takes away from their time and energy. Once, we had a teacher who changed schools because she didn't have enough money to support herself and it was hard on the students when she left. All this matters to me because I think that everyone should be able to have a good education, so they can have a good future.

In conclusion, I think that if we put up more farmer's markets, have stores sell less expensive food that is fresh and nutritious, widen the range of bus and MAX stops and give more funding to public schools, then Portland will improve greatly as a city. Thank you for reading and considering my thoughts about Portland.

Sincerely,

Ally

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Ally' written in a cursive, stylized script.

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

Hello, my name is Harper. I am in sixth grade and live in Southwest Portland. This year in school we have been studying cities and I'm writing to you because I know that you are accepting public comment before the Portland plan, and I have a few ideas. Specifically I care about food distribution and neighborhood equality.

I think we should work hard on creating complete neighborhoods with access to all basic needs everywhere. Housing that is far away from basic needs is very troublesome. If you have a car, you are forced to drive much more for these things, which increases the pollution level. Housing that is affordable is often very far from these needs (which is why it's so cheap!) To be precise, only 60% of Portlanders are within a half-mile of a grocery store. My house is pretty close to our needs and is affordable for us, but wouldn't be for many people. Neighborhoods are also unequal because many are unsafe. This is because of an absence of sidewalks, as you doubtlessly know. I think making more sidewalks should be a higher priority for the city, because it would do three important things; increase exercise, which would lower the obesity rate; decrease pollution, because people would be able to drive to some places, and make neighborhoods more safe. Without sidewalks, people are forced to walk on the side of the road, or not walk at all.

One more thing I would like to mention is food distribution. Grocery stores provide the food everyone needs. As you probably know many neighborhoods are very unequal in terms of

grocery store accessibility. Some people have to walk more than a half-mile for food if they don't have a car. Walking a half-mile is very easy for most people, but not while going for half of the trip carrying heavy bags. In some families, how much food one parent can carry is all the family can eat for a while. Personally, I live pretty close to two grocery stores, but we always drive there. We drive because it would be very hard to walk, and would take a long time. One reason for our high obesity rate is because unhealthy food is cheap and convenient for access. If all neighborhoods have equal access to good food, (which we could do by using incentives to invite grocery stores to neighbors in need) it will create jobs, lower Portland's obesity rate, and make people happy by making their lives easier.

I think we are doing pretty well from my point of view at improving these things, but I think we should push a little harder in these areas.

Thanks,

Harper

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harper". The letters are fluid and connected, with a large initial "H".

Dear Planning and sustainability commission,
Portland is an amazing place to live in and I love it. There are small things that could be fixed/improved about it but overall these are things that Portland is already doing but could do more. I live in Irvington where a lot of these problems are not a problem for me but I know that they are a problem in other neighborhoods and I care a lot about that getting improved. I am in sixth grade and I go to Arbor School.

Having walkable/bikeable neighborhoods is very important to me. If a neighborhood is not walkable it is hard for people to get exercise. They live in a neighborhood where it is not good to walk around in so they can't go out and walk places or ride their bike. Neighborhoods need to be built to be easy and fun to walk around in so kids can play outside and have fun in their neighborhood. People should be able to easily walk or bike to the store because some people don't have or want a car so they have to be able to walk or ride their bike to the store. Only 60% of Portland households are within a half mile from a full service grocery store. This is part of not having a walkable neighborhood. I live really close to a grocery store and I would hate to be really far away from a store and not be able to drive to one if I didn't have a car. Having walkable neighborhoods is important to keep people healthy. People need to go out more and do things like play sports or do other activities if those things are available to them where they live. A complete neighborhood needs a variety of housing options, grocery stores, quality public schools, recreational

facilities, affordable transport options. A good neighborhood is built on a human scale. I think that if we maintain lots of bike paths, parks, and sidewalks and make more neighborhoods walkable we can make it easier to incorporate exercise into daily life.

I think that it is a big problem that fresh fruits and vegetables are hard to get if you don't have a lot of money. I think that it is really bad that fresh fruits and vegetables are expensive while more unhealthy processed foods are cheap. Sometimes people don't have a choice between healthy and unhealthy food. We need to make sure that affordable fresh fruits and vegetables are available in lower income neighborhoods. 40% of the people east of 82nd street live in poverty and have to walk more than 1.5 miles to the grocery store because they can't afford gas or a car. There should be more stores in neighborhoods where people don't have as much money.

Pollution is a big problem that I want to address. People need to know about global warming to keep our air clean. People need to know the effect it is going to have on the world and how they can help slow that down. Portland needs to raise awareness for what people can do and why they should. Portland is doing a good job doing things like composting and recycling but I think we could compost more, like we do at Arbor (the school I go to). We have 3 large wooden boxes that sit by our garden that each classroom dumps their compost in. We even compost pizza boxes! One of the boxes is for new compost, one is for almost-composted-compost, and one is for the compost that is dirt that we put in our garden. It is so

great to see all of this food that would have been thrown away get turned into this amazing dirt that we can use. Doing this at school has really motivated me to care more about not throwing away things that could be composted and it's also very fun. I know that I would not be able to do as much at my house but at least we have the compost bucket that we put our food scraps in. Another thing that I know plays a huge part in pollution is cars. People drive cars everywhere so it seems important that if we are going to drive them so much we should make them good for the planet. If people drove more eco cars it would be a really easy change and it would be so much better for the environment. We should do small things to help slow global warming and make Portland a great place to live in (it's already awesome).

-Nina
Nina Seidel

November 24, 2014

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

My name is Sydney Straw and I am 12 years old. I live in NE Portland right by Grant Park, but I go to the Arbor School of Arts and Sciences in Tualatin. In my class we have been studying what makes a city livable. The main issues I have been researching are getting kids a better education, the cost of healthy organic food, and food deserts.

I think Portland's more healthy foods should be less expensive. People who don't have enough money face a greater challenge to try to eat healthy due to the food costs. Cheaper more unhealthy alternatives are all around and it's hard to resist getting cheaper food even though it's unhealthy. Once the people keep getting the cheap unhealthy food, they get in bad habits of eating the junk food instead of even wanting the healthy food. I read that 61% of Portlanders are obese because of getting in these habits. If you become obese, it can lead to diabetes and other bad diseases. I heard on the radio about a program I think we should expand in Portland, where if you use SNAP benefits at local farmers markets to buy fresh foods, you get double the benefit. This supports healthy eating and local farmers.

