



HOUSING SENIORS | CREATING HOPE | PILOTING CHANGE

August 28, 2024

City of Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler
City Commissioner Rene Gonzalez
City Commissioner Mingus Mapps
City Commissioner Carmen Rubio
City Commissioner Dan Ryan
Eric Engstrom, Interim Director, City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

Re: Feedback on City of Portland's 2024 Housing Production Strategy

Dear Mayor Wheeler, Portland City Commissioners, and Director Engstrom -

Northwest Pilot Project (NWPP) is a social service agency with over five decades of experience in providing housing stabilization services to low and very low-income older adults, age 55 and over, experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Multnomah County. While we do not own or manage housing, our extensive experience in service provision throughout Multnomah County has given us a strong vantage point to understand the urgent need for expanded production of deeply affordable housing units, both in the Portland Metro Area, as well as statewide. We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback in response to a request for comments on the City of Portland's draft 2024 Housing Production Strategy which will offer critical guidance to meet housing production goals.

We are encouraged that the City of Portland is focused on housing for older adults, people with disabilities, and extremely low-income populations. We strongly support three strategies under the new draft Housing Production Strategy:

- Strategy A: Promote affordable housing (0-80% AMI)
- Strategy F: Promote age- and disability-friendly housing
- Strategy H: Advocate at the state and federal level.

The populations referenced in Strategies A and F (low income households, older adults, and people with disabilities) represent populations with evolving and challenging needs – e.g.,

increasing rents and housing precarity, increasing acuity levels, inability to age in place, lack of social connectedness – that could benefit from these focused initiatives.

We also want to take this opportunity to provide more specific feedback on the City’s revised Housing Production Strategy to identify additional actions to enhance each strategy and better meet the overall goals.

Strategy A: Promote affordable housing (0-80% AMI):

Recommendation: Focus on providing units for 0-30% AMI

Rationale: As highlighted in the City’s report, 22% of the population fell into the 0-30% AMI range in 2023, but these households have the fewest resources of all income brackets.

Strategy B: Increase middle income housing and homeownership

Recommendation: See Age- and Disability-Inclusive Neighborhoods Action Plan (Bureau of Planning and Sustainability¹) strategies:

- Strategy 1: Housing and Land Use: Facilitate Aging in Place and Social Connectedness by Understanding and Supporting Expanded Housing Options.
- Strategy 5: Support Aging-in-Place, Aging-in-Community, and Providing Local Access for Meeting Individual’s Daily Needs

Rationale: Need to establish clear pathways for middle housing options that support social connectedness and aging in place and community.

Strategy C: Increase access to opportunity

Recommendation: Ensure that project-based subsidies/rental assistance are in high opportunity areas (e.g., centers, complete communities, climate friendly equitable communities)

Rationale: Housing choice is important for people who prefer to age in place and community; when we remove choice, we must ensure housing options are in high opportunity areas, especially for people who have limited financial means and physical abilities to change housing locations

Strategy D: Reduce barriers to development and improve processes

Recommendation: Do not ease requirements or incentives related to accessible housing (e.g., visitability, zero parking without accessible parking) to encourage development

¹ City of Portland (October, 2023). Age- and Disability-Inclusive Neighborhoods Action Plan; Discussion Draft. Retrieved from: <https://www.portland.gov/bps/planning/adin/documents>

Rationale: With an insufficient supply of accessible housing, reductions in the name of more units exacerbates the housing and homelessness crisis for issues for older adults and people with disabilities, the populations that are disproportionately growing

Strategy E: Stabilize current and future households

Recommendation: Increase supports for people at risk of eviction and homelessness

Rationale: Housing precarity and eviction is common among low-income households; evictions and homelessness disrupt services and supports and cost government additional funds to support shelter, rehousing, and other services.

Strategy F: Promote age- and disability-friendly housing:

Recommendations:

1. Rewrite Chapter 33.229 Elderly and Disabled High Density Housing to better incentivizing and regulate accessible housing at a level higher than the state building code
2. Use the Lifelong Housing checklist to educate housing producers and consumers on accessible housing design and development that enable aging in place and community
3. Advance the Age- and Disability-Inclusive Neighborhood Action Plan discussion draft through a discussion with government and community stakeholders that leads to implementation of the following actions:
 - a. Action 1.4: Create a Communications Tool that Details Options for Aging in Place and Community
 - b. Action 2.2: Leverage the Housing Production Strategy to Address the Need for Accessible, Age-Friendly Housing in Portland's Centers and Corridors
 - c. Action 5.1: Support Aging-in-Place and Aging-in-Community for Underserved and Frontline Communities
 - d. Action 5.2: Educate Housing Consumers and Producers with the Goals to Better Understand Age-Friendly Housing and to Increase the Supply
 - e. Action 8.3: Embrace Older Adults and People with Disabilities as Key Consumers
 - f. Action 9.5 - Homelessness: Increase understanding and mitigate the increasing trend of homelessness among the older adult population (likely to worsen), and people with intellectual, developmental and physical disabilities
 - g. Action 9.11 - Multigenerational Housing: Support Multigenerational Housing Opportunities (i.e., housing with units for older adults and other generations, such as families) as Americans are increasingly living in

multigenerational households, a trend that was exacerbated by the Great Recession and the global pandemic. Multigeneration [sic] housing is also more common among communities of color including older Asians (46%), Latine/x (43%), Blacks (33%), and other people of color (33%), as compared to whites (16%).

- h. Action 9.13 - Intergenerational: Integrate more intergenerational programming for families and caregivers to enhance community and social connections.

