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May 10, 2016

Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission
psc@portlandoregon.gov

Oregon Walks Comments on Mixed Use Zones Proposed Draft, March 2016

Chair Schultz and Planning Commissioners:

Oregon Walks advocates for safe and convenient conditions for walking in Oregon. We have reviewed the Proposed Draft Mixed Using Zoning and strongly support the provisions that emphasize the development of pedestrian friendly city by providing for a mix of land uses and development regulations in centers and corridors that make it easy, safe, and comfortable to walk or use transit to meet our daily needs.

The continued restrictions on new Drive-Through Facilities in section 33.130.260 will help reduce the negative effects that drive-thoughts have on the pedestrian experience. Driveways generally create potential conflicts for users of the sidewalk because they are the locations where automobiles cross the pedestrian realm. Drive-throughs, which generate significantly greater volumes of cars, present a greater danger to pedestrians.

Likewise, Oregon Walks supports the increased requirements for Ground-Floor Windows in the Mixed Use Zones, from 25% to 40% of the ground floor wall area. Ground-floor windows make a big difference for walking, giving pedestrians a view into stores and building lobbies, increasing visual interest and increasing personal safety by ensuring "eyes on the street" from those within the building.



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We are concerned, however, that the requirement for a 4' high maximum for the bottom of windows is proposed to be removed from section 33.130.230, C. The windows must be at eye level to allow pedestrians to see into buildings, and to allow those inside to be able to see people on the outside, call for help when needed, as well as provide an interesting and varied pedestrian experience. Without a maximum bottom height, builders can set windows with their sills at 6 feet, say, and extending to 10 feet height to achieve the required window area, without providing pedestrians a visual connection to the life inside the building.

We welcome the additional window percentage requirements in the Mixed Use Zones proposal, and request a change in the draft proposed language requiring the windows be placed at a maximum 4' bottom height to ensure that people are able to see in and out at eye level on any window assembly counting toward the standard.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lidwien Rahman
Oregon Walks



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