40% of Portland's people live more than one half mile from a grocery store particularly in low-income neighborhoods. Those people have to walk in all different weather conditions just to get food that's probably not all that good for them. I heard on the radio about a woman who had to feed her kids but she had to the store by herself with heavy bags there and back because there were no grocery stores near by and she couldn't afford a car, gas, or public transportation. This is another factor preventing people from getting healthy food.

I think Portland also needs to encourage citizens the value education for kids because if kids don't get a good education, when they are older they won't be able to invent new things, teach other kids, and just learn and discover new things about the world. Most of the generation won't be successful at all if we don't get a good education. And they probably won't get a good paying job and they won't have money to live or feed their families. It's sort of like a cycle.

But in order to get a good education you need to work hard and try. My dad used to be really poor. When he and his adopted mom moved to Montana in a trailer park, his mom said that he didn't have to go to high school. But he rode his bike all by himself into town, two miles, to register for high school. My dad worked hard through high school, college, and two graduate schools, and he got a good job as a physicist. Now his whole situation in life has changed pretty much because he tried hard and went to school. My dad's story isn't the only story with education changing someone's life.

I am not exactly sure how Portland could help people value education, but I really think that it's a big issue that both the kids and the parents need to recognize why school is important.

If we don't address these issues, how will our city improve and what will our people be like in the future?

Sincerely,


Sydney Straw

Dear planning and sustainability commission,
My name is Penelope Allen. I live in Irvington NE
Portland. For the past month or so I have been learning
about cities, livability, and what makes a city livable.
I am writing about a couple things that would
improve the city more, and make it better than it
already is. The two issues I am going to address are:
Diverse housing and costs of healthy food.

I think there should be more diverse and
diverse density housing options in Portland. If
there are more high density housing in all
neighborhoods, Portland will be able to plan for
all the people that are going to come to Portland and
have enough space for them. In 2035 Portland
expects to gain 21-25% more households than we
have now. That's 464,000 - 620,000 more, so I
think we might need more space. If we also think
about the location of high density houses, and
build them in different and more neighborhoods,
closer to basic needs and amenities, it will be
a better choice for more families. This will also
help them save money because they don't need
to spend as much on transportation if they are
closer to what they need. In my neighborhood there
aren't as many high density buildings, but once
you get a little farther away there are more.

I think it is also important to have different density housing distributed Portland and closer to basic needs.

If low income houses are closer to basic needs and in better neighborhoods, they won't have to spend as much money as I said earlier. Low income families spend 64-79% of their income on housing and transportation, so if they live in a place where basic needs are closer their expenses will be reduced and they'll have more money for other things. If affordable houses are distributed through out the city and in all and better neighborhoods, there might be more jobs that are closer to their house as well.

The other issue is that healthy food is expensive and might not be a choice for all families. Because unhealthy food is less expensive more families buy the cheaper, packaged foods instead of cooking healthy meals. Look at the box of cereal next time you have breakfast or the granola bar in your lunch, the yogurt, bread, and all the other packaged foods, look at the sugar quantity. There is so much sugar in packaged foods it's crazy and sugar leads to obesity and other chronic disease. If people don't eat as much packaged foods

(Portland's high rates of chronic disease will lower.

There are also not as many healthy grocery stores in lower income neighborhoods. I heard a radio story about a woman that lives East of 82, and it was talking about food deserts. She has to walk (in any weather) more than a mile to the grocery store. Grocery stores can't stay in business in less wealthy parts of Portland because the people there can't spend enough money to keep them open and that's a food desert.

(There should be more public gardens and farmers markets in Portland. 60% of Portland lives half a mile from a grocery store (I know I live half a mile from a grocery store!) but I think we can do better. Only 7% of Portland lives one fourth of a mile from a farmers market (I don't think I do.) and only 2 out of the 24 farmers markets are in East Portland. And finally the waiting list for community gardens is 1,300 names long! How hard is it to make a garden? Gardens are great and you don't have to pay for healthy food because you grow it yourself. Gardens are great for the environment too because you don't have to ship in food.

I think everything I wrote about really matters in our city. I live in a great neighborhood and eat healthy and delicious food, but not everyone has the same privileges as I do and it would be great if everyone could. Thank you for reading my letter and I hope you can try to make these improvements.

Penelope

November 23, 2014

Dear Planning and Sustainability commission,

My name is Cole and I am a sixth grader at Arbor School in Tualatin but I live in SW Portland. In school we are thinking about how to make Portland a better place to live. I live in a very livable neighborhood and I would like the rest of Portland to have the same good conditions as my family and me. There are three issues that I think we need to address when making Portland a more livable city. Easy and cheap transportation needs to be made possible with better sidewalks and bike lanes. Healthy food needs to be easily accessible to everyone using the good sidewalks and bike lanes. Along with health, bike lanes and sidewalks provide entertainment and a fun thing to do. In addition to being easily accessible, fresh food needs to be cheaper so more people can afford it.

I think that Portland needs to invest more in sidewalks and bike lanes. Bike lanes and sidewalks will encourage people to get exercise because they are more likely to if it is easy and safe. Even if you are not overweight you need to get exercise to be healthy. If you lived in a neighborhood with no sidewalks or bike lanes you could not easily get exercise even if you wanted to. In East and West Portland some people find it hard to walk to a park or green space because of sidewalk conditions. I live in ash creek, a very walkable neighborhood and I can imagine how hard it would be if there were no sidewalks. Bike lanes and sidewalks also give more easy, cheap transportation options. People who cannot afford a car or other transportation need an inexpensive and safe way to get to places where they need to go. If we invest more in sidewalks and bike lanes instead of roads it will make more pollution free transportation easy and possible. This will make Portland an overall better place to live.

Another thing that will make Portland a more livable place is if we have more fresh grocery stores distributed evenly around the city. People who do not have a car need grocery stores close by, even if the sidewalks are good. On the radio I heard about someone in Portland who has to walk more than a mile to a grocery store regardless of the weather. Like this woman, lots of Portlanders' groceries are limited to what they can carry, even if they have the money for enough food. It is easier to eat healthy food if it is easier to get to. Some people are encouraged to eat cheap, processed foods if they cannot get fresh, healthy food easily.

In addition to having more widely spread grocery stores the healthy food needs to be cheaper. Most fresh foods are very expensive compared to unhealthy,

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,
My name is Wenwen. I live in West Linn and we have been studying livability recently in my 6th grade humanities class at Arbor School. Here in West Linn we have a lot of parks, places to walk or bike, some grocery stores and nice neighborhoods. I really like West Linn and find it a really nice place to live. But I do think that we need some updated restaurants and stores. Next I'm going to be telling you about access to public transportation, neighborhood walkability and usage of cars. These are not necessarily only for West Linn but for Portland and other cities too.

