



# PORTLAND MAIN STREETS DESIGN INITIATIVE



**The Portland Main Streets Design Initiative supports communities with tools, education, and policy advocacy to advance design literacy and innovation.**

Design + planning support for Portland communities experiencing growth and change.

## PDX Main Streets is a collaborative of:

- Business Districts
- Neighborhood Associations
- Architects + Designers
- Urban Planners
- Main Street Advocates
- Community Leaders

**INVOLVING COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

**COLLABORATING ACROSS NEIGHBORHOODS + DISTRICTS**

**ENGAGING DEVELOPERS, DESIGNERS, OWNERS, BUSINESSES, & CITY STAFF**

**DESIGN INITIATIVE**

tion of community and business leaders, architects, support Portland communities experiencing growth, hosting events, fundraising, fostering education and planning policy. Together our work helps advance ability and innovation, and improved design for better

**SUPPORTING PARTNERS**  
Hawthorne Boulevard Business Association  
Division Clinton Business Association  
Sellwood Moreland Improvement League  
Richmond Neighborhood Association  
Hosford Abernethy Neighborhood District  
South Tabor Neighborhood Association  
Mount Tabor Neighborhood Association  
Forge Design + Planning, LLC  
Habitare Property Management  
Gammar Architecture + Town Planning  
City Love  
Sustainable Southeast  
Southeast Uplift

**THANK YOU TO SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS & BUSINESSES**

**Join PDX Main Streets!**  
Support our work as a design member or firm, an organization sponsor or collaborator. Donations are tax deductible through our fiscal sponsor's 501c3.

**Learn More:** [divisiondesigninitiative.org](http://divisiondesigninitiative.org)  
[facebook.com/lovepdxmainstreets](https://facebook.com/lovepdxmainstreets)  
**Contact:** [lovepdxmainstreets@gmail.com](mailto:lovepdxmainstreets@gmail.com)  
**Follow us:** [instagram.com/lovepdxmainstreets](https://instagram.com/lovepdxmainstreets)

# MAIN STREET DESIGN INITIATIVES

- Design Guidelines
- Research + Data Gathering
- Policy Advocacy
- Community Visioning
- Design Tours
- Design Awards
- Sustainability Scorecard

## FUTURE OF HAWTHORNE Preservation + Development COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Thursday, January 24, 6-8:30 PM

5511 SE Hawthorne Boulevard, Western Seminary Auditorium

*Sponsored by the Hawthorne Boulevard Business Association (HBBA),  
Sustainable Southeast and the Division-Hawthorne Main Street Design Initiative*



### Portland is Growing

How do we keep what we love about Hawthorne + add density with sensitivity?  
How can we grow with affordable, cohesive, sustainable development?

Join the Conversation

## Visioning Workshops

# MAIN ST DESIGN INITIATIVES

## Policy Advocacy

- Comp Plan
- Mixed Use Zoning
- URM's
- Neighborhood Contact Code Update
- Residential Infill Project
- Better Housing By Design
- Historic Resource Code
- Design Standards + Guidelines (DOZA)

### Division Design Initiative TOP TEN POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PORTLAND

*The following are proactive solutions based on broad community input to fix current planning and zoning policies. The intent is a no net density loss approach to encourage additional infill density with fewer impacts.*

**Background:** Recent development on Division is a sharp contrast to its traditional small-scale main street character and form. We have seen a great deal of new development that often features flat facades and rooflines, large blank walls, inconsistency in quality of materials, as well as privacy, light, noise, parking, and traffic impacts that have caused significant community design concerns. Much of this development has occurred despite more than 2-years of community outcry expressed in the media, public testimony, letters, surveys and neighborhood meetings. As we plan our growth strategy in the Comprehensive Plan and new Mixed Use Zone changes proposed by the City's MUZ Advisory Committee, we can - through more context sensitive design - encourage compact density and infill that meet our population goals within our urban corridors in a more unifying, intentional manner that preserves what is special and character-defining while allowing us to grow into a more compact city.



