

Hello Planning Commission,

My name is Peter Laciano and I am a resident of the Buckman neighborhood. I am speaking today to urge you to go beyond “studying” and begin executing and staffing a project to re-legalize low- and mid-rise apartments in Portland’s inner eastside. Furthermore, I urge you to identify publicly-owned land in these close-in neighborhoods and work towards building mixed-income social housing on these properties. Portland is experiencing a housing crisis, with record numbers of our neighbors living on the street, suffering severe rent-burden, and being displaced from their long-time homes, and we no longer have the luxury of spending years studying whether to act.

The inner eastside is one of the most high-opportunity areas of Portland and yet low- and mid-rise apartments, an inherently affordable and climate-friendly form of housing, is banned in much of it. The majority of land zoned for these housing types is along loud, polluting arterial roads and near freeways with severe negative impacts to health, safety, and quality-of-life. Proximity to freeways is associated with sharp increases in cardiovascular, respiratory, and neurological disease, such as asthma, heart attacks, strokes, and dementia, and it is unconscionable to disproportionately subject our younger, older, and less wealthy residents to these consequences.

As a resident of a multifamily building on Southeast Ankeny Street, one of the rare non-arterial streets where such housing is allowed, I am grateful to be able to live in the inner eastside on a quiet, healthy, and pedestrian-friendly street with excellent access to jobs, services, and transit. I hope that more people have the same opportunity in the future.

Thank you for your time and your hard work.

Peter Laciano