It's important that access to public transportation is improved in all of Portland because when stores are farther away from neighborhoods people are more likely to drive instead of walk, bike or take the bus because those types of transportation will take longer, but driving is bad for the environment. For example, in West Linn the closest bus stop is about 1 mile away and I bet that's the case in a lot of other areas too and nobody would want to walk a mile just to get on the bus. This also matters for the convenience of people living in Portland. In poorer neighborhoods people may not be able to afford cars and gas. That's why all of the grocery stores are farther away because they didn't get enough money. Either the people don't have a car and have to use some other type of transportation where they will not be able.

and walking also helps people get exercise. Since there's a lot of cars and that creates a lot of traffic and if it takes longer for people to reach their destination they use more gas. Which will produce more pollution into the air which is bad for us and our wildlife.

Portland is a great city but there are definitely some problems that we need to work on especially making sure that every neighborhood is a complete neighborhood with everything people need.

- Wehwen Agamie

November 23, 2014

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

My name is Grace and I live in West Linn. I am in the sixth grade and at school we have been researching what changes for Portland are being planned. We also brainstormed as a class ideas of what can be changed that will help Portland move forward and what is working that we are already doing. Separately we researched about what interested us most and then wrote about three issues we care about most. The issues that I'm most concerned about are all neighborhoods having sidewalks, all neighborhoods being complete neighborhoods, and more good public schools.

All neighborhoods should have sidewalks because than more people will be motivated to get exercise. This is important because lots of people in Portland are overweight. Twenty to twenty five percent of the teenagers are overweight, obese, or about to be overweight and fifty three percent of the adults are overweight or obese. Parks are a great way to get exercise and seventy six percent of the people living in Portland live half a mile or closer to a park, but some people do not have easy access to them because there are no sidewalks and too many busy streets. Another main reason why sidewalks are needed to walk places is so we can use less gas and if we use less gas, our air and water will become cleaner. It is true that in Portland, people usually spend nearly half of their income on a place to live and transportation, so using less gas would also save money.

All neighborhoods should be complete neighborhoods so everyone can have access to grocery stores, transportation services, and other basic needs. Portland is not very evenly cared for. Generally, when rent is cheaper in neighborhoods there aren't as many ways to find fresh food, get exercise safely, or other basic needs, and in neighborhoods where there are all the needed services rent is higher so some people can't afford it. In Portland there are ten neighborhoods that don't have any access to a grocery store within half a mile and there are eight neighborhoods where everyone has access.

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

November 23, 2014

My name is Quinn Barrett and I am 11 years old. I go to Arbor School of Arts and Sciences. We decided to write you a letter of our thoughts because we are studying issues affecting Portland. The issues I have picked to share with you are more well-paying jobs and public schools. I hope you consider my ideas and enjoy reading my letter.

I care about expanding the number of well-paying jobs for Portland citizens. Every individual deserves a quality job. Since 2000, the number of jobs in Portland has not kept up with the expanding population. Based on that result, people move here but the economy can't support the expanding population. We need more well-paying jobs to help reduce the percentage of homelessness and poverty. To move this issue forward, Portland can support small and large local businesses to preserve our diverse economy and enhance our local, regional and global economies.

Another issue I feel strongly about is education. Portland needs to find ways to improve the quality of its public schools. Without the skills of reading and writing, our city would not be able to function because no one would have the skills to fill the important jobs. One very important job for our community would be a leader or a president. Without that knowledge and leadership skills our community and environment would not be able to grow and thrive. It is important for schools to teach these skills so that individuals and communities will reach their full potentials. Many schools in Portland do not have the money to teach students to reach their full potential. This issue might come from the increasing class size which means attention from teachers will decrease. I care about teachers being paid for the amount of work they are doing. Without adequate funding, there will be a lack of materials such as books, desks, computers, classrooms, etc. How are children supposed to learn without the materials needed? Portland is a very wealthy city. Why can't that reflect on public schools?

These matters I really care about because I want to make sure that every individual has a fair and equal opportunity. I have really enjoyed studying these topics in school so I could write you this letter. Thank you for being open for public comments. Once again, I hope you consider and enjoy my letter.

Sincerely,

X 

Quinn Barrett

Dear Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability,

Hello, my name is Theo Tannahill. I am 12 years old and I live in Multnomah Village. I have been studying cities in school and my class is writing letters to you about things that we think the city should change. I have two issues I am writing about, parks and healthcare.

One problem I see in Portland that needs improvement is updating and remodeling parks. Usually when I go to parks the soccer goals are rusty and don't have nets. The baseball fields are overgrown with weeds and the facilities are not well maintained. If this is the state of local Portland parks it makes them unwelcoming and people will not use them. Instead they will maybe drive to other parks far from their neighborhoods and use a lot of gas which increases global warming. Also people will not go to Portland parks at all if they are poorly maintained which could lead higher obesity in Portland.

Another thing Portland should work on is better availability of high quality inexpensive health care. It is not fair for someone not to get health care or fill prescriptions that person needs just because they don't have the money. If they don't see doctors they will not know what is healthy to eat or receive their medicine or care when they are sick. People that have asthma or allergies cannot get care to help their symptoms if they can't afford it and they will be uncomfortable or sick often.

In conclusion, I would like Portland to fix these issues soon. Portland is a good city and what I am writing about matters. Portland can fix these problems by putting more money towards maintaining parks and health care availability. If Portland fixes these problems it will become a more fun and healthier city than it already is. I love Portland and want to help make this city even better than it is. Thank you for reading my letter.

Sincerely,

Theo Tannahill

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Theo', written in dark ink.

November 24th, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Holden and I live in Sellwood. I go to school at Arbor School of Arts and Sciences, and I am in sixth grade. We are studying the city, so I'm sending you a letter about what I think you could do to improve it. The main things I want to talk about are store access, public transportation, and schools.

I think everyone deserves store access and good food, but not everyone has these things that we take for granted. Imagine how hard it would be if food were your main priority every day, but you could not plan what you were going to eat because you have no money to spend on anything else. In East Portland, most people live more than a mile away from a store with fresh food and have to carry all their food back home in plastic bags, because they don't have a car. Healthy food is good for people, but it is expensive and some people can't afford it. Grocery stores go out of business because no one can afford to go to them.

