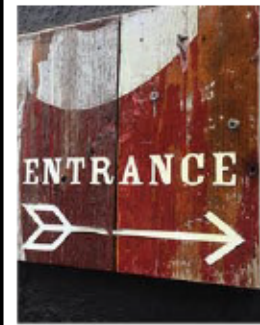


PDX MAIN ST DESIGN INITIATIVE

Fostering design literacy to empower communities with a greater voice in their future, and to help encourage better support for density, sustainability and affordable design



RECOMMENDATIONS

AMENDMENTS

1. **Support Amendment #3 with modification** - Apply as Optional everywhere in the D-Overlay, and require 4 points from this list in the M-Overlay.
2. **Support Amendment # 8 - Direct staff to do the Future Work and focus the work for the “Main St. Centers of Centers” called for in the staff report** on pages 51-53 (these are the **full main street standards** we need as part 2 with a prioritization as a next step budget and staff work plans
3. **Add the Affordable Design Standard** developed by PDX Main Streets
4. **Add a BDS Context Elevation Requirement to show adjacent development/block** for any new building permit applications over 3 stories or 20,000 sq. feet. This can help promote context-sensitive development and decrease unintended impacts.

Please extend the timeline for Amendments. A key concern is this is not enough time for equitable engagement of those affected. One week on the amendments, especially leaves no time to include this on a business district, neighborhood association or coalition meeting agenda for community dialogue.

Design for Affordability

New Affordable Design Standard Proposed

- Use a simple and compact building form and massing
- stack unit plans and floor plates and align window and door openings within walls (SMILE Guidelines)
- Avoid cantilevering large structural elements which reduces the need for expensive structural steel.
- Avoid extraneous overbuild elements that extend from the building as “just for show” design
- Integrate energy efficient strategies that contribute to reduced utility bills for inhabitants.

Optional Standard: 4 points

These recommendations are informed by the “Cost Efficiency for Affordable Design & Construction” white paper from Walsh Construction. The main streets pattern aligns with these simple recommendations.



This new building on Alberta was built for **no additional cost** above typical construction and follows all the main street patterns.

Design for Affordability

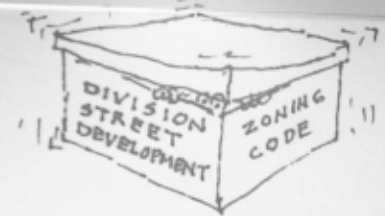
These recommendations are informed by the “Cost Efficiency for Affordable Design & Construction” white paper from Walsh Construction. The main streets pattern aligns with these simple recommendations.

Design for Affordability Keeping building form simple and efficient helps make them easier and less costly to build. Alignment of elements can reduce engineering costs, reduce need for larger structural members, and extraneous materials. Cost savings can be leveraged for greater investment in higher quality durable materials that reduce future maintenance and increase durability and long-term quality.

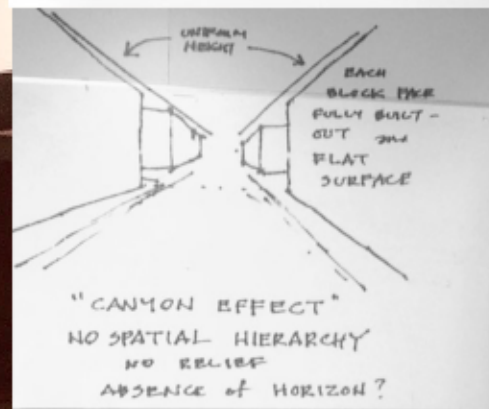
- Use simple, compact building forms (e.g., avoid extraneous overbuild elements, faux framing and arbitrary graphic elements that extend from the building). If upper stepbacks are used to minimize scale contrasts (e.g. at the 4th floor), align with stacked walls and columns below.
- Stack unit plans and floor plates (reduces exterior flashing materials at corners, and reduces material maintenance problems)
- Align window and door openings within walls (a wood framed structure is a more cost-effective structure than concrete or steel, but wood structures don't lend themselves well to non-load bearing walls, reducing continuous load paths to the ground, and a more complex structure to build)
- Avoid cantilevering large structural elements in wood construction buildings to reduce expensive structural steel; small balconies that extend from the face of the building are an exception.
- Integrate energy efficient design that contributes to reduced utility bills for inhabitants, greater comfort, and longer lasting quality. (per levels determined by the City)

Optional: 4 points *(see SMILE Guidelines, page 13 and Walsh Construction White Paper: Cost Efficiency for Affordable Design & Construction)*

IMPACTS on Main Streets & DOZA



PANDORA'S BOX?