Rationale: Build on project work funded by the City of Portland and developed with internal and external stakeholder; set an example for of other communities to follow

Strategy G: Promote climate-friendly and healthy homes

Recommendations: Increase the supply of housing that is efficient to reduce energy use and expenses; increase the supply of housing that is heated and cooled effectively and efficiently

Rationale: Ensure high-quality housing is available to Portlanders, especially those with lower incomes and changing health needs

Strategy H: Advocate at the state and federal level

Recommendation: Ensure that Portland's Housing Production Strategy is coordinated with the State of Oregon Housing Needs Analysis.

Rationale: Stakeholders must understand Portland's proactive positions to calm worries that housing needs analysis and production strategies are not able to be completed, and to advocate with other state departments (OHCS, DLCD) and offices (e.g., Governor's office) so that statewide barriers to effective housing production strategies are not impeded.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide feedback and comments on this critical plan. As the City of Portland's population ages it is critical that we as a community be prepared to address the specific housing needs of older adults. It is also important we take this opportunity to address the extreme shortfall of accessible and disability-friendly housing.

Sincerely,

Laura Golino de Lovato
Executive Director
Northwest Pilot Project



August 28, 2024

Portland City Council
1900 SW Fourth Avenue, Room 2500
Portland, OR 97201

Re: 2024 Housing Production Strategy

Dear Portland City Council,

We are writing to express our support for the recommended draft of the *2024 Housing Production Strategy* and to encourage the City to continue to prioritize our housing affordability crisis by taking additional bold actions that encourage housing production. Boosting housing production in Portland is critical to addressing our housing affordability crisis, reducing homelessness, and enhancing our city and region's economic prosperity.

Portland needs an additional 120,560 units of housing by 2045 to meet the needs of our growing population, and we strongly support the City's efforts to close this gap by encouraging the production of housing that meets the range of incomes, needs, and preferences of our community.

The programs and projects outlined in Portland's *2024 Housing Production Strategy* support our shared goals of increasing housing production and helping our city grow and thrive. We believe that a healthy, housed Portland is attainable and achievable through a multi-prong approach that prioritizes reducing barriers to development. In particular, we are encouraged by upcoming initiatives to increase housing capacity and kickstart housing demand in the Central City, create new Tax Increment Financing districts, revise System Development Charges, leverage state and federal funding sources for housing projects, and expand homeownership opportunities. And we continue to support ongoing efforts to improve permitting timelines, periodically review the Inclusionary Housing program, and regularly improve code through RICAP projects.

But much more needs to be done to fully address Portland's significant housing production shortfall. And we're currently falling further behind, with production trending in the wrong direction: The number of units that were built between 2017 and 2022 dropped from 8,335 to 1,639—an 80% decrease in just 5 years. Portland is on track to produce only 500 new units this year, far below the pace needed to produce more than 120,000 homes by 2045.

The City must take bolder action to advance housing production. Whether in the *2024 Housing Production Strategy* or through separate actions, we have proposed many additional pro-housing policy change ideas to the City, including:

- Explore initiatives such as Los Angeles’ Executive Directive 1—which accelerates the approval of qualifying affordable housing projects—for applicability to Portland.
- Allow projects in the Central City to request height variances if the modification would increase the amount of housing provided on site, meet shadow study requirements, and not exceed the heights of any relevant Scenic Resources Maps.
- Increase FAR — and consider tying FAR and the potential height of a building to a U.S. building code building type — to help developers maximize density and residential units.
- Clarify that Historic Resource Review cannot have the effect of reducing allowable unit count or dimensions below those set by the site’s zoning — just as the Design Commission isn’t allowed to deny a building based on height, density, or FAR.
- Adjust thresholds and qualifications for SDC waivers and tax incentives, to help more projects secure necessary financing—particularly those that are affordable for households up to 80-120% of AMI—and implement an SDC deferral program that does not require a first-position lien on a project.
- Reducing homeownership barriers in East Portland & elsewhere by simplifying middle housing rules.
- Conduct a stakeholder-informed check-in on FAIR, Mandatory Relocation Assistance, and other local rental housing regulations, similar to the recent Inclusionary Housing Calibration Study.

We are committed to working collaboratively with the City of Portland and other stakeholders to explore these and other ideas, and ensuring that the 2024 Housing Production Strategy is implemented in a way that benefits all residents and facilitates robust growth of Portland’s housing market.

Michele Gila

Director of Realtor® Advocacy, PMAR

Preston Korst

Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs, Home Building Association of Greater Portland

Jon Isaacs

Executive Vice President of Public Affairs, Portland Metro Chamber

Amy Ruiz

Advocacy Director, Oregon Smart Growth

Testimony Aug 28, 2024 to Portland City Council on the Housing Production Strategy Recommended Draft – Donna Cohen, St Johns.

Yes to

- adding an accountability piece
- a new Housing Bond
- land banking
- upzoning, including inner Eastside changes
- updating short term rental housing fee
- improving IZ
- first time homeowner programs. I am a beneficiary and it radically changed my life for the better.
- assistance for aging in place.
- preserving affordable housing
- housing for seniors in need as the fastest growing segment of the homeless population are those over 50
- advocating on the state and federal level, especially, for example, to increase the amount of money available for Section 8 Housing Vouchers, which only ¼ of those eligible can now receive due to the funding.

I would also like to see the Fessenden corridor in St Johns become a TIF area. The surrounding neighborhood is lower-income and diverse – an identified “racially concentrated area of poverty” and “area of economic vulnerability” according to the HPS, and has been historically neglected. It has a high proportion of kids and seniors.

Fessenden bisects the largest of the 95 neighborhoods in Portland. The half of the population living north of the corridor are not within walking distance of a town center but are within a quarter mile of four schools.

