



# CRESTWOOD

## *Neighborhood Association*

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September 14, 2021

City of Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

Via map app website <https://www.portlandmaps.com/bps/wptc/#/map/>

Re: West Portland Town Center Plan, Proposed Draft

Dear Chair Spevak and Members of the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission:

Crestwood Neighborhood Association in SW Portland is a mostly residential neighborhood, bounded by SW Barbur Blvd/I-5, the City of Tigard, SW Taylors Ferry Road and SW Capitol Highway. Only four commercial businesses are located in our neighborhood boundaries. Although about half of our neighborhood is within the proposed new WPTC boundary, Crestwood is one of the least walkable and bikeable neighborhoods in the City of Portland today.

Crestwood Neighborhood Association supported the creation of the West Portland Town Center (WPTC) in 1996, and we are pleased that the City of Portland is finally moving forward with the West Portland Town Center Plan with its focus on affordable housing and racial equity. WPTC is home to Barbur World Foods grocery store, a public elementary and middle school, Capitol Hill library, and numerous parks, restaurants, shops and services that are all amenities needed for a town center to thrive. WPTC needs sidewalks, bicycle facilities, a transit network and community spaces that enable people to meet their needs without relying on an automobile.

Here are Crestwood Neighborhood Association's comments and recommendations for the Proposed Draft of the WPTC plan.

**Density and Proposed Zoning:** The West Portland Town Center needs increased densities along corridors with frequent transit service to support growth such as SW Barbur Blvd (which would also benefit from funding construction of the SW Corridor Light Rail Plan).

- Crestwood requests that the plan be modified to preserve more of the existing affordable single family residential housing (sometimes known as "entry level single family housing") in addition to the proposal to preserve existing affordable apartment housing. There remains a demand for single family housing with yards and open spaces and we have welcomed many young families into our neighborhood.
- Crestwood requests modification of the proposed zoning code language for 33.595.040 (Volume 2 pages 8-9) to comply with Comprehensive Plan Policy 10.3.d that prohibits up-

zoning until public services are capable to accommodate growth by the time the development is complete. The Proposed Draft 33.595.040 only requires plans for stormwater and transportation improvements. The proposed up-zoning from residential to multi family zoning within Crestwood covers a large area that lacks transit service, stormwater management infrastructure, sidewalks and bike facilities. Even with the proposed phasing as described in the plan, many properties are 4/10 mile from “standard” transit service (bus #44) and more than a half mile from the Barbur Transit Center’s “frequent” transit service (bus #12 and #94). Developers are often exempted from constructing street and stormwater requirements because they are expensive. The proposed up-zoning in our neighborhood seems to be based on a rationale that there needs to be more density in order for city code to be enforced (Volume 1 p. 115) instead of Comprehensive Plan Policy 10.3.d.

- We support the plan’s requirements for open space but recommend that you strengthen the Character Statement’s Environment and Natural Resource section and other elements of the plan to enhance and preserve the tree canopy and viewsheds. Trees, terrain and viewsheds are key features of Crestwood Neighborhood Association’s letterhead logo because of their prominence throughout the neighborhood. We have observed a significant decline in tree canopy as new development has occurred over the past few years. Trees are a tool to address climate change, preserve habitat and prevent the urban heat island effect that has been observed in other parts of Portland. We also are concerned that the tall buildings (CM2 with bonuses) near SW Capitol, SW Taylors Ferry Road and SW Barbur will result in a loss of public viewsheds. Please create a buffer between RM1, RM2 and CM zoning next to single family residential zoning.
- Crestwood is concerned about the City of Portland’s policy and recommended WPTC language to limit off street parking in both residential and commercial areas. Without adequate transit service this wishful thinking has resulted in more cars that are parked on our streets and more rideshare services such as Uber and Lyft that contribute to local traffic and pollution. The city’s off-street parking policy should not be one-size-fits-all and should be more tailored to local conditions.

**Transportation:** The West Portland Town Center has been nicknamed “Crossroads” because of the historic roadways that intersect our neighborhoods: SW Taylors Ferry Road (1852), SW Capitol Hwy (1916), Pacific Hwy 99W (1934), and Interstate-5 (1961). As was stated in the Barbur Concept Plan, the land use and transportation history of the West Portland Town Center are intertwined and need to be resolved concurrently. We are concerned that the proposal to toll I-5 will bring even more motor vehicle traffic to WPTC streets.

Crestwood Neighborhood supports the draft “Green Ring” Circulation Concept that would construct and connect a route around WPTC on local and main streets that avoids the dangerous Crossroads intersections near SW Barbur and SW Capitol Highway. This Green Ring concept is key to making our neighborhood safer to walk and bike to our local schools and library and other

amenities in WPTC using the Markham/Luradel I-5 Overpass and SW Taylors Ferry Road. The Green Ring concept would also improve access to Portland Community College's Sylvania Campus by creating safer walking and biking facilities nearby, and could be further enhanced by re-paving SW Capitol Highway/SW 49<sup>th</sup> between SW Huber and SW Stephenson with safer walking and biking facilities and safer routes to schools.