PSU DIVISION PERCEPTIONS SURVEY

Do you feel positively or negatively about recent development on Division? If positive, what are the elements you like? If negative, what are the biggest issues or problems?

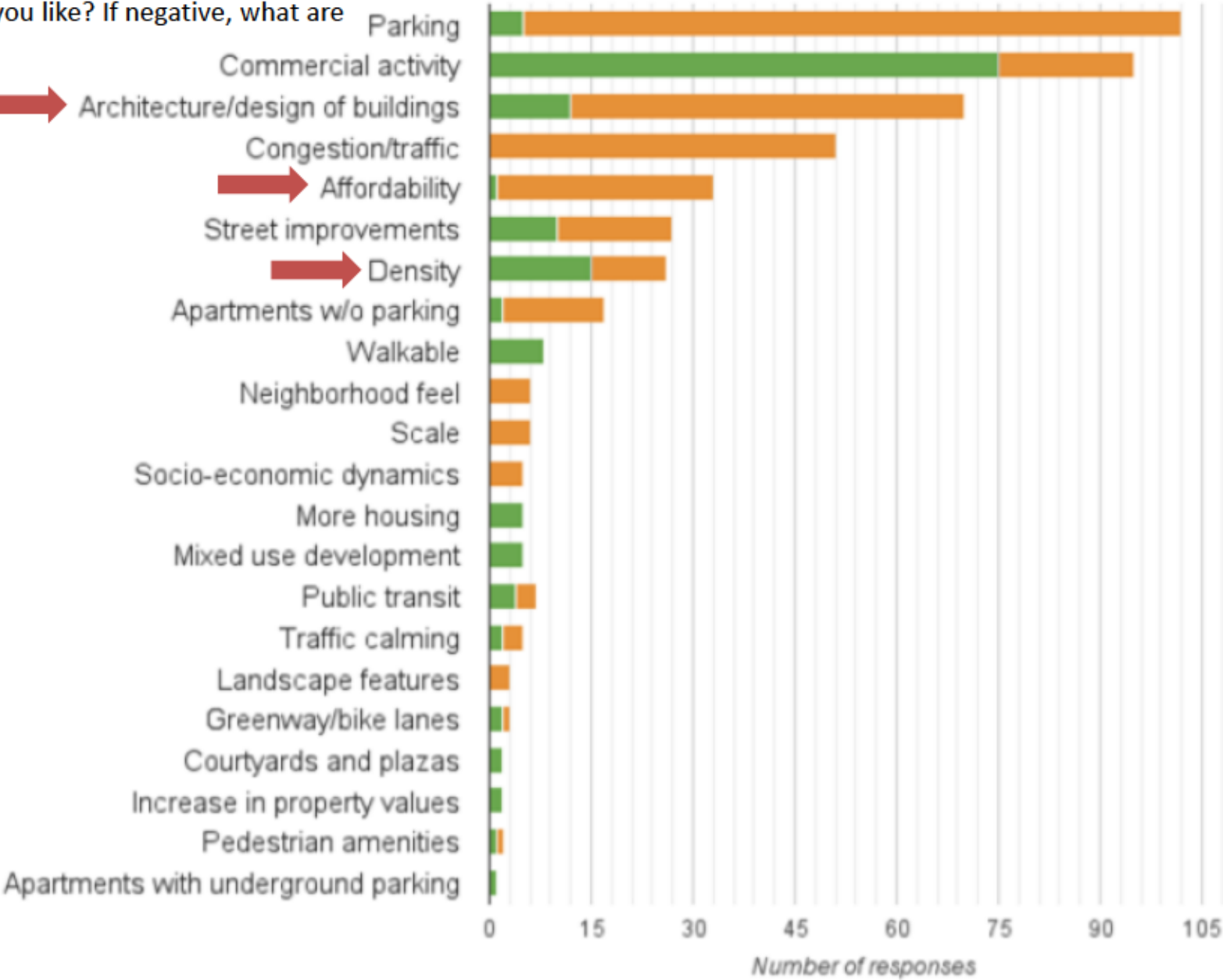
PSU DIVISION PERCEPTIONS SURVEY:
<https://divisiondesigninitiative.org/division-perceptions-survey/>