This is part of why public transportation is so important. I think bus stops are good for people who can't afford cars so they can pay less money for transportation. They should be spread evenly around Portland so poor people can use them. Buses also help the environment, because having less vehicles on the road slows global warming. Having people travel together also creates less traffic, which leads to more space. Public transportation can help some people get to school as well.

Everyone should go to a good school, but not everyone can. Good schools are expensive, and some people can't afford them. Even some of the people who can afford schools can't buy the materials they need to succeed or go to college. Only 60% of Portland students graduate high school on time. I think that is too low of a level of success, because even some of the people who can graduate on time do so with bad grades, and can't get a good job.

Thanks for reading my letter.

Sincerely, *Holden*

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

My name is Liam Ross I am in sixth grade and I live in West Linn over behind Albertsons.

There are many problems in Portland that matter to me that we are either trying to fix or at least thinking about. Of course we can't fix all of the problems that I care about but here are some suggestions and problems that may occur. Most of the problems I am going to talk about are about transportation.

I often compare Portland to other cities I've been to to get ideas about what what we have and don't have. For example when I was in Seattle there was a monorail going from one side of the city to the other side without stopping, with certain destinations on either end like malls and shopping on one end and eating on the other. There were a lot of people in line and on the monorail because it goes exactly where they need/want to go with no stops.

In Portland for example, maybe the monorail would go from the Clackamas Town Center to Lincoln Memorial Park. With a monorail people will do this more often because the reason more people don't take a bus is because it takes quite a while to get where you need to go, especially if you were to have a meeting, because you need to be there quick and on time. Also, most of the time people don't get off at every stop, they have a certain place they need to go and having a monorail would make it possible to get there on time and not own a car and not have to pay for gas.

Most people don't live on a main road and may have a long way to walk to a bus stop and the whole point of a bus is not having to walk too far. If you do have a long way to get to a bus it is pointless, but it is not pointless if you do not have another option. For the people who do have another option and who just want to save money, it is not as convenient.

This is just my point of view and I'm sure others will disagree with my worries and ideas.

Thank you for giving me the chance to express my ideas.

Thanks!

Liam Ross

Liam Ross

I'm Sammy, I'm in 6th grade, and I live in Sellwood. Although my neighborhood has (at least I think) good transportation and accessibility, I know many neighborhoods don't. And many neighborhoods, such as Sellwood, provide accessible goods and services, but a limited range of housing. Portland is far from perfect. But by fixing issues and problems in the city we can get it much closer. Three of the most important issues are the lack of cheaper housing in neighborhoods with higher accessibility, well distributed public transportation, and steadily dropping high school graduation rates.

The lack of affordable housing with accessible goods and services is an issue that must be addressed. Many people in Portland are in poverty and have a hard time affording housing. For these people, housing combined with transportation, can take up 61-77% of their budget. What housing they can afford is often not in what is considered a "complete neighborhood" which has easy and safe access to all the goods and services needed in daily life. If people must spend so much money on these things, then it can be hard to afford enough healthy food for their family. Also neighborhoods should be built on a walkable/bikable human scale. Because 40% of the population lives over a mile away from a grocery store and much further away from lunch jobs, the unaccessibility is apparent. Since there is lower accessibility in poorer areas, such as east Portland, than in richer neighborhoods, those in poverty must spend more on transportation.

Transportation can also be something that many Portlanders worry about. Not simply how you're going to get your son to soccer practice but how you can get to jobs and grocery stores without spending more than you have. Part of this problem is caused because TriMet's bus routes are not spread consistently throughout the city, especially not in east Portland, where much of the poor population lives. Housing generally takes up more of someone's budget, but the less you spend on housing, the more you spend on transportation since cheaper housing often means lower accessibility. It shouldn't. Much of east Portland is devoid of TriMet services, although those living there may need it the most. Because of this many need to use cars, which they often can't afford, in addition to the price of gas and maintenance.

While transportation is much needed to get to jobs, with the steadily dropping high school graduation rates, more and more people won't have jobs to get to. Only 61% of students graduate on time and most of these students grew up in poorer families whose parents might not have graduated. It's a perpetual, never ending circle, contributing to joblessness, poverty and in turn homelessness. But it doesn't have to be never ending. An education is important for most jobs, and without one it can be very hard to earn a living. Also, as the funding for schools becomes less and less, these students have a much harder time catching up (and ending the circle) because the number of students per class rises and in this way the graduation rates continue to drop.

As you can see these issues are quite important and need to be resolved. The lack of cheaper

housing in neighborhoods with higher accessibility, well distributed transportation, and steadily dropping high school graduation rates, all weigh down people in their ascent to a happier, less stressful life. I write this letter because I believe how important it is for this situation to change and I hope that these issues will be resolved to help make a better Portland.

From,

Mary

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

My name is Graciela and I live in SW Portland in the Capitol Hill neighborhood. My class has been studying cities and how they run and so the sixth, seventh, and eighth graders at the Arbor school have written letters to you about some issues in Portland that we think need attention. The three issues I'm most concerned about are food expenses, public school systems, and environmental problems. I think there are many things that Portlanders can do to address these issues.

Healthy and fresh food is expensive. For some people that means that it is not an option in their daily diets. Compared to other foods such as junk food, healthy food is usually quite expensive. Some families rely on their schools to provide meals for them. Could you imagine a whole day when all you've gotten to eat is a school lunch? That would be incredibly difficult. Being hungry makes everything harder whether you have to go to school or to work. In some parts of Portland specifically East Portland, people may not have the money for cars, gas, or public transportation. We listened to a program on OPB and we heard that six grocery stores closed down in the last few years. Not only do they have to walk further, but they can only buy what they can carry home. Food deserts are getting larger and it is affecting many people's lives. In my neighborhood, we have many nearby stores that are a short biking distance from our house. That makes it easier to get what we need. Having stores close works well for my family. If grocery stores in East Portland could stay in business, it would help those residents a lot.

The second issue that I am concerned about is public schools. Public schools are very important because they are educating the majority of our future population. Since so many students go to public schools, the schools need to provide a good education so that all of those kids can get good jobs and later help our city be a better place. But if the schools don't provide good educations the students won't become good leaders which is a very important part of communities. Portlanders pay taxes and 36 cents out of every dollar goes to public schools. Public schools have to pay for maintenance of the buildings, teacher salaries, supplies, food, administration, and other important things.