Now, after a years-long community push for transportation safety changes, the corridor has been revitalized by rerouting illegal freight trucks and adding pedestrian crossings. With a \$3 million revitalization of George Park in process, it is the time to look toward an overall renewal of the corridor. With improvements, more housing, businesses, and amenities, **WE WOULD CREATE AN OPPORTUNITY ZONE AREA IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD.**

**

Finally, I think the 53% below AMI housing target is understated as the AMI being used is for the Metro region, not Portland. For example, you say “Only 46 percent of the for-sale housing stock in Portland was affordable to households earning the Median Household Income (MHI) in 2023.” If we used the Portland AMI the percentage would be lower.



8/28/2024

Dear Mayor Wheeler, Portland City Commissioners and Director Engstrom,

LiveAble Homes submits the following written testimony for the City Council Hearing on Housing Production Strategy on Aug 28, 2024.

LiveAble Homes specializes in designing, developing, and certifying accessible homes in the Portland Metro area. We are an expansion of the Lifelong Housing Program in Southern Oregon through the Rogue Valley Council of Governments that has certified over 200 homes. As community leaders in accessible design and through our partnerships with local non-profits, builders and aging/disability advocates, we know that the lack of accessible and affordable options for housing in our state has created hardship for many of our most vulnerable residents who are aging, living with a disability (physical, mental or cognitive) or both. We are encouraged by this draft of the Housing Production Strategy (HPS) by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) and are excited to support the City of Portland and BPS in plans to prioritize housing for those who are aging and/or have a disability.

In order to achieve the goals of the HPS, we have outlined the following recommendation plan:

THE NEEDS

“The City must plan to accommodate Portlanders with a diverse range of needs in terms of unit types and prices in locations that help meet the needs of all, including low-income populations, communities of color, and people of all ages and abilities.”

HPS - Page 9

The current draft of the HPS states, on page 47, that *“approximately a quarter of all households in Portland have at least one family member with a disability and over 13 percent of the population is over the age of 65, and these numbers are forecast to increase.* ... The HPS community engagement also identified a need for specific actions such as updating incentives in the zoning code and developing a comprehensive source of information for developing housing that allows ageing households to age in community. ... These strategies promote age and disability friendly housing and increase Portland’s ability

to ensure equitable access to housing, making a special effort to remove disparities in housing access for people with disabilities and older adults.”

- 63,541 houses currently exist with older residents and 22,126-27,314 homes are needed (page. 13).
- Of these homes with a resident 65 or over, 33% have at least one disability (p.12).
- 65,279 households currently have at least one person with a disability and 21,777-26,318 more accessible homes are needed

The growing need for truly accessible homes is staggering. It is important to note that these numbers do NOT include households that may not have a current aging or disabled resident but who have visitors that are unable to have barrier-free access to their homes. We know that bodies fail and that accidents happen. Homes that do not have a resident with a disability today, may easily have one tomorrow and access to that home needs to be supported.

THE GOALS

Sections E and F lay out strategies for addressing the identified needs found in the HPS. These 2 areas align specifically with the work LiveAble Homes is currently doing to assess, identify and track accessible units in the Portland area.

NEW STRATEGIES – HPS, Section E.2 - page 47

Launch Affordable Housing Listing Service In partnership with local housing providers and other jurisdictions

The City will establish an affordable housing listing service to help low-income households better access affordable housing opportunities. The City will be conducting a request for professional services for an affordable housing listing service to kick-off these efforts. The service would allow households to search for opportunities by geography and accessibility needs

NEW STRATEGIES – HPS, Section F - page 48

1. Implement Accessible Housing Production Strategies

The City aims to reduce the financial, regulatory, and institutional barriers to developing needed accessible housing in the aging city.

- Review and revise Chapter 33.229 Elderly and Disabled High Density Housing to consider relevancy and use as well as the opportunity to target middle housing.
- Revise visitable units bonus (33.120.211.C.4) to incentivize the increased development of visitable and accessible units that meet Universal Design, **Oregon Lifelong Housing Certification**, and other similar standards.
- Create an accessible housing inventory – BPS, PHB and PP&D will work together to identify opportunities to fund and support the work of creating an accessible housing inventory in order to better understand the gap in accessible housing. The City will explore programmatic opportunities to connect households to units (D3).

2. Educate on Opportunities for Aging in Place & Community

Provide technical assistance on incremental housing development guidelines to enhance aging in place/community (e.g., zero-step entrances, universal design, adaptable housing, affordable neighborhood-based housing models).

Create programs to support two types of development:

- Retrofits to allow households to age in community/place.
- Middle housing opportunities for aging in community

THE SOLUTIONS

- **ADVOCATE FOR INCREASED ACCESSIBILITY**
HPS Section H.2 - page 53

WORK WITH STATE LEGISLATORS TO DEFINE ACCESSIBILITY AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL

LiveAble Homes supports City Council and BPS' engagement in advocacy efforts at the state level as referenced in Section H.2 on page 54. Currently, the Oregon Structural Specialty Code defines 'Accessible unit' as follows: **“dwelling unit or sleeping unit that complies with this code and provisions for Accessible units in ICC A117.1, Section 1102”**.

At the higher end of the accessibility spectrum, in ICC A117.1, one finds “Type A Units” or “Visitable” with some accessible features and “Type B and C units” with more accessible features. However, “UFAS Units,” which are the most accessible units of all and constructed according to the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS), are required under Section 504 of the federal Rehab Act.

We believe that the emphasis on "quality" should be tied to the highest definition of “Accessible units” found in UFAS which includes "Communications Units" for people who are deaf/blind. Because of this, LiveAble Homes supports the definition of “Accessible Unit” to being worded in the following way:

“Accessible unit,” for purposes of ORS 456.515 and ORS 456.571, means a dwelling unit designed and constructed for accessibility in accordance with the design and construction requirements for dwelling units reflected in the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS).

Add back in this removed wording from SECTION F.1 of the original February 2024 draft -page 19

"Convene officials to discuss legislation that increases jurisdictions' ability to regulate and incentivize accessible housing."