**1 Improve notification and enable constructive community engagement about growth** Eight large buildings in 18-24 months is major redevelopment, yet the neighborhood had no meaningful opportunity for real input.

*(See DDI Notification and Community Engagement Policy Recommendations)*

**2 Close the Residential Floor Area Ratio Code Gap Now** - There is currently no Floor Area Ratio (FAR) requirement for the residential portion of mixed use buildings which results in overly boxy, bulky buildings as projects build to the maximum envelope allowed. The City (through their Mixed Use Zones Proposal) is recommending this be fixed as part of the Comprehensive Plan adoption but it would not take effect until 2017. We recommend this be a top priority for the City to take immediate action to fix now.



**3 Add Permit Review Criteria for Assessing Compatibility with Neighborhood Context** (see draft Division Design guidelines Compatibility section & comment letter to the City of Portland Hearings Examiner re: land use appeal by Brentwood Darlington Neighborhood). Request additional permit submittal requirements be added including:

- Elevations showing proposed development in context of adjacent building/block development,
- Solar shading analysis, privacy and view impact drawing
- Statement of features/approaches used to demonstrate alignment with community design goals and preferences if formal guidelines exist
- If no parking is required, provide a transportation demand management plan for mitigation of impacts (this could include annual bus passes for residents, shared/conjunctive use parking, on site car or bike-share options, etc.)



*Older, smaller neighborhoods with more traditional main street character and buildings of one and two stories need better review requirements to assess compatibility with neighborhood context and adjacent residential. Good transitions in scale, screening, articulated massing and design features make the difference. The best projects are innovative in design, of durable quality materials, and show respect for the neighborhood by reflecting design preferences and desired features (note: "reflect" does not =replicate), rather than rejecting existing neighborhood architectural patterns.*

# Are we guiding a Citywide vision with sufficient care + involvement?

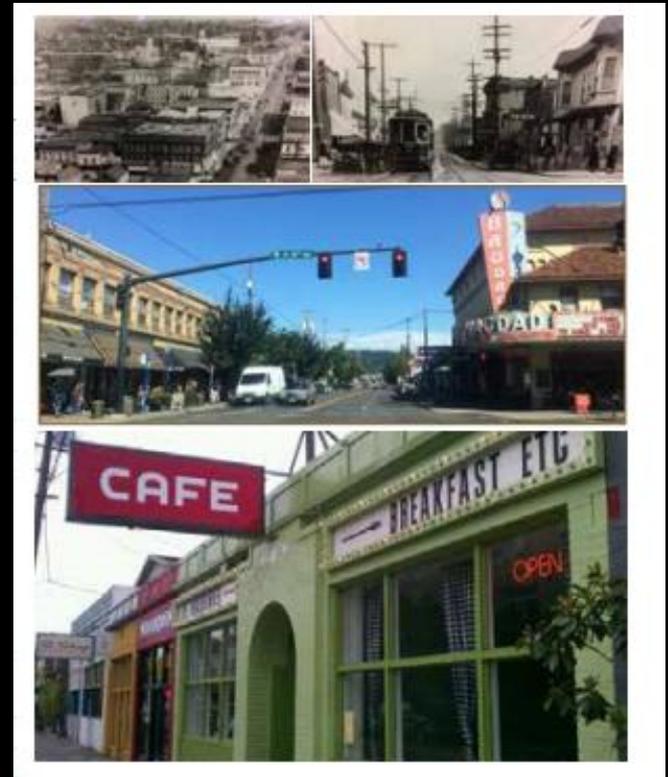
- **COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF TRADEOFFS**

As we consider our role in contributing to the story of this place – are we being thoughtful about what is special that should remain and what we need to change? How do we manage if we don't measure?

- **PATTERNS:** What are Portland's Design "Patterns"? How can this help us be responsive to context?