Since classes at public schools are so large being a teacher is a big responsibility. Many students need one-on-one support from their teachers which is difficult to do. Some students come to school without enough food or sleep which affects their learning. The teachers have so many students that it is difficult for them to meet the needs of each kid. Schools are a very important

Ruby Lewis

32 Tanglewood Drive • Lake Oswego, Oregon 97035

November 23, 2014

Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
1900 SW 4th Ave, Suite 7100
Portland, OR 97201-5380

Dear Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission:

Hi! My name is Ruby Lewis and I am in sixth grade. I live in Lake Oswego. I have been studying the livability of Portland, but especially food, public safety, and neighborhoods. I have picked three topics that I care a lot about, and I really hope will help make Portland nicer: (1) available, healthy food; (2) affordable housing; and (3) access to transportation. These things are all important to living a happy, healthy life.

One of Portland's main issues that I hope will be remedied is that healthy food is not available to everybody. Low-income families and individuals often do not have enough healthy food because it is too expensive. Fifty percent of Portland's children use the free or reduced-price lunch program and a lot of Portland's citizens have to go to food banks or soup kitchens to get food. Other people have enough money to buy their own food, but sometimes have to eat unhealthy food because it is cheaper, maybe McDonalds or another fast food restaurant. Unhealthy food is less expensive than healthy food, and some people can only afford the cheaper option. I listened to a radio story about the fact that many people living east of 82nd do not have enough money and do not have access to some of the food that they need. I read that only seven percent of Portland's population lives within a quarter-mile of a farmer's market. Not enough people have access to the fresh, nutritious food that farmer's markets provide. If there were more farmer's markets, then maybe fewer Portlanders would need to eat unhealthy food.

Affordable housing is also an important issue in Portland. I live in a comfortable house in a safe neighborhood, but there are many people who do not live in comfortable circumstances, and do not live in safe neighborhoods. By saying "comfortable," I mean places that are warm, safe, and pleasant to live. Many low-income families cannot afford a comfortable and affordable home. There are people, with kids, living in tiny one-to-two bedroom apartments with not enough space. There are also a lot of homeless people in Portland, who do not have anywhere to live. Some families and individuals living in Portland do own or rent a nice house or apartment, but spend too much of their salaries on housing. That means that they cannot afford to buy other things they need, like healthy food. Let's say a woman rents a comfortable apartment, but she cannot afford to pay her electricity bill, water bill, and other bills. Then she might cut her food budget; lots of people do that when they are running low on money. Eventually she might lose her apartment. This is a problem for many citizens of Portland, which is why having affordable housing would be great.

People need to get to their jobs and to grocery stores (and back), so transportation is also very important. I have two points to make about this. First, there are people who do not own cars and cannot

get around. It is especially hard if their neighborhoods do not have bike lanes or sidewalks. Plenty of people without cars just bike or walk to where they need to go, but for some people (including the elderly or disabled) that is not an option. Forty percent of Portland houses are more than one half-mile away from a grocery store. It would be even harder to get to your job if it was far away. Without sidewalks, it could actually be dangerous. You could always ride the Max or a bus, but that brings me to my second point. Some neighborhoods do not have access to bus stops or the Max. People living in these neighborhoods have to own a car, or walk/bike places. The neighborhoods that do have good access to transportation have more expensive houses, but if you can't afford one, then it is harder to get around.

I am hoping that you will address these issues by making food, transportation, and housing more available, which will make Portland an easier place to live for low-income families and individuals. Thank you very much for letting me share my opinion. I am grateful that you are doing so much to help our city and the people of Portland.

Sincerely,

Ruby Lewis

Ruby Lewis
Arbor School of Arts & Sciences, 6th grade

November 23, 2014

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

My name is Sam Grube, and I live in southeast Portland. I am in sixth grade at the Arbor School of Arts and Sciences. We have been studying what makes a city work, what makes one not work, and what specific issues are happening right here in Portland that need to be addressed. I am writing this letter to you to express my opinions about what things in Portland need the most help and what to focus on in the rebuilding of areas here.

In my opinion, the problem that the city of Portland needs to focus on most is access to healthy and affordable food sources. If you look at it, all of the healthy, fresh, and organic markets, stores, and restaurants are expensive and the low-quality ones are often the cheaper option. Low-income families can't always afford the healthier food. This is a factor that has led to 60% of Portland residents being overweight or obese. Obesity can affect a person's health and can also lead to diabetes and other diseases. If Portland cannot solve this problem, the future of our residents could be filled with obesity and the medical bills that go along with it. In addition to this, 40% of Portland residents live in food deserts, areas where the closest food is more than a mile away. There are no good quality grocery stores in low-income neighborhoods because the residents there may not have enough money to pay for food. As a result, very few good quality stores build in low-income neighborhoods.

Another issue that concerns me is the Portland public school program. Almost 40% of Portland's public school students do not graduate on time. Portland needs to invest money in these students, help them be more engaged in their classes and help prepare them for their future careers on time. These students are the future of America. If they are not educated well, then who will be teachers, doctors, scientists, engineers, surgeons and other important professions that require knowledge in certain fields? Not only is a good high school education important for these careers, it's critical for some people who plan to go into low level jobs that still require a high school diploma.

The last issue that I'd like to bring to your attention is that of affordable housing. Monthly housing costs in Portland have risen on average 40% from 2000 to 2007. Some low-income families cannot afford to pay for housing that increases at that rate. They may not find any place to live in the Portland area if housing costs continue to rise. The number of households in Portland is projected to increase by 42% from 2005 to 2035. If affordable housing continues to decrease as the population grows, there will not be enough housing for everyone.

I hope that you think these issues are as important as I do. They may be hard to solve, and require putting a lot of money toward them, but in the end, I think that it will be worth it if you made an effort to fix and support them.

Sincerely,

Sam Grube, from the Arbor School of Arts and Sciences

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Sam Grube', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

I think it is important that there are plants in parks. I have noticed that there is space that is not really being used for anything. This space has tall grass, bushes, is like a swamp or overgrown field. This space in parks could be used for bigger plants that are native to Oregon instead. I think it is important because there would be a natural habitat for animals and other plants. People would also be able to enjoy and learn about nature without having to go somewhere far away. I think it is important to learn about nature because it will help people understand the world around us.

I understand that you are making Portland a better place and probably already know and are doing something about these things but thank you for reading my letter and thinking about what I have to say.

-Colia

To whom it may concern,

My name is Will Koenig, I am 11 years old and I go the Arbor school. We are studying city planning. I live in Northeast Portland, in the Sabin Irvington neighborhood. In this letter i want you to realize I have concerns about these topics: healthy food, education, homeless people, and how to improve public schools. I attended public school before I went to the Arbor school.