- **EDUCATE ON OPPORTUNITIES FOR AGING IN PLACE & COMMUNITY**
HPS Section F.2 – page 48

LiveAble Homes provides educational opportunities for accessible design in environments ranging from individual homeowners to senior centers to residential construction building associations. In addition, our recent integration into the RMLS system allows us to directly target education efforts to builders and developers and over 14,000 Realtors– all critical players in the increased efforts to create more accessible housing inventory.

- **CREATE AN ACCESSIBLE HOUSING INVENTORY**
HPS Section F.1 - page 48

The tool used by LiveAble Homes (Lifelong Housing Checklist) has already been identified in the HPS as a tool for identifying visitable and accessible units that meet state, national and international residential building standards on accessibility.

“Revise visitable units bonus (33.120.211.C.4) to incentivize the increased development of visitable and accessible units that meet Universal Design, **Oregon Lifelong Housing Certification**, and other similar standards.”

Homes in the Portland area are currently being assessed and certified to these standards. Partnering with LiveAble Homes and the LiveAble Homes Certification program, means that BPS and City of Portland can immediately implement this strategy without waiting for the 2028 timeline identified on page 20. This existing certification program will allow BPS to identify, certify and track the accessible units within the city limits, meeting the metric identified in Figure 10, section F on page 55,

F. Promote Age and Disability Friendly Housing

- # of accessible units permitted and produced
- # of middle housing units permitted and produced

At LiveAble Homes, we understand that policy, construction and design decisions are often made to allow for the highest level of cost and systems efficiency. If BPS does not clearly state Housing Production Strategy expectations of the highest level of accessibility and affordability and *INCENTIVIZE* those standards, builders and designers will commonly choose ease over effort. Clearly stated expectations and incentives in collaboration with actionable oversight, certification and tracking will allow BPS to access qualifiable and quantifiable data to show compliance with the stated metrics for monitoring progress. We, at LiveAble Homes, look forward to partnering with BPS and the City of Portland to meet those metrics.



Jackie Haddon, Beth Kellan, and Jennie Vinson

Co-Founders of LiveAble Homes LLC

www.liveablehomes.org





August 28, 2024

Matt Serres, Policy Director
Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities
2475 SE Ladd Ave #231
Portland, OR 97214

RE: 2024 Housing Production Strategy Resolution (Agenda Item 756)

Dear Mayor Wheeler and the Portland City Council:

The Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) works to create change so that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) can live full lives as valued members of their communities. Every Oregonian deserves an opportunity to live in housing that is designed to meet their physical needs. For persons with developmental disabilities, the lack of accessible dwelling units creates insurmountable barriers to those housing opportunities.

The draft Housing Production Strategy under consideration by the City Council addresses the lack of accessible dwelling units by including strategies to promote disability and age friendly housing. Those strategies include reducing “financial, regulatory, and institutional barriers to developing needed accessible housing”, and “providing technical assistance on incremental housing development guidelines to enhance aging in place/community.”¹ The HPS does not do the following:

- Implement those strategies in a timely manner
- Create higher accessibility standards for housing built with City funds
- Consider legislation to increase the ability to regulate and incentivize accessible housing
- Explore ways to make sure that available accessible housing units are occupied by persons with disabilities who need those units
- Set specific targets for construction of the housing types needed to improve the supply of accessible housing

¹ City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, [2024 Housing Production Strategy \(DRAFT\)](#), p 48 (August 2024).

Without those elements, the Housing Production Strategy will fail to redress decades of inadequate planning that have denied people with developmental disabilities access to housing choices that meet their disability-related needs.

Time is of the essence when it comes to planning for and producing accessible housing. However, the proposed Housing Production Strategy does not reflect that urgency. Those with developmental disabilities have been compelled to live in more restrictive environments than necessary, such as adult foster homes, because they cannot find units with the accessibility features that they need. A population of increasingly older adults also cannot age-in-place, because the city did not implement strategies long ago that would create aging-ready homes. Despite the immediacy of the matter, the primary means that the Housing Production Strategy outlines to address those issues are categorized as “medium” or “low” priority and do not begin implementation until 2027 or 2028. Delays in implementation now will compound the problem of housing instability of people with disabilities for years to come.

If the City of Portland waits any longer to implement higher-density housing that benefits people with disabilities; create Floor Area Ratio (FAR) or height bonuses tied to accessibility; or take inventory of existing accessible units, then the housing choices for people with developmental disabilities will grow even narrower. Those zoning code and programmatic changes are entirely within the City’s resources to implement now. Also within the City’s current capacity is providing the technical assistance necessary to assist developers to retrofit homes to better meet the needs of those with disabilities or to allow households to age in place. Programs such as “LiveAble Homes” have the knowledge that the City of Portland needs to educate developers on the elements of accessible design.

Holding developers who receive public funds to a higher standard in terms of accessibility is not only fair, but certainly would benefit persons with developmental disabilities who are more likely to need accessibility features in their homes. Those higher standards for receipt of public funds are not contained in the proposed Housing Production Strategy. Tying accessible housing production to government monies is a proven strategy. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, for instance, requires that any recipient of federal financial assistance construct dwelling units to the highest building code standards in terms of accessibility. Developers who benefit from federal dollars must comply with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS), which is better than any accessibility standard contained in the Oregon Structural Specialty Code. If the City of Portland implemented a similar strategy through its HPS, it could narrow the accessibility gap that deprives people with developmental disabilities meaningful housing choice.

The previous discussion draft of the City of Portland’s Housing Production Strategy issued in February 2024 contained two key provisions that are notably absent from the current draft before City Council. Section F of the previous draft of Portland’s HPS included the following concepts:

1. “Convene officials to discuss legislation that increases jurisdictions’ ability to regulate and incentivize accessible housing.”
2. “Explore programmatic opportunities to connect households to units.”

