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## About the South Portland Historic District Design Guidelines

### Information



Purpose, background, timeline, and contact information for South Portland Historic District Design Guidelines Project.

### Project purpose

The City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) is working with community partners to update the design guidelines that apply to alterations, additions, and new construction in the South Portland Historic District. The guidelines update is made possible by a [Metro 2040 Planning and Development grant](#), which is supporting a variety of land use and community development projects in Southwest Portland. The draft historic district design guidelines will be reviewed at public hearings of the Historic Landmarks Commission and City Council in 2022 before final adoption.

### Project background

In 1977, the Portland City Council established the Lair Hill Conservation District to “encourage the conservation and maintenance of the historical and architectural integrity of the district.” In 1998, a National Register of Historic Places nomination was approved by the National Park Service, expanding the boundaries of the Lair Hill Conservation District to become the [South Portland Historic District](#). According to the historic district nomination, South Portland is “locally significant under [National Register of Historic Places] Criterion A as a former gateway for ethnic groups arriving in the city of Portland, representing, in particular, Jewish and Italian immigrants. The area also meets [National Register of Historic Places] Criterion C as a neighborhood that exemplifies the characteristics of modest Victorian style architecture.” The 49-acre historic district has around 175 historic contributing buildings.

### Contact

Brandon Spencer-Hartle

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### Past Events

Council Meeting

#### [City Council Meeting - Afternoon Session](#)

📅 November 9, 2022

2:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Available Online

Location: [City Council Chambers](#)

Council Meeting

#### [City Council Meeting - Afternoon Session](#)

📅 November 2, 2022

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Available Online

Location: [City Council Chambers](#)

[View the 1998 Historic District Nomination document](#)

## About the current guidelines

The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission adopted design guidelines for the Lair Hill Conservation District in 1980. While these guidelines are still used as approval criteria, they only apply to the geography of the former (and smaller) conservation district, do not represent modern best practice for City of Portland design guidelines, and lack context and criteria related to the district's multi-ethnic historic significance. The design guideline update will build upon the 1980 guidelines and 1998 historic district nomination to provide greater historic resource protection and development clarity in the South Portland Historic District prior to possible high capacity transit being built in or near the historic district.

 [Lair Hill Historic Conservation District Design Guidelines \(1980\)](#)

## Project steps and timeline



Advisory group on walking tour of South Portland

To inform a broad and deep understanding South Portland's social, cultural, and architectural history, a Community Advisory Group will help guide the development of draft design guidelines during 2019, 2020, and 2021. The nine-member Community Advisory Group is comprised of individuals with ties to South Portland, familiarity with design guidelines, and expertise in architectural and cultural history, and includes:

- Martin Houston
- Valeria Tapia
- Emily Kemper
- Paul Falsetto
- Abdul H Amin
- Stephen Leflar
- Sandy Doss

- Althea Wunderler-Selby
- Annie Mahoney

[Community Advisory Group meetings](#) are open to the public.