People need to be healthy because it is not good to have an unhealthy population. It ends up costing more to be unhealthy because then you have higher doctor bills. By educating people to eat right it would create a healthy communities, and the rate of overweight and obese people will go down. If people are more healthy, they will have more opportunity to find active jobs and be more productive.

If we can help homeless people get an education, this can help them find jobs. It can also get homeless people to maybe even start their own business and be healthy. They could learn to spend their money wisely, instead of spending it on drugs and alcohol, or items they don't need. If we can educate homeless people, we could prevent poverty and homelessness. Reducing poverty will make Portland more appealing for people to who might move here.

I think it would be good if public schools were better funded. With better funding, we could build more schools, so they would not be so crowded. When I went to kindergarten there were 35 kids and one teacher. The class would get out of control and it was difficult for the teacher to watch all of us. So if there were more schools, with smaller class sizes, children would receive more attention and not fall through the cracks. This would lead to less drop outs. The graduation rate is 61% today. If more students graduate they would have more success getting a good paying job in the future.

I hope that my concerns about Portland will be fixed, and I hope our city can grow and be a big healthy wealthy smart city.

William Koenig

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission

I am an 11 year old student attending the Arbor School of Arts and Sciences. I live in NW Portland on Thurman St. I am asking that you shorten the 2035 plan to a 2015 plan honing in and targeting homelessness and making long term changes before 2035.

In school, we have been studying cities and societies. First, we learned about Mesopotamia and its culture, then we jumped right into Portland, Oregon. I picked homelessness as an issue I want to address mainly because my Dad works with the Citizens Crime Commission and he has inspired me to investigate this more thoroughly.

All people should have homes!

Reducing homelessness in the City of Portland would stop the suffering of many people. Many homeless people have a criminal record, mental health issues, physical issues, etc. Therefore, it can be hard to get a job. At this time many homeless people are freezing because nature brings no warmth during winter - only nurture does.

Since the homeless population is growing rapidly, we need to act quickly by funding a City-wide organization to build inexpensive residential complexes in a safe environment. Many people say we are doing this but what would you prefer, a lot of smaller organizations with cheap apartments or bigger, safer affordable apartments.

If you want get more constructive criticism I suggest using a props and cons sticky note board - we used this in school and it was a productive way to share our ideas.

Thank you for your time. I hope this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Isaac Olshin

Benjamin I. O.

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

My name is Jed and I live in Southeast Portland near Division St. and Hawthorne Blvd. In school we have been studying city structure and how to keep a good city. I think it is a really unique opportunity that we get to write to you. I'm only a sixth grader so my opinions may be a little different than yours, but thank you for reading my letter.

An issue for Portland that I would like to address has to do with high school soccer and football fields. All of Portland public high schools play on an artificial playing surface. Turf is not necessarily a bad thing, but it has its downsides. For instance, I love to play soccer and my team practices at Buckman field. I have had some nasty cuts and burns from the turf. Also, an article my mom read and told me about said that turf made from tires can cause cancer. I know Buckman is made from recycled shoe soles, but it's not the best for you. This is why I hope that by 2035 there is a nice grass field somewhere in Portland. The field I hope is also open to not only select and recreational teams but also the public too. That would make it so the people who can't always have access to nice fields can have a good surface to play on. I know that turf is a really nice surface, but I think you should have a choice between grass and fake grass.

I have another issue that concerns me, and it has to do with our public high schools graduation rate. Only 69% of high graduates graduate in four years. That number is too low. That means three out of 10 people at PPS graduate on time. If they don't graduate on time and want to go to college, they may have less chance of being accepted into college than a four year high school graduate. If they get into college and want a good job, it won't help their job application if they had to spend an extra year in high school. If they get a good job, they can make more money and help their families. That could raise more people above the poverty line. It all starts with education. I hope by 2035 PPS has a higher graduation rate.

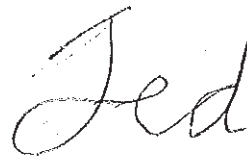
Another issue that Portland faces is East Portland neighborhoods' food situation. Five food markets have closed in the past year. That makes it so that almost all of east Portland residents live more than a mile away from a good grocer that offers organic fruit and vegetables. That makes it really tough on the people who live there and don't own a car. Having to walk a mile to a grocery store and only

buying what you can carry is really tough, especially on families. We also need to have people buy more healthy food, because 61% of Portlanders are obese.

I really hope this is what Portland is like in 2035. Thanks again for reading my letter, and I just have two questions for you: Why do you do this job? What is city planning like?

Sincerely,

Jed Whalen Stewart

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jed". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the printed name "Jed Whalen Stewart".

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

My name is Fiona Goettler, I am eleven years old and go to Arbor School of Arts and Sciences. My class and I have been studying city systems and structures, and so I have written, from my perspective, about three issues facing my city, Portland, and why the city government should address these issues.

A big issue in our city, is the high prices/costs of local, healthy natural, foods. Low income families, because if the high price of healthy foods, may be forced to buy and eat less expensive unhealthy foods. My family does not have to face this challenge, but I would like to see Portland address this problem and do the best they can to make it better.

In neighborhoods where there are a lot of low income families, grocery stores are closing down. This is because low income families can only buy a limited amount of food. This could affect Portland because then people will have to travel farther to get food. There won't be as many places to get food. I think that the grocery stores shouldn't be closing down, but hiring more people so that people with little money can get a job and be paid enough money to get more food, which will help the stores.

Eating many unhealthy foods can cause sickness and obesity. Another thing that I think causes sickness and obesity is how there are so many places that sell cheap and unhealthy foods. There are so many fast food restaurants, drive-through, and other unhealthy food places like 7-eleven and Plaid Pantry, in every neighborhood.

Another I hope I have is that there will be enough affordable housing, and just enough housing in general. There are people and families that don't make a lot of money and are just barely getting by and need a place to live. People always build houses for wealthy and middle class people and families, leaving not enough living spaces for the income people and families, which creates poverty and homelessness. Someone does seem to be addressing this issue because there are so many apartment buildings being built, but when the apartments are built does there seem that the parking was never thought of. If there is no parking, all the streets around the apartments will get so crowded.

Everybody needs a place where they can feel comfortable, safe, and feel like an equal, as much as possible. I think some sort of home would be a great place to fulfill all these things. The community around the house also needs to fill all these needs. I noticed that there can be an awkwardness or uncomfortable feeling when people of different incomes or backgrounds are together because they don't think of each other as equals. I think all the communities in Portland need to work on having more community get-togethers with everyone of all classes, and bonding time to try and make this issue does not come up as often, and help people get to know each other as people.