Categories

PERCEPTION: POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE

Positive
Negative





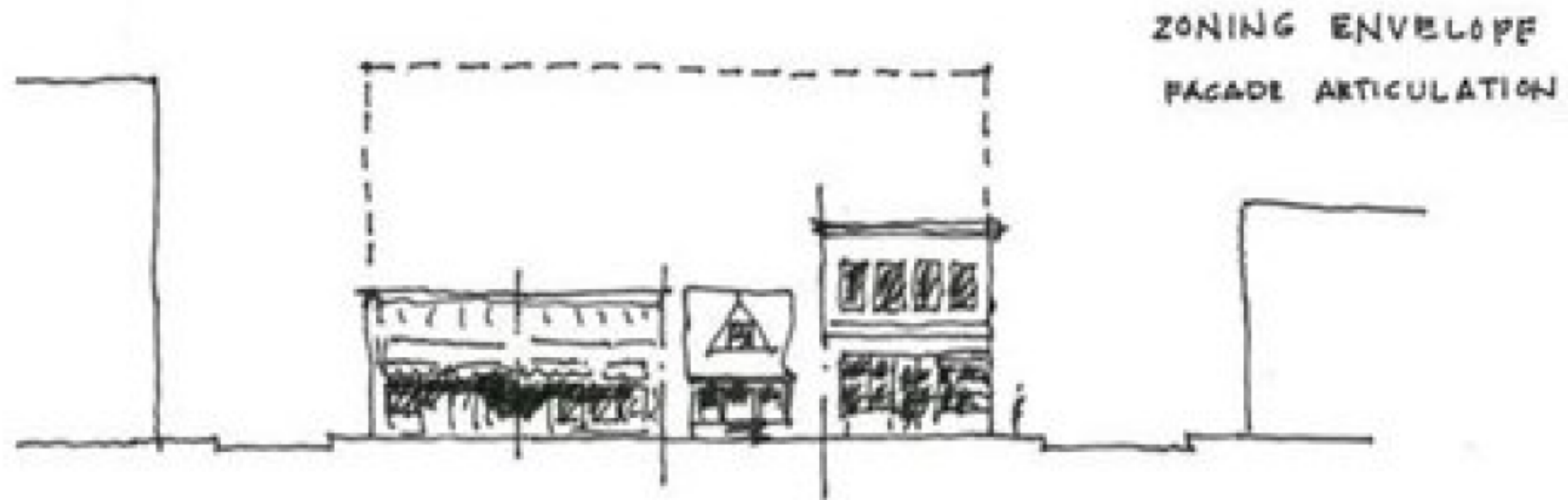
We can increase support for density when done well.
Only one of these is context sensitive

Dispelling Myths: Our Main Street Guidelines are style-neutral & work at all scales within existing zoning and height. Below are two new modern buildings that relate to the Main Street Pattern Language & have “human-scale” design.



Proportions, form, pattern, materials, sustainability, are the DESIGN focus, with increased opportunities to build on CONTEXT for COMPATIBLE INFILL with variety, affordability, quality for greater support from communities.