- **VOICE:** How can communities gain a voice in shaping the redevelopment of their neighborhoods?

- **COLLABORATION:** How might we work together to help guide the vision?



# The new arbitrary, abstract, break-up-the-box fashion

There's a new architecture style that's sweeping the nation:



Source: Uncouth Reflections

## Developer Modernism

(also known as "Beige Box Revival", "Earth Tones n' Rectangles", "Normcore")

# The default style of pointless variety

ROBERT STEUTEVILLE NOV. 30, 2018



TV screen and checkerboard buildings





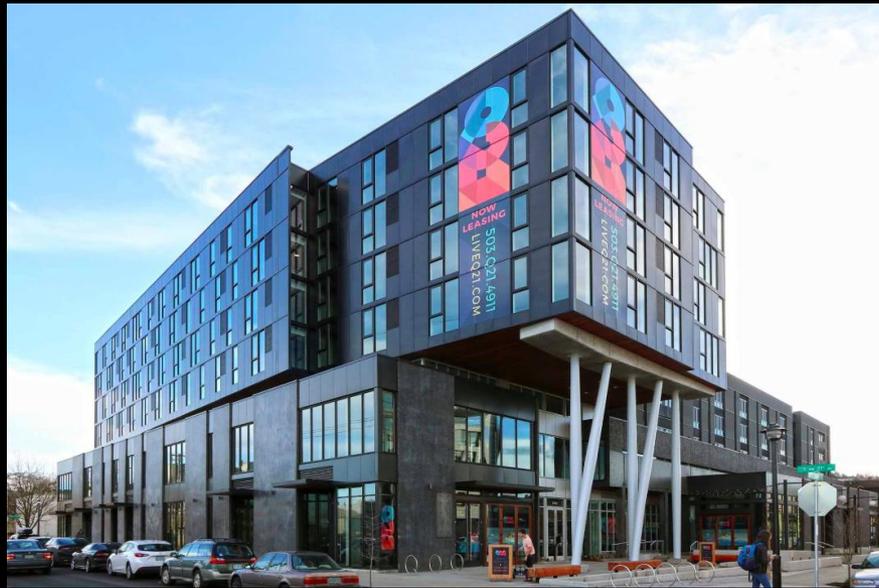
**“A city is not an accident but a result of a coherent vision and aims” – Leon Krier** **DO WE HAVE A COHERENT VISION FOR THE CITY?**

Early 20th C. American cities grew with a coherent, resilient, and easily replicable urban form-language based on human scale and proportion in building facades.





Streetcars were the most formative land use planning impact to shape our city thus are important culturally. Have narrow streets and small lots so redevelopment has big impacts.



Structural gymnastics, cantilevering, complex geometries = cost...and lacks human scale + proportion

# Excerpts from "Cost Efficient Design and Construction of Affordable Housing" (Walsh Construction Co.)

Reduce cost in mixed-use buildings by:

- Striving for simplicity at all times...
- Limiting excessive form articulation...
- Minimizing structural cantilevers...
- Avoiding steel whenever possible...
- Stacking walls and unit plans as much as possible,
- Aligning openings within walls from floor to floor.
- Providing continuous structural load paths to the foundation.
- Keeping building massing simple and compact...
- Using repetitive components such as windows, doors.
- Developing and utilizing standardized and reliable systems that are functional, and durable yet cost effective

**Traditional  
Building  
Forms =  
Affordable  
Design**

# WINNER - NEW CONSTRUCTION NE 1930 Alberta - Emerick Architects



New main street construction with deco detail, low relief columns, inset vertical windows, traditional brick materials, storefront pattern, recessed entries, articulated roofline, and mural



# Division Design: Issues & Concerns

(2014. Now 200% since. Housing of 20 years happened in only 6. Redevelopment without a Voice)

1. Dramatic change in existing character of the corridor
2. Building size and bulk do not reflect neighborhood “main st.” character or context
3. Building height to street width ratio feels out of scale
4. Large blank walls, overly flat surfaces and lack of articulation have led to concerns of overly boxy shaped buildings
5. Materials and construction often appear to lack quality in materials, construction and durability
6. Poor relationship with adjacent buildings and uses (e.g. large 4 story mixed use buildings next to small single family residences or single story commercial)
7. Minimal green design aspects

8. Lack of ability for community to have input on the redevelopment of Division



Figure 6: Map of redevelopment projects on Division Street, 2009 to 2014.