Each of those concepts omitted from the current draft HPS would benefit persons with disabilities.²

First, more discussion about existing regulation is needed to address decades of inadequate construction in terms of the number of accessible dwelling units. For example, Oregon’s building code that defines requirements for construction of accessible units only requires 2% (or at least one unit) to be built to “Type A” standards, but *only if* the housing complex contains *at least 20 units*. That is why high-density construction is important for people with disabilities. Without high density development, builders have no obligation to consider the needs of people with disabilities beyond the most basic floor of “adaptability” that the Fair Housing Act requires for buildings containing four or more dwelling units. While local city lawmakers do not define the building code, they can discuss and recommend to the state Building Codes Division changes needed to increase accessible housing production.

Second, connecting people with disabilities with units that contain the accessibility features they require takes planning. Omitting strategies to explore programmatic opportunities to connect individuals with disabilities with accessible housing units overlooks a key aspect to the accessible housing crisis. Even where accessible units are available, persons with disabilities have trouble locating those units. Those accessible units are frequently rented to individuals that do not benefit from the accessibility features available in them. An HPS that does not account for how persons with developmental disabilities will be connected to the accessible housing produced is less likely to solve the accessibility crisis.

Finally, the proposed Housing Production Strategy does not clearly target the production of the types of housing complexes that are most likely to increase the supply of accessible housing. As noted above, the only housing complexes that are required to build to the higher standard of 2% “Type A” accessible are those complexes that contain 20 or more units. While increasing the percentage of “Type A” units under the statewide standard would improve the number of accessible units, we recognize that is not within the City’s control. What is within the City’s control, however, is setting ambitious targets for construction of housing complexes with 20 or more units.³ Setting such targets is necessary to afford fair housing opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

² City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, 2024 Housing Production Strategy (DRAFT), p 19 (February 2024)

³ The Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development is exploring a “Safe Harbor” provision that cities may rely on for Housing Production Strategies that specifies that 50% of new residential units be attached “multi-unit” housing. The City of Portland proposed HPS contains no such specifications.



Oregon Environmental Council



August 28, 2024

To: Portland Mayor, Commissioners, Planning Commission, and City staff:

Portland is struggling with several unprecedented challenges:

- A housing affordability and houselessness crisis;
- A displacement crisis;
- And a climate crisis.

Alongside its short-term crisis management, our city can take a long-term step to systemically address all these problems by re-legalizing small to mid-size apartment buildings throughout its close-in neighborhoods, not just along a handful of busy streets.

The "Recommended Draft" of the Housing Production Strategy prepared by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) says the city will **"increase housing capacity in high-opportunity neighborhoods to promote fair housing, address racial segregation, and expand affordable housing options. These changes may involve increasing and expanding commercial mixed-use and multi-dwelling zoning in centers and corridors in the inner neighborhoods."** This is exactly the strategy we have advocated for, and we are excited about this opportunity to increase housing opportunities in Inner Eastside neighborhoods with access to transit, parks, and jobs. We applaud the BPS and the City for committing to this strategy and urge City officials to launch, staff, and implement this project promptly. We urge BPS to define "Centers and Corridors" as within at least ¼ mile of main corridors (in line with the City's

Transit-Oriented development strategies) so that new homes will not be concentrated solely on our noisiest and most dangerous streets.

Already, BPS has committed funds from the Department of Land Conservation and Development to determine whether the existing infrastructure in the Inner Eastside is sufficient to support increased density. This is an important, tangible action to support Inner Eastside upzoning. Far too often, however, we have seen reports such as these - which outline possible deficiencies and recommend actionable solutions to remedy them - sit unused on Bureau shelves, ignored by future members of the City Council that commissioned them.

Upzoning the Inner Eastside is a project that should be urgently prioritized. It is, in fact, a key component of Portland’s 2021-2024 Strategic Plan in the Equity, Health, and Prosperity areas, with a stated goal to “Grow the supply of housing (affordable and market-rate) to keep pace with population growth,” and a specific call that the “City Council adopts fair housing zoning policy to encourage development of multi-family/multigenerational housing in inner Portland.”

We are calling on the city to:

- Commit to dedicating staff time and Bureau resources to implementing an upzone of opportunity-rich areas - not just along corridors and centers, but across the entire Inner Eastside; and
- Ensure that this project is completed *and* voted on within the timeline provided in the HPS, if not earlier.

This commitment is a core component of the "Increase Access to Opportunity" section of Portland’s Housing Production Strategy. We appreciate the time and effort BPS staff have put into the HPS, and are excited that it now contains stronger language committing the City to action. We look forward to working with BPS on this crucial strategy.

Portland: Neighbors Welcome and our fellow signatories:

1000 Friends of Oregon	Housing Oregon	ROSE Community
APANO	Advocacy Team, Interfaith	Development
Bike Loud PDX	Alliance on Poverty	Sightline Institute
Fair Housing Council of Oregon	Lloyd EcoDistrict	Southeast Uplift
Habitat for Humanity Portland Region	No More Freeways	Strong Towns PDX
Hacienda	Oregon Environmental Council	Sunrise Movement PDX
Home Forward	Oregon Smart Growth	The Street Trust
Housing Land Advocates	Oregon Walks	Verde
	Proud Ground	

(Portland: Neighbors Welcome addendum on page 3)

Addendum on Building Code Amendments from Portland: Neighbors Welcome:

In addition to advocating for the strategy to increase housing capacity in inner neighborhoods, Portland: Neighbors Welcome urges the city to take action on another strategy included in the HPS: “Advocate for Regulatory and Code Changes to Meet Housing Need.”