Unaddressed: Impacts to Main Streets

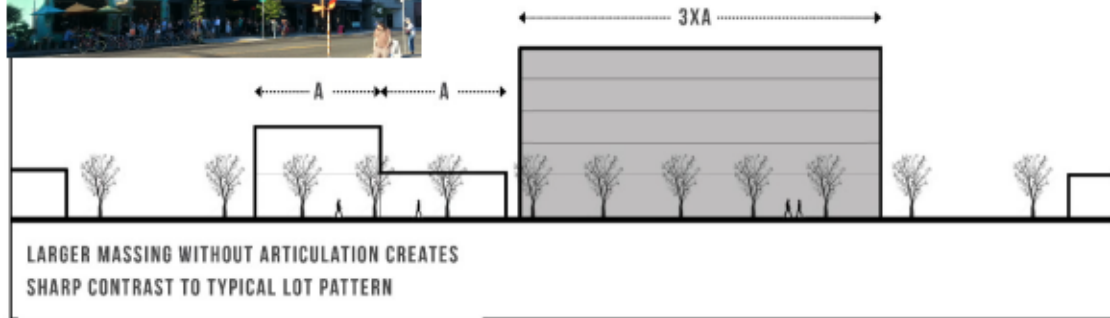
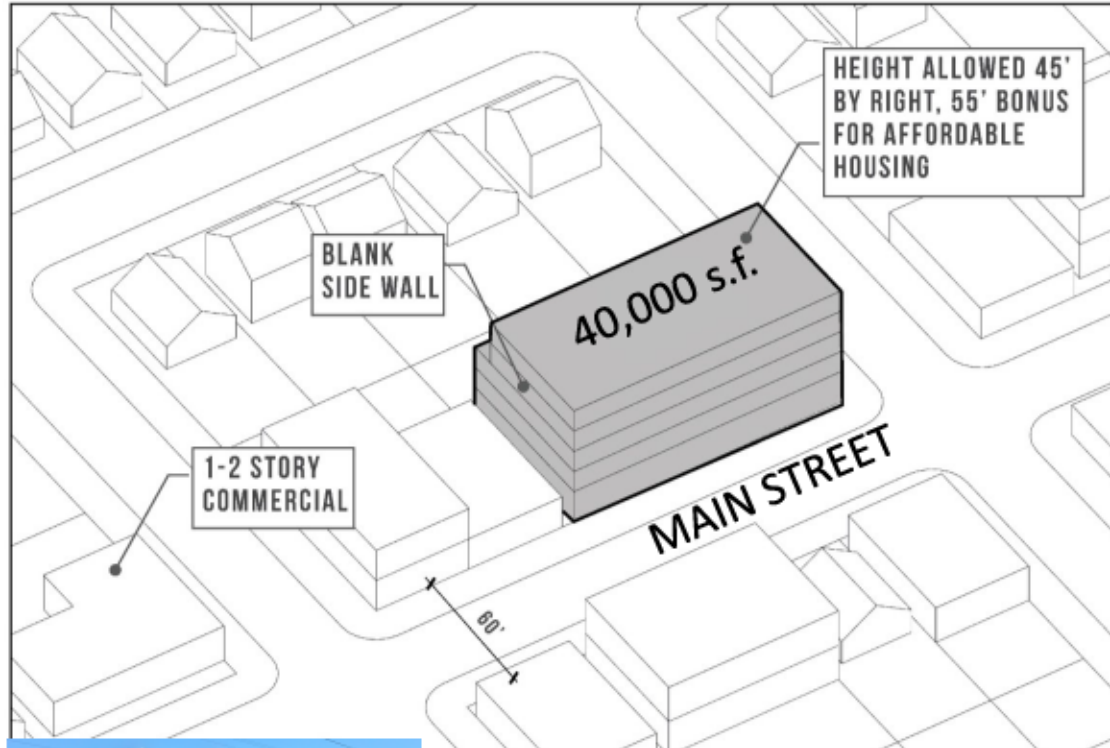


The Context Challenge: Transitions in Scale &
Compatibility vs. Larger Zoning Envelope Potential