#### Transportation Studies:

- We urge you to fund a much needed in-depth look at people circulation and safety within Crossroads, particularly at seven key intersections within WPTC: SW Taylors Ferry/I-5 SB off-ramp; SW Taylors Ferry/SW Capitol Highway; SW Taylors Ferry/SW 41/SW Barbur; SW Barbur/SW Capitol Highway/I-5 SB on- ramp; SW Barbur/SW Huber; SW Huber/SW Capitol Highway; SW Huber/I-5 NB on-ramp. The Oregon Dept. of Transportation (ODOT) and Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) must not make changes to one intersection without considering the effects on the others. We strongly oppose the upcoming construction of ODOT's "Barbur Safety" jughandle project because the transportation agencies have not demonstrated that sufficient people circulation and safety analysis has been done outside of traffic studies. We are extremely concerned that the upcoming jughandle project will make conditions less safe for people to access transit and other services within WPTC by walking and biking and may harm the viability of Barbur World Foods if customers and vendors cannot safely access the grocery store.
- The WPTC Plan recommends several needed transportation studies (Volume 1 p. 102-103). Please strengthen the commitment to conduct the studies in the near term and publicly discuss the results before significant changes are made to the transportation system. Too often transportation agencies determine a course of action and ignore public input, as happened with ODOT's "Barbur Safety" jughandle project.

#### Transportation Projects:

- Crestwood Neighborhood's highest priority project is TSP Project 90064.1, SW Taylors Ferry Road (Volume 1 p. 106), and needs to be funded and constructed in the very short term, as recommended by the Bureau of Environmental Service's (BES) memo (Appendix E pages 8-9). Sidewalks and bike paths are critical to the success of the plan and leverage the BES's funded Capital Improvement Project to replace the Woods Creek culvert, repair outfalls and repair roadside erosion on SW Taylors Ferry Road. We need safer access to the many services in WPTC without relying on a car and these improvements are critical to that outcome.
- Crestwood supports the proposed modified design for the SW Taylors Ferry Road improvements (TSP Project 90064.1) and requests that the City of Portland coordinate with the City of Tigard and Washington County to develop and implement a roadway design and speed limit that is continuous throughout the three contiguous jurisdictions.

- **Crestwood strongly opposes the proposal to remove the Markham/Luradel Ped/Bike Bridge over I-5 (TSP Project 90048) from the TSP financially constrained 11–20-year plan** to a timeframe 20-30 years into the future (Volume 1 p. 110). **DO NOT MAKE THIS CHANGE TO TSP PROJECT 90048.** This needed I-5 overcrossing is a key link in the Green Ring that connects our neighborhood with the schools, shops and services in WPTC, and connects other neighborhoods to the playground structure and natural areas near Dickinson Park. This project has been a priority for our neighborhood since the first TSP over 30 years ago. The precise location of the overcrossing is less important than the fact that it needs to be in the financially constrained TSP to complete the “Green Ring”.
- We urge you to partner with TriMet to improve transit service to a network that runs 7 days/week at least every 30 minutes with ADA-accessible walkways within 1/4 mile of properties in all of the areas that are proposed to be zoned RM1 or greater. This level of transit service is critical for the success of the WPTC plan. The existing TriMet bus service (especially bus #43) doesn’t come close to this level of service and the future of the SW Corridor Light Rail Transit Plan is uncertain.

**Stormwater:** We recommend the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability strengthen partnerships with Bureau of Environmental Services and Bureau of Transportation and incorporate recommendations in the BES memo (Appendix E). There are significant stormwater issues in this area associated with historic and recent roadway and building improvements that contribute to poor water quality in the tributaries of Fanno and Tryon Creeks.

**Civic Dialogue:** We support all Portlanders coming together to discuss local issues affecting local residents and businesses. The City of Portland needs to support local nonprofit District Coalitions and Neighborhood Associations as well as the SW Corridor Equity Coalition (SWEC) organizations cited in the WPTC plan in order to enhance livability in WPTC. Crestwood Neighborhood Association has been struggling to support our neighbors in the absence of city funds for the Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. (SWNI) nonprofit coalition since July 2020, and we have relied extensively on volunteer efforts. SWEC, SWNI, neighborhood associations and other community groups in SW Portland should have opportunities to learn from each other, collaborate and build partnerships that improve and enhance livability in WPTC.

Thank you for considering these comments on the Proposed Draft of the West Portland Town Center Plan. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
 /s/  
 Marianne Fitzgerald  
 President, Crestwood Neighborhood Association

Tony Hansen  
 Vice President, Crestwood Neighborhood Association