

May 10, 2016

Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission
c/o Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
1900 SW 4th Avenue, Suite 7000
Portland, Oregon 97201

RE: Mixed Use Zones Project

I recommend three things:

- 1) Change the names of the proposed zones from **Mixed Use Commercial 1, 2, and 3** to **Storefront Commercial 1, 2, and 3**.
- 2) Provide for flexibility in the proposed Main Street Overlay.
- 3) Avoid the political rhetoric "progressive" over things such as the demise of the car.

First: Zoning is meaningless for most people; although zoning fundamentally shapes life as a police power. A word "mixed use" is meaningless except to planners. The word "storefront has meaning to all.

Second: In the 80s, before I was active in Portland as a land use planner, streets like Belmont, Alberta, Hawthorne, and Mississippi were viewed as "commercial strips" by Portland's planners. The strategy was to social engineer the breakup of these "commercial strips" by placing commercial nodes such as Hawthorne at Cesar E. Chavez with R1 zoning between nodes along the "commercial strip". The strategy failed creating many non-conforming uses and market dysfunction.

In the late 1990s, the Planning Bureau through Coleen Acres saw the pain and conducted the "BLAZE" study on Belmont rezoning it to commercial storefront and the "Main Street" came alive. This was repeated with the Albina Community Plan and Martin Luther King, Mississippi and Alberta came alive.

Zoning cannot create market. Zoning restricts market. Imposing strict zoning on areas with low surrounding densities will only destroy whatever retail/commercial vitality exists. The Main Street Overlay needs to provide flexibility through adjustments to allow for market growth. The creation of urbanism is a comprehensive approach. The extreme vitality of the Central Eastside is due to a comprehensive strategic approach not zoning. In fact, as the market gains in power in its specific designated areas, we have allowed more flexibility in the EXd and IG1 areas; not less.

Third: The rhetoric around the car is not surprising as people tend to demonfy things to gain political leverage. The car is our modern day horse. Our cars provide us the power of individual control and mobility; particularly those with precious cargo such as children and pets and those with disabilities.

I was born and raised in San Francisco. I have used transit systems around the world. Our transit system is emerging as world class; which I am blessed to be a part of its development. Yet we cannot restrict the use of cars to force change. The drive-thru is critically important to those many that are not young and able.

As we get older, mobility is important. Why victimize those who are struggling to accommodate the political rhetoric of those who are not yet struggling. Compassion is flexibility to accommodate things that are needed now even though they may violate your values.

Sincerely,



Peter Finley Fry

**303 NW Uptown Terrace #1B
Portland, Oregon USA 97210
peter@finleyfry.com**