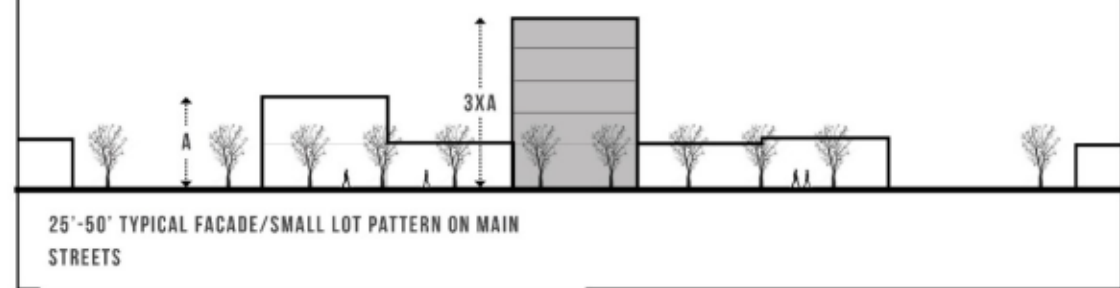
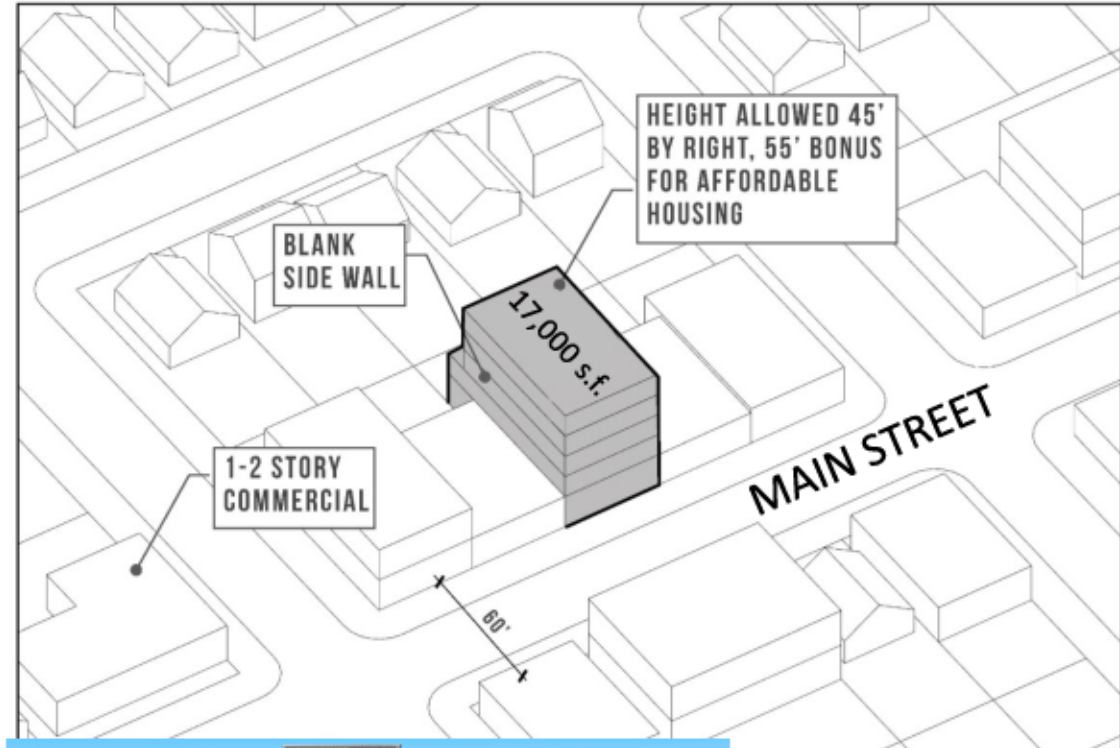
Source: Mixed Use Zoning Committee Presentation <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/494316>

small lots, narrow main streets, big impacts

1/2 TO FULL BLOCK



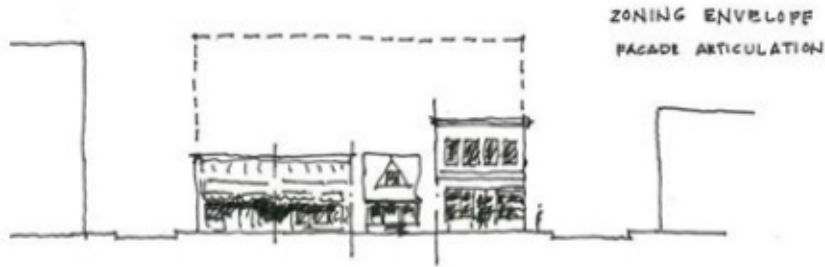
SINGLE PARCEL



Height, Width & Mass: Degree of change, contrast & impact to local identity is significant, yet will never have Design Commission Review



Main Street areas are vital to our economic health and vitality. Support work to address these unprotected historic areas to ensure new density has greater sensitivity to local context and desired character. This is about preserving our FUTURE.