In particular, we advocate that the city sponsor a local amendment to the Oregon Structural Specialty Code that would allow single-stair residential buildings consistent with the cities of Seattle, Honolulu, and New York as well as peer cities abroad.

As alluded to in the proposed draft, state legislation in 2023 had seemed to prompt Oregon's Building Code Division to come up with alternative safety measures to allow small-scale, single-stair residential buildings up to six floors---a change that would make small buildings of stacked flats with elevators much more feasible in places like the Inner Eastside. However, on August 27, 2024, staff for the Building Codes Division told the OSSC committee that they had no such responsibility, and committee members voted down a proposal to amend the statewide code, saying this would be more appropriately pursued through City-specific code amendments.

Officials in the Bureau of Development Services and Fire Marshal's Office have already given thought to the possible details of such a code amendment in Portland, but direct city action will now be necessary to implement them. We urge the city to act on this issue, potentially in conjunction with other local building code amendments that will unlock new types of buildings and homes in Portland.



August 28, 2024

RE: Support for Housing Production Strategy (#756)

Dear Mayor Wheeler and City Commissioners,

My name is Sarah Radcliffe and I am the Director of Government Relations for Habitat for Humanity Portland Region ("Habitat"). On behalf of both Habitat and our partner, Proud Ground, the region's largest community land trust, I want to thank the Project Team, City Council, the Housing Bureau, and the Planning Commission for your receptiveness to community input on the Housing Production Strategy.

Specifically, homeownership is now included as a housing strategy for households below 80% AMI. With the right public subsidies, homeownership is possible for lower income households, and the difference it can make for families who would otherwise face housing instability is transformational.

We are also excited to see a City-wide Land Bank Strategy elevated from an "idea for exploration" to a specific, high priority goal. Land is one of the City's most critical assets. The City's proactive steps to repurpose underutilized land for housing can lead the way for other public and private partners to do the same. The strategy allowing for rezoning of faith-based and non-profit lands may be a powerful compliment to the Land Bank.

We love the plan to Expand Homeownership Programs through land, incentives, increased funding for downpayment assistance, homebuyer education and matched savings programs. What's more, supporting alternative homeownership models was elevated from an "idea for exploration" to a high-priority program to implement.

Finally, thank you for including critical homeownership data points in the proposed metrics for success:

- Change in # of ownership units (ACS)
- # of ownership units built using TIF
- \$ used for homeownership programs

This Housing Production Strategy holds the potential for meaningful progress towards addressing homeownership disparities between White Portlanders and Portlanders of Color, addressing the legacy of City-sanctioned displacement, and investing in housing stability for families who are struggling to maintain a foothold. We look forward to partnering with the City to implement this vision.

I am a NE Portland resident and board member of Portland: Neighbors Welcome. I want to thank Bureau of Planning and Sustainability staff for the time and effort that they have put into the Housing Production Strategy. I am especially excited about the strategy to increase housing capacity in high-opportunity neighborhoods in the Inner Eastside.

Increasing density in these neighborhoods - not just on major arterials (or corridors) but throughout neighborhood streets - will lay the groundwork for thriving, resilient communities where people at a variety of income levels can live. It will also ensure that apartments - especially affordable apartments - will no longer be relegated to our busiest, loudest, and most dangerous streets.

Increasing the amount and variety of housing units in the Inner Eastside will help the City meet its climate goals, particularly around transportation, and help support local businesses. As this strategy is implemented, it should be combined with efforts to mitigate displacement, especially for the tenants of the legacy rental housing in these neighborhoods. The City should provide additional support for affordable housing, including a public lands inventory and investment in community land trusts - strategies that are also identified in the HPS.

I hope that the City will devote the necessary staff time to implement this strategy in a timely manner. We are still in a housing emergency, and we urgently need more housing in neighborhoods where residents have the opportunity to live car-free. Political conditions and climate change are going to continue driving folks to cities like Portland - if we fail to plan for adequate housing, we will be failing our queer and trans neighbors moving from states where their healthcare has been criminalized, as well as those displaced by wildfires and other disasters.

I hope you will support the Housing Production Strategy, and that the future council will use it as a roadmap for our City's future. I look forward to continuing to work with the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability on the Inner Eastside strategy, along with our coalition partners, which include a variety of environmental, transportation, and affordable housing organizations, as well as neighborhood associations.

Thank you for your time.

Jennifer Shuch

NE Portland Resident

Board Vice President, Portland: Neighbors Welcome



August 27, 2024

Portland City Council
1900 SW Fourth Avenue, Room 2500,
Portland, OR 97201

Re: City of Portland Housing Production Strategy (HPS)

Dear Commissioners:

This letter is submitted by the Fair Housing Council of Oregon (FHCO). FHCO is a non-profit civil rights organization which advocates for policies and practices which affirmatively further fair housing. Please include these comments in the record for the City of Portland Housing Production Strategy.

FHCO commends the staff of the City of Portland for their diligent work in analyzing the housing needs for current and future residents. The HPS does an exceptional job at analyzing not only how much housing is needed, but also where it can and should be built. This type of location-based analysis is critical to rolling back historic patterns of segregation. Many of the focus areas of the HPS also center fair and equitable housing outcomes admirably.

The HPS lays out some excellent concepts when it comes to meeting the housing needs of people living with disabilities, but it is missing some connections to actually producing accessible units. The first is to explicitly prioritize the construction of buildings where these units would be required, i.e. fourplexes and larger. The second is to create pre-approved plans which are built to accessible design standards. Of the four ADU plans adopted so far, none of them meet federal accessibility standards. This oversight should be remedied as more plans are adopted.

One historic harm which the HPS leaves largely unaddressed is the loss of low cost and low barrier housing options in the Central City. NW Pilot Project estimates that between 1978 and 2015, downtown Portland lost 40% of its rentals to demolition or redevelopment. Many of these would have been able to house people currently experiencing unsheltered houselessness. A concerted strategy for developing new single room occupancy (SRO) buildings in key areas is critical for meeting the needs of Portlanders with very low incomes or other barriers to housing.