# SOME DESIRED DESIGN ELEMENTS

- Respect for context, surrounding character and scale of adjacent buildings
- Quality materials, and use of nearby horizontal and vertical architectural and structural elements
- Minimize appearance of bulk & scale
- Treatment of whole building (no “backside”)
- Storefront/Ground Floor Design
- Pedestrian Amenities – seating, awnings/overhangs, art, decorative lighting
- Activate the street – balconies, roll up doors for restaurants and cafés
- Room for and encouragement of art/“funk” factor
- Green Features & Innovative demonstration features
- Creation of community spaces



# PORTLAND MAIN STREETS DESIGN GUIDELINES

## ~~DIVISION~~ MAIN STREET DESIGN GUIDELINES

90% DRAFT | MAY 2018



RECOMMENDED UPDATE TO THE 2016 PROVISIONALLY ADOPTED DRAFT DIVISION DESIGN GUIDELINES



# Division Design Process

**Inter-neighborhood Design Committee (DDC)**  
(7-Neighborhood Coalition formed, Spring 2014)



**Extensive surveys & policy research**  
through [background documents](#) of related plans and policies, [online and paper surveys](#), PSU student projects, extensive outreach at monthly meeting and events (Conducted from Summer 2014-Fall 2015)



**Grant to hire Technical Design & Policy support by design consultants** (See RFP Scope of Work Phase 1, November 2014)



**1st Draft –Division Design Guidelines**  
(Consultant and design committee, Fall 2015 )

**2<sup>nd</sup> Draft Guidelines Draft**  
(Design Task Force, Spring 2016 )



**Final Draft Division Street Design Guidelines Approved by the Division Design Committee**

(DDC Draft, Summer 2016)

## Division Design Initiative Activities



**Policy Recommendations to Neighborhood Orgs & City**



# 6 YRS of COMMUNITY RESEARCH:

**300** Division  
Perception  
Surveys (PSU)

**20+**Public Design  
Committee Meetings  
**over 2 years** (w/ BPS Staff  
in regular monthly attendance)

**9** Public Workshops

(e.g. Visioning, Affordable Green Design, Resilience & Sustainability, Adaptive Reuse, Tools for Managing Growth + Change, etc.)

**6** Street Fairs

**6** Walking Tours (3 Division, 2 Hawthorne, 1 Sellwood)

**2** PSU Design Studios

**450** Vision Cards

Received from **10** “Your Voice Matters” Art Installations created with Architecture for Humanity

**145** DOZA Surveys

33 submitted for May Draft – none counted in Staff’s comment count for May Draft thus **25%** of total DOZA comments were excluded)