The Context Challenge: Transitions in Scale & Compatibility vs. Larger Zoning Envelope Potential

Source: Mixed Use Zoning Committee Presentation <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/494316>

**“MAIN ST” DESIGN
STANDARDS + GUIDELINES
ARE NEEDED NOW FOR
AREAS OF SPECIAL
CHARACTER**

Vintage Buildings Study
City identified **Areas of Special Character”** at risk.
We have tools we can use **NOW.**



Low-rise Storefront Commercial – Analysis Areas





AMENDMENT 8 ADD

Support the “FUTURE WORK” identified for main street centers by DOZA staff, and prioritize in next step budget and staff work plans

(See page 51-53 in the Staff report)



SE Hawthorne, view east from SE 35th



SE Hawthorne, view east from SE 35th Place

SE Hawthorne

Percentage of lots with Streetcar Era storefront buildings: 73%
 Percentage of street frontage with Streetcar Era storefront buildings: 68%
 Existing zoning: Primarily Storefront Commercial (CS)

Notes:

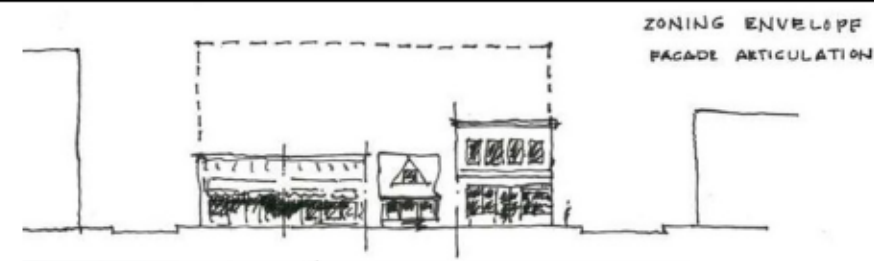
The above percentages do not include several storefront-type buildings built in the 1950s. The analysis area does not include the Bagdad Theatre, which was left out because of its greater height. The analysis area includes several properties that are historic landmarks or are in the Historic Resources Inventory.

- 2016 BPS Study mapped key areas with Important Streetcar Character that have no protections

This study has excellent information that should be considered as a baseline for recommendations for conservation or historic protections and designations. These areas are unique in our city and valuable assets for commerce, tourism, and our city's identity. They are vulnerable to be lost. PDX Main Streets has done much of this work and there are multiple documents in hand to make this work fast.

The Context Challenge: Transitions in Scale & Compatibility vs. Larger Zoning Envelope Potential

Source: Mixed Use Zoning Committee Presentation <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/494316>



“A concern of many people is that the rate of growth overwhelms and erases the legacy of these areas as various older buildings are replaced.”

- City of Portland DOZA Tools Concept Report, May 2018.





RECOMMEND REQUIRING A BDS CONTEXT ELEVATION

This helps assess at a glance what is in context or not. A picture says a thousand words. We can engender better support for density if we do it well, but turn people off of density when we do it badly.

PUBLIC IS UNDER-ENGAGED ON DOZA

CONCERNS

- It is overly complex for laypeople and the project has not engaged people on the east side.
- Does this fast pace turnaround on amendments meet our goals for equitable engagement?
- Have communities of color been adequately engaged on this policy? Only 1 open house on the east side?
- Have we made multi-lingual materials or easy to understand visuals available to diverse communities?
- The Standards which most projects will use, have not been adequately shared with communities, nor illustrated or explained. Only 1 open house on the east side was held.
- The Standards are labeled as “Code and Map Amendments” only presented as strike through code without illustration or description of the how the point system works.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Please extend the timeline for Amendments. Move ahead with Guidelines and process improvements but please don't rush the Standards. A key concern is this is not enough time for equitable engagement throughout the DOZA project of those affected. For the amendments, there is not enough time to include this on a business district, neighborhood association or coalition meeting agenda for general public to be involved.
2. A multi-lingual poster at local libraries, churches, High Schools, Community Centers, etc saying, “The City is changing building design standards and guidelines for buildings – what’s important to you?” with a survey form or handout with links to learn more. This could grab community members attention more than complex code documents most have little time to read.
3. Host a Town Hall/listening sessions/design tour to hear about local design priorities and concerns.
4. Use a Visual Preference Survey that can also help cross language barriers and to validate this is the direction for the City we want. Most communities have strong feelings about design but the way this policy is presented is so complex that it does not engender participation. Make it easy for all communities to weigh in, not just special interests. Architects have been a primary commenters, however studies show they typically have very divergent views than the public on design.