Additionally, while not a “production strategy,” the City may want to consider following Salem’s lead in adding housing status as a protected class in its statute. This will help reduce barriers for people with a history of houselessness to access the units which will hopefully be created as a result of the measures contained in this HPS.



Please provide written notice of your decision to, FHCO, c/o Samuel Goldberg, at 1221 SW Yamhill Street, #305, Portland, OR 97205.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samuel Goldberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Samuel Goldberg
Public Policy Manager
Fair Housing Council of Oregon



930 NW 14th Ave, Suite 280
Portland, OR 97209
503-222-4200

www.portlandstreetcar.org

August 27, 2024

Portland City Council
1221 SW Fourth Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners:

On behalf of the Portland Streetcar, Inc. (PSI) Board of Directors, I'm writing to thank you for your focused efforts on increasing housing production in Portland – particularly at the opportunity sites you have listed in the 2024 Housing Production Strategy (Broadway Corridor, Lower Albina, OMSI, South Waterfront and Montgomery Park).

Portland Streetcar is a City-owned and operated transit system that provides clean and efficient transit access to 40% of all affordable housing in Portland today and directly serves each of these opportunity sites.

The people that live and work along the existing streetcar system are the very ones that use our service to access jobs, education and opportunity every day. In fact, Portland Streetcar's ridership of over 10,000 passengers per day makes it the third-largest transit system in Oregon. This puts us in a unique position to build partnerships between the City and the private sector to improve access to existing and future housing.

We are writing today to request a more explicit link between housing production and Portland Streetcar in your Housing Production Strategy 7, "Promote Increased Transit Service." Specifically, we would like the plan to call for improved service and reliability on the existing streetcar system in order to better serve the key development areas included in the plan. In addition, we are asking the plan call for continued work to plan, fund and build the Montgomery Park extension of the Portland Streetcar NS Line in the same manner the plan calls for building the 82nd Avenue project in Strategy 7.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to our continued partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dick Davis'.

Dick Davis
Chair, PSI Board of Directors.

27 August 2024

Testimony for City Council Hearing on Housing Production Strategy

Hearing Date: 28 August 2024

Regarding: The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability's 2024 Housing Production Strategy

The Housing Production Strategy (HPS) drafted by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) can be applauded for correctly noting that there is a significant need to construct new and accessible units to meet the needs of households that include one or more persons with disabilities.

Given the socio-economic circumstances of the vast majority of persons with disabilities (and households that count persons with disabilities as part of their families), and given shifting demographics and the correlation between aging and disability, a more robust response with commensurate resources (funds and staffing) is needed.

The draft HPS notes that approximately 65,300 households currently include persons with disabilities, and that 21,300 – 26,300¹ new accessible units will be needed (page 12).

The HPS does not include data on the number or percent of households with a person with a disability who are currently housed in inadequate housing.² Nor does the HPS include data on the number or percent of persons who are homeless and self-identify as persons with disabilities. We know from other studies that a disproportionately high number of persons who are unhoused are also persons with disabilities.³

Despite the absence of hard or precise data, it is still reasonable to assume that a significant percent of households with persons with disabilities are currently housed in units that are inadequate in one way or another.

Importantly the HPS notes that households under 50% AMI “are more likely to include persons with disabilities.”

While data is not presented on the costs of households with disabilities, it is also reasonable to assume that households with persons with disabilities have higher costs

¹ All numbers rounded to the nearest 100.

² Per the United Nation's definition, there are seven elements of housing adequacy: 1) security of tenure; 2) availability of services, materials facilities and infrastructure; 3) affordability; 4) habitability; 5) accessibility; 6) location; and 7) cultural adequacy. See Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1991), General Comment 4. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/committee-economic-social-and-cultural-rights>

³ UN Habitat (2015), The Right to Adequate Housing for Persons with Disabilities Living in Cities, pages 16-17 Available at: <https://unhabitat.org/the-right-to-adequate-housing-for-persons-with-disabilities-living-in-cities>

than similar households that do not include persons with disabilities. Additional costs can include but are not limited to medical expenses, transportation, social services, and reduced working hours for caregivers (forgone income).

The HPS recognizes that such households need units that are “accessible or visitable.” (p.12). While the standard of “visitable” is certainly a minor improvement over units that pay no attention whatsoever to accessibility, “visitable” units are not set up to be fully usable by persons with disabilities. In short, a higher accessibility standard is needed. One potential set of standards is noted below.

Three overarching myths or misconceptions about accessibility need to be course corrected:⁴

First myth: there is little demand for accessibility features. This misconception underestimates the percent of persons with disabilities; and also fails to recognize that the features are needed to enable persons with disabilities to exercise their right to housing on an equal basis with others.

Reality: non-disabled persons and persons with disabilities, alike, when surveyed have indicated that the concept of accessible housing is good and needed, and the vast majority have noted preference for many specific accessibility features.⁵ The HPS in fact refers to accessibility as “The most critically needed specific needs housing types were identified as housing for households experiencing houselessness, mental health support, aging individuals and households, and persons with disabilities.” (p.57)

The Government of the United Kingdom organized a survey in 2019 and 2020 on whether and to what degree stricter accessibility standards should be mandated. They received a total of 413 responses online, by email, and in print, and those responses came from a broad range of constituents (local authorities, civil society, occupational therapists, builders, designers, etc.). 98 percent of respondents wanted stricter standards.⁶

Second myth: Accessibility regulations / requirements will add significantly to the cost of design and construction.

⁴ Ibid, pages 102-103.