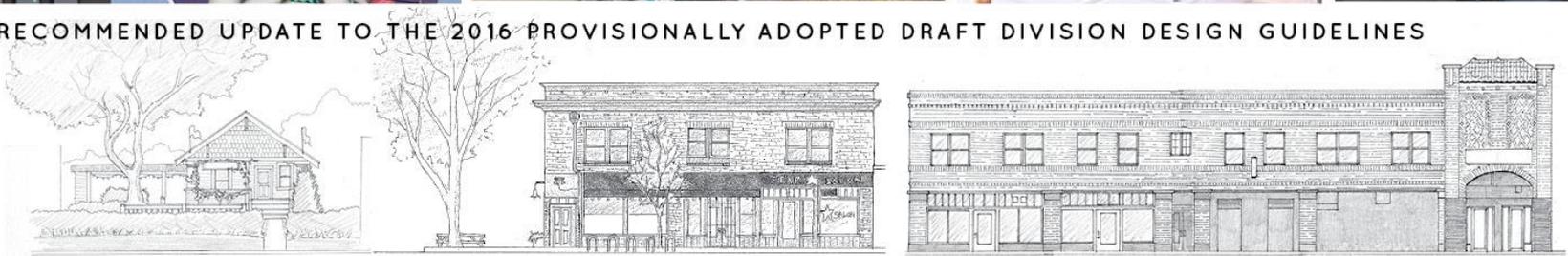
# PORTLAND MAIN STREETS DESIGN GUIDELINES

## ~~DIVISION~~ MAIN STREET DESIGN GUIDELINES

99% DRAFT | JUNE 2018



RECOMMENDED UPDATE TO THE 2016 PROVISIONALLY ADOPTED DRAFT DIVISION DESIGN GUIDELINES



# PDX Main Streets Architecture + Design Guidelines Adopted by:

**4 Neighborhoods**

**7 Neighborhoods +  
Biz Assoc.**

**7 Main Streets**

*Division Design Committee (2016)*

*Mount Tabor Neighborhood Association (2016 Draft)*

*South Tabor Neighborhood Association (2018)*

*Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District (2018)*

*Division Clinton Business Association (2018)*

*Hawthorne Boulevard Business Association (2018)*

*Richmond Neighborhood Association (2018)*

*Sellwood-Moreland Improvement League (2019)*

*Woodstock Neighborhood Association (2019)*

# The Context Challenge: Transitions in Scale & Compatibility vs. Larger Zoning Envelope Potential

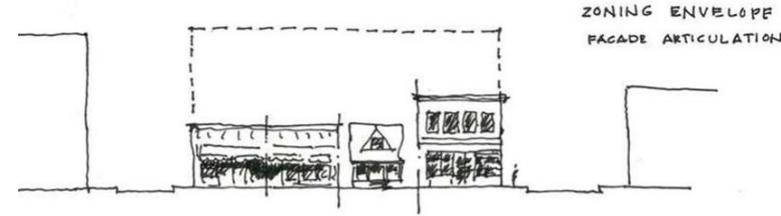
Source: Mixed Use Zoning Committee Presentation <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/494316>



**“A concern of many people is that the rate of growth overwhelms and erases the legacy of older areas as new buildings are replaced.”  
(DOZA Findings Report)**

# The Context Challenge: Transitions in Scale & Compatibility vs. Larger Zoning Envelope Potential

Source: Mixed Use Zoning Committee Presentation <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/494316>



- NOT about the Density but about poorly context and compatibility in DESIGN

A precise and teachable form-language that is also flexible, malleable



Emerick Architects 2018

This old and new building would be compatible beside each other due to their common form language. Could even be taller with stepback above.

**We often yearn to have a  
greater connection to place and  
community**

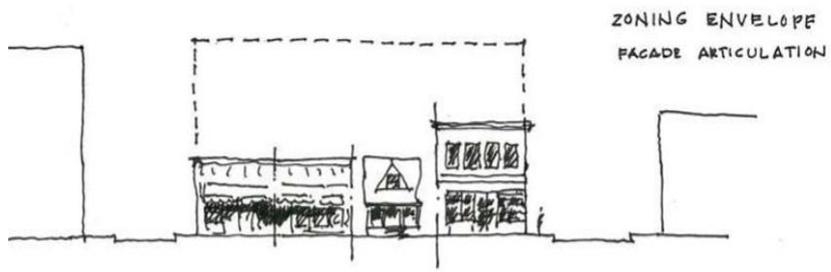
**We respond to human scale  
building design** (both in big + small buildings)

**Portland is known to be a city of  
many villages and**

**OUR MAIN STREETS ARE THESE PLACES  
where we come together, that are filled  
with special buildings and unique  
vibrancy.**

