

**Date:** November 4, 2014  
**To:** Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission  
**Subject:** 2035 Comprehensive Plan: Proposed Draft  
Testimony of Gustavo J. Cruz, Jr., President, Northwest District Association

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Good afternoon, my name is Gustavo Cruz, and I am the President of the Northwest District Association, or the NWDA. I live at 2224 NW Johnson Street, and I am a life-long resident of Northwest Portland. I appreciate the opportunity to testify on behalf of our neighborhood association regarding the draft Comprehensive Plan.

We feel this is an invaluable opportunity to improve our city by setting goals and policies that reflect our values and aspirations. Our committees have reviewed the draft Plan carefully, and representatives from our Planning, Air Quality, and Transportation Committees will also testify today with more specific comments. Overall, we are excited and optimistic about this project, but we have several global concerns to share with you.

First, although the draft Plan states that “one size does not fit all,” our members are concerned that the unique qualities of Northwest Portland may not be fully appreciated in this process. Our neighborhood combines an extremely dense residential area with robust commercial activity, a historic district, and a major institutional campus. We also adjoin an industrial area, the Pearl District and downtown Portland. Very few neighborhoods outside of major cities like New York and San Francisco have a similar cross-section of influences and challenges. Our members are concerned that the infrastructure and amenities that we value may not be able to keep pace with rapid development in what is already an extremely dense area.

Second, we encourage you to include neighborhood associations as part of “community involvement” in the draft Plan. Neighborhood associations are grass roots democracy at its finest, and they play a key role in addressing the day-to-day concerns of neighbors and businesses. We encourage you to respect and build on existing neighborhood plans.

Third, our members are concerned that the goals and policies expressed in the draft Plan may not be specific enough to be implemented effectively. We encourage you to adopt goals and policies that are clear, direct and capable of evaluation in the future.

Finally, given the scope and importance of this project, we request that you leave the written record open and hold additional public hearings. This project is extremely complicated and challenging, especially for those who lack a formal land use planning background, and we feel that additional time for consideration - and more than four public hearings - are both warranted.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your efforts to improve our city.