Dear Planning and sustainability commission,

My name is Nikhil Saha. I'm 11 years old, and I'm in 6th grade. I live in NE 30th and Knott, Portland, OR. USA. We've been studying city livability, and how to make a city successful. I've written about a few things that I felt strongly about, and that I thought would make Portland a better place overall. I really believe in ending homelessness and poverty. I hope you do too.

Portland needs to help people afford heal-thy food for less money.

In my life I am lucky, and I don't have a lack of healthy food, but in some places they do have that problem. In some places there are people who can hardly pay for food. I feel like it's important to encourage people to eat healthy foods by making them cost less money. I feel strongly against the unfairness of this because if the only heal-thy foods are expensive then the less wealthy people can only buy unhealthy food, so they may get Diabetes or obesity which would make Portland a less healthy place. Imagine if people were all unhealthy in Portland. It may spread. People who have enough money to buy healthy food might develop bad habits and there will be an unhealthy food culture. This could be caused by other people eating unhealthy food and even healthy people seeing it.

Portland needs to distribute food resources.

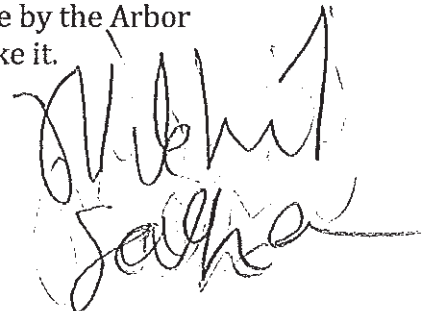
I think it's important to spread our food resources so people in all neighborhoods can get fresh food. If we don't then some low-income people without cars would either have to suffer from lack of food or go through a lot of trouble to get groceries. We may get starvation in some places if we don't spread out food resources. If people have less food they can't raise children properly, and more people would grow up poor and unhealthy.

Portland needs to spread out public transportation.

I feel very strongly about this because there will be many, many troubled citizens if we don't spread out public transportation. One of these problems is school. Sixty-one percent (61%) of people in Portland don't graduate on time and if there isn't spread out transportation, then people who cannot afford a car won't be able to get to school on time unless they live close to school. This will cause lower grades, which will lead to even less people graduating on time. The other problem is medical issues. If someone is infected or injured and they need to get to the hospital, then if they don't have transportation, they can't get there. This would overall cause more injuries and sick citizens.

I believe that all this is possible for Portland. I believe that Portland can become a place where everyone is happy with transportation and food, and everyone is more or less healthy. The opportunity to send this letter was showed to me by the Arbor School of Arts and Sciences, and I hope Portland can make schools like it.

Sincerely,
Nikhil Saha

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nikhil Saha', written over a faint circular stamp.

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission,

My name is Sophie Kruse. I am in 6th grade, and I go to Arbor School of Arts and Sciences. Recently we have been studying the city's development. As your plan is open for public review, my class has decided to write and provide you with our feedback. There are 3 issues in our town that I really care about: overcrowded schools, general walkability/sidewalks, and access to public transport.

One thing that deserves help is our Portland Public Schools system (PPS); the main problems are intertwined: funding and overcrowding.

We could do many things with more funding, including hiring more highly qualified teachers, buying supplies, and expanding schools.

If we have more teachers, people can spread out into many different classrooms with all different teachers just for 1 subject! That could help with overcrowding-the overarching issue.

If we provide supplies for everyone, including students in need, all students would be able to participate in class activities they might not have been able to before. It also helps make everyone feel equal, and schools might not have had enough funding for supplies before, due to overcrowding.

If a public school gets overcrowded, the teacher/student ratio can be about a teacher to 30 or more students in a class. Some students are in a class with 30 to 40 other students in it, and it is hard to ask for help if those other students all need it as well. The teacher doesn't have time to assist you personally. Students can fall behind because there is no one to aid them. Or maybe students are the opposite – they finish in 10 minutes but the teacher can't set up something for them while there are people who need help much more. Even I had this experience at a public school. I finished a project 15 minutes before we were supposed to, but other students needed help and so I sat at my desk for the last 15 minutes.

All of these problems circle back to overcrowding, which is why it's so important to stop it.

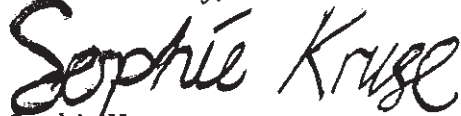
The second issue that matters to me is the quality of the sidewalks in Portland. For one thing, sidewalks make neighborhoods safer. Sidewalks create a barrier between the people and the cars, which makes me personally feel much safer as well as helping prevent accidents and possible fatalities. Another thing that makes me feel safe walking in a neighborhood is having a marked cross walk so that so that both drivers and pedestrians are aware of the safe places to cross the street.

Being safe is not the only thing sidewalks are good for. They make transport more accessible and affordable. Being able to walk around reduces transport cost, helping people who need to get around.

That segues right into my next topic: accessibility of public transportation. The more affordable lower-cost houses are farther away from public transportation, therefore if you live in one of those houses, gas and car repair costs will be more than if you lived in a closer, more expensive neighborhood. Forty-nine to seventy-nine percent of a household's budget is spent on housing and transport. If you spend almost nothing on gas, and nothing on car repairs and mechanics, the transport cost drops drastically and saves money for other basic needs, and lowers your environmental impact, too.

Thank you so much for reading this letter and for considering my suggestions. I hope you find a way to fix school funding, transportation issues, and sidewalk fixes. I wish you luck in implementing the plan!

Yours sincerely,


Sophie Kruse

Arbor Student

Dear Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability,

Hi, my name is Dylan, I am 12 years old and I live in NE Portland in the Hollywood neighborhood. My mom is the executive director of OEC and my dad is the president of Sustainable Northwest. I have been studying the environmental issues of Portland, and I would like to do more than just learn about them. I want to help improve the environment and I want people to know that my generation and future generations are going to be living in the environmental mistakes made by previous generations. Right now what matters is not pointing fingers, but working together to fix them. I think Portland should be a good role model for other cities and do just that.

