



Home Builders Association
of Metropolitan Portland

May 10, 2016

Katherine Schultz, Chair
Portland Planning & Sustainability Commission
1900 SW Fourth Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

Re: Mixed Use Zones Project

Chair Schultz and Commissioners:

The Home Builders Association of Metro Portland (HBA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the City's Mixed Use Zones Project. We recognize the importance of this project in helping revise commercial zones outside of Central City, as well as addressing policies of the new Comprehensive Plan that work to address housing affordability for current and future residents of Portland.

The HBA appreciates the effort that has gone into the project, and there are aspects of the draft plan that are to be commended. However, there are key items that stand out as potentially problematic, especially toward achieving the shared goal of housing affordability for Portland residents.

Specifically, proposed changes to replace the current zoning with a more restrictive height and FAR for all uses, runs counter to our need for increased density and more affordable opportunities. Namely, a restriction on the height and FAR requirement may potentially result in the unintended consequences of discouraging building, reducing density, increasing rents for non-affordable portions of projects, and ultimately exacerbating an already tenuous housing situation within the city.

Rather than artificially limiting the height and FAR along the centers and corridors, a better and sensible approach would be to allow more density throughout the city to help increase supply and provide more affordable opportunities for current and future residents.

Moreover, the types and location of the housing built and residents of those units are integral to achieving the city's sustainability objectives. These residents are drawn to Portland for the urban experience, to live close to their place of employment. Many elect to take mass transit, walk or bike to their workplace. As a city, we should work to encourage those housing types that help lessen our carbon footprint.

At a time when the city is in the midst of an affordability crisis and facing unprecedented growth, now is not the time to place unduly onerous restrictions that impact affordability. Rather, by increasing density throughout the city we can hope to achieve a balance in the supply/demand spectrum that is currently lacking and avoid taking another step in the direction toward San Francisco.

Home Builders Association of Metro Portland
15555 SW Bangy Rd., Ste. 301
Lake Oswego, OR97035
503-684-1880 • Fax 503-684-0588

The HBA values our relationship with the City and looks forward to working together on these important issues for Portland. Thank you for your consideration of the proposed items.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Grove', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Grove
Associate Director of Government Relations
Home Builders Association of Metro Portland