⁵ Sopp, Leslie and Wood, Liz (2001), Consumer and Industry Views of Lifetime Homes, *available at:* <https://www.jrf.org.uk/housing/consumer-and-industry-views-of-lifetime-homes>

⁶ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (22 July 2022), Raising accessibility standards for new homes: summary of consultation responses and government response, *available at:* <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/raising-accessibility-standards-for-new-homes/outcome/raising-accessibility-standards-for-new-homes-summary-of-consultation-responses-and-government-response>

Reality: the added cost of designing for and constructing accessible units is nominal. Some US-based companies have found that for mid-size and larger developments that accessible units are either cost neutral or represent a cost savings.⁷ The Kelsey, for example, built their fully accessible San Jose project at 2% below average cost, when compared to other low-income housing tax credit funded projects in the city.⁸ Other estimates in the states, for single homes, found that the added costs would be around \$2000.⁹

Third myth: Accessible features would lead to a reduction in housing quality.

Reality: There is no data to support this myth. In fact, as the UK study above noted, consumers have articulated a preference for many of the accessibility features.

Conclusion

Persons with disabilities are disproportionately represented amongst the homeless population, are more likely to be in inadequate housing now, and have limited housing choice due to the lack of available, affordable, and accessible housing stock. The inequities for households with persons with disabilities will increase dramatically over the next twenty years. Bold leadership and decisive measures are needed to address the current and forthcoming housing crisis for persons with disabilities and their families.

The aim of Strategy C of the HPS is “to increase access to opportunity.” For opportunity to be meaningful for persons with disabilities and their households, all seven elements of adequate housing, including the provision of accessible housing, need to be met. Accordingly, all new developments described on pages 30 – 37 of the HPS should be designed and constructed to be accessible per the standards set in the Kelsey’s design manual.¹⁰

Submitted by

Michael Szporluk

MAS Consulting LLC
4135 NE 16th Ave
Portland, OR 97211

⁷ See: <https://thekelsey.org/>

⁸ Hunter Herrera-McFarland, email, 26 Aug 2024

⁹ Lieberman, Wanda (2013) Crossing the Threshold: Problems and Prospects for Accessible Housing Design, Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University, page 24, *available at*:
<https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/w13-5liebermann.pdf>

¹⁰ *The Kelsey (undated), Housing Design Standards for Accessibility and Inclusion, available at*
<https://thekelsey.org/design/>.

Tel: 1 503 679 1235

Email: mszporluk@yahoo.com



City of Portland
Historic Landmarks Commission

1900 SW Fourth Ave., Suite 5000 / 16
Portland, Oregon 97201
Telephone: (503) 823-7300
TDD: (503) 823-6868
FAX: (503) 823-5630
www.portlandonline.com/bds

Date: August 19, 2024
To: City Council
From: Portland Historic Landmarks Commission
Re: Housing Production Strategy Action Plan Recommended Draft

Dear City Council:

The members of Portland's Historic Landmarks Commission greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft report and acknowledge the huge and thoughtful effort that has brought it thus far. All the goals outlined are worthy – and easier said than done. We hope the following comments prove to be useful in refining the strategy:

- We urge a greater focus on **retaining existing housing**, adding density without demolition, and making it easier to convert single-family houses into multiple units or ADUs without triggering code upgrades that are cost prohibitive. This helps neighborhoods retain their livability, context, and cultural heritage.
- We must also recognize it may not be able to fully build our way to sufficient affordable housing. To be successful, we must **put equal emphasis on reusing buildings we already have**, creating housing through the **conversion of existing commercial or industrial structures**. Adaptive reuse:
 - Can be faster, less expensive, and is far more environmentally friendly than new construction. Adaptive reuse is encouraged due to the environmental benefits associated with preservation -
 - renovation and reuse projects have been shown to save between 50% and 75% of the embodied carbon emissions compared to constructing a new building. This is especially true if the foundations and structure are preserved, since most embodied carbon resides in concrete, steel, and aluminum.
 - Retains buildings that embody our cultural heritage and define Portland's unique sense of place.
 - Supports converting commercial buildings to housing, which is key to reviving downtown.
- A critical missing ingredient to fast-tracking conversions is a **state rehabilitation tax credit**. As highlighted in the HLC's State of the City report, Oregon utterly lacks financial incentives for adaptive reuse. State tax credits, which can be combined with federal historic and other tax credits, have **proven effective in 39 other states**. In total, historic tax credits typically **offset 40% or more of rehab costs, making projects that require seismic retrofits feasible**. Any housing production strategy that doesn't incentivize conversion and reuse may struggle to meet its goals. This should be a top legislative priority for the City.
- Also important is lowering barriers to reuse that take the form of permitting and logistics. As you may be aware, New York City has created an [Office Conversion Accelerator](#) program that provides a single point of contact to help navigate the process. Not all our needed housing will be produced by big developers. Providing technical support to small property owners is a logical and effective approach.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to weigh in and we appreciate your careful consideration.

Sincerely,

The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission



Portland City Council Meeting
Wednesday, August 28, 2024 - 2:00 p.m.
Verbal Testimony

	Agenda Item	Name
1	756	Saurav Palla
2	756	Peggy Moretti Historic Landmarks Commissioner
3	756	Jonathan Greenwood
4	756	Jennifer Shuch
5	756	Michael Andersen
6	756	Timothy Slevin-Vegdahl
7	756	Luke Norman
8	756	Donna Cohen
9	756	Doug Klotz
10	756	Ben Hufford
11	756	Sarah Radcliffe
12	756	bret winkler
13	756	Jackie Haddon
14	756	Heidi Hart
15	756	Allen Hines
16	756	Matchu Williams SE Uplift Neighborhood Coalition
17	756	Alan DeLaTorre
18	756	Dave Peticolas
19	756	Miranda Krone
20	756	Peter Fry