One of our big environmental issues is that we use too much fossil fuels. To help reduce fossil fuels I think Portland should encourage walking, biking, and public transportation like the Max more often. For one thing its good for your body and it would improve the livability in Portland neighborhoods. Also driving an electric car is much better for the environment and it makes a really cool noise when you drive them. I'm not quite sure how to get more people to buy them, but maybe if you told them about how bad fossil fuels can be for our environment then also reduce the cost of a electric car that might help more people want to buy them. Drilling for oil ruins many forests and great scenery but I am very appreciative that we do not use fracking drilling in Portland. This type of drilling puts methane into our drinking water and it lights on fire!

Portland has too much traffic and that many cars means a lot of carbon going into our atmosphere. That means climate change gets worse! Carbon and methane have been proven to be the main cause of climate change. Other good reasons to reduce how much we use our cars is that they let off chemicals that help cause cancer and asthma. Communities that live around freeways have higher rates of both of these. If we use our cars less and reduce traffic it would help our sickness rates as well as our carbon footprint.

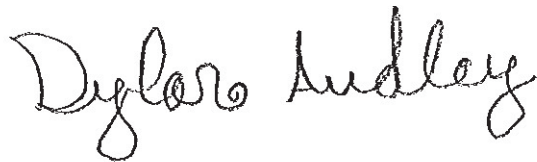
My third topic links the first two. We need to make and encourage more eco friendly and electric cars. For many of the same reasons, but we could make them run on natural things, things that don't let off as much or any

carbon. We could also take out lots of the bad chemicals that cause cancer and asthma. Overall everything would be improved.

I believe that this will make a difference in our environment. I also think that working together on these issues will help make our community stronger. Thank you so much for taking the time to read this. I would really appreciate your feedback.

Sincerely,

Dylan Audley

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dylan Audley". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the printed name.

November 24, 2014

Hello,

My names Sophie and I'm twelve years old in the sixth grade. I love to dance, hang out with my friends and family, and make people laugh! I live in Lake Oswego but go to the Arbor School of Arts and Sciences in Tualatin. Currently we are studying city structures and how to make cities more functional. I really care about how to improve homeless and low income families overall lives. I think everyone deserves the same opportunities and a chance to thrive.

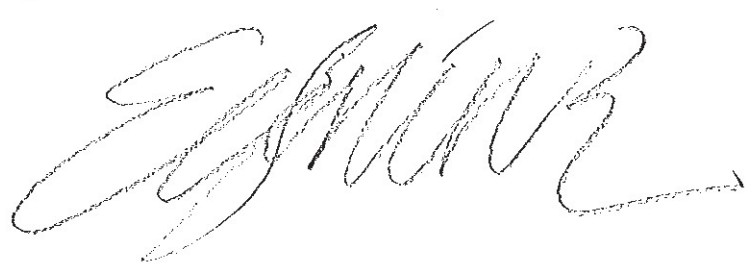
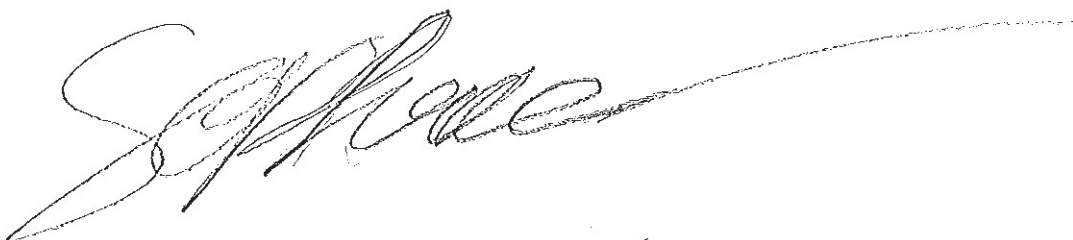
I think educating people in Portland is important so they can support themselves. Low income and homeless people have fewer opportunities and a low chance to get an education. Employers look for people with good education. If people don't get an education they cannot support themselves and afford basic needs. I think we need volunteers to provide education for homeless and low income. I also think the city should help by building more shelters and developing education, an idea could be education is actually provided in the shelters. I think another important step is teaching them about the dangers of how to wisely spend money and be healthy. More opportunities for getting an education need to be available because otherwise people have a very low chance of getting a living if they are not properly educated.

Some ways to give opportunities is having the schools provide food and supplies needed. People also need to be encouraged to get an education and be explained to why it's so important. Since so many people need help I think the citizens in the town of the homeless and low income families should have some responsibility of helping them. This way it will make things more manageable.

Having activities available to homeless and low income families will improve quality of life. There are so many great activities located around the city but most of them cost money and require equipment. I think helping people find something that interests them and helping them get better at that skill so that maybe they can use it in their everyday life. As long as the teachers are respectful I think that this project could socialize a lot of people and help add meaning to their life. Some activities could be sports so they can get exercise or sewing so they can make clothes or blankets.

I hope that all people have the right opportunities and respect they need to have a meaningful future. This matters to me because some great people have faced far too many challenges because they were not granted opportunities. If everyone has a happy life it will improve the quality of the city and how the city runs. Thank you so much for reading this letter and I hope you can possibly considerate my ideas and use my information. What steps will you take to help these people?

-Sophie



Dear Planning & Sustainability Commision,
My name is Paris. I'm 11 years young, live in Lake Oswego OR, and attend Arbor School of Arts and Sciences where we have been learning about what makes a city a good place to live in. Even though I have a decent education, food source, & and house, I still know that lots of people in Portland don't have all of those basic needs at hand. Here are a couple of ideas that could help Portland be a better place for everyone.

I want to make sure that all Portland Public High School students graduate on time, because if they don't, colleges might think that they weren't focusing during class so they might not accept them. Now that definitely could be the case sometimes, but it could also be that the kid really wants to study, but when they come to a challenging spot in their homework, their parents don't speak english so they can't help them. This matters to me because I don't want to live in a where some people graduate and some people don't. I really want everyone to get a good education because if they don't they will end up homeless or hungry and they probably don't celebrate Thanksgiving because they have nothing to be thankful for.

Another idea I have is for school buildings to be places where local communities can gather for events and activities. This is important to me because I want to embrace the community that I live in and not have space go to waste for

example, in the summer time, school buildings are just sitting there without anyone inside of them. But, if a group of people organized a play at the school's auditorium, they could give the ticket money to the school's art or sports department, which is related, and then you might object to this idea for certain holding issues, but parent supervision would be involved for the purposes of clearing the way.

School buildings can also be opened to adult, such as small businesses, using out the space if they don't have enough money to buy their own building to work in. There are lots of ways that schools can be improved to help the less fortunate and make the whole city a better place. Sincerely,

Paris