**THEY ARE AT RISK OF BEING LOST**

These areas are vital to our economic health and vitality. NO proposal or conservation designation to address these unprotected historic areas



The Context Challenge: Transitions in Scale & Compatibility vs. Larger Zoning Envelope Potential  
Source: Mixed Use Zoning Committee Presentation <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/494316>

# “MAIN ST” DESIGN STANDARDS + GUIDELINES ARE NEEDED FOR AREAS OF SPECIAL CHARACTER

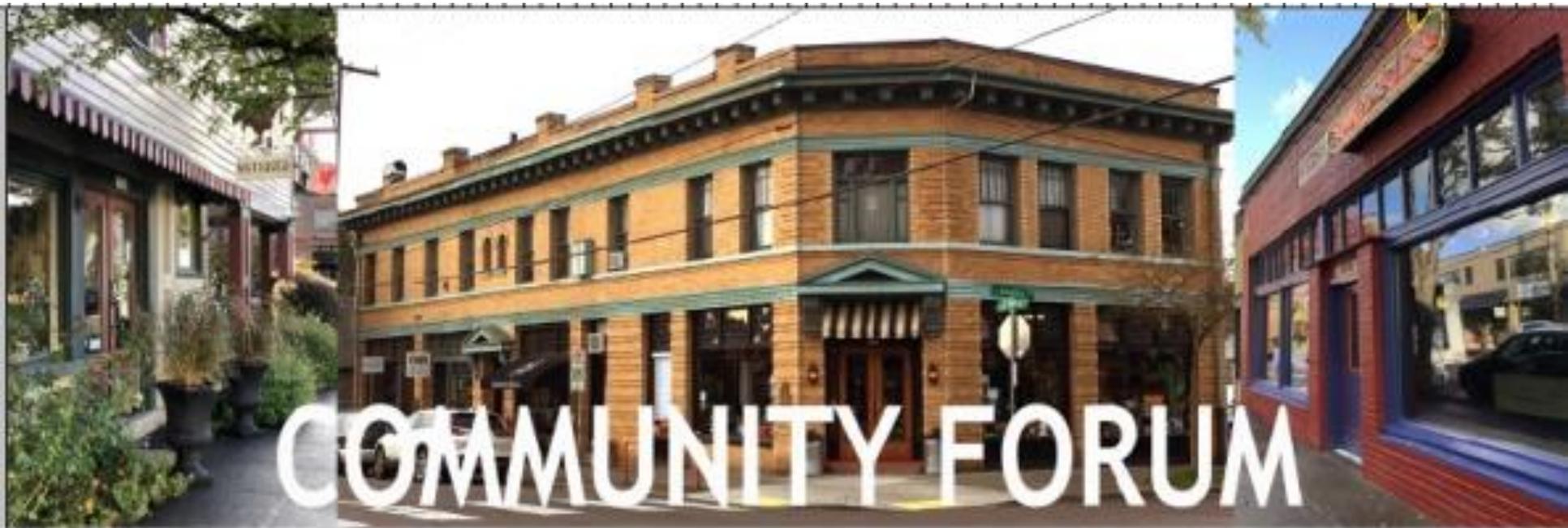
Vintage Buildings Study  
City identified 13 “Areas of Special Character” at risk.  
We have tools for we can use NOW.





# DESIGN CONCERNS

1. **Major redevelopment without a community VOICE**
2. **Not doing placemaking, no plazas and gathering spaces**
3. **Creating contrast over compatibility and many impacts to livability and cost**
4. **Not building affordably**
5. **Not relating to context**
6. **Gentrifying neighborhoods, demolishing good buildings and displacing people**
7. **Overbuilding in the places that are already working, not in the ones where needed – 20-minute neighborhoods should be supported for ALL of Portland**



# COMMUNITY FORUM

Design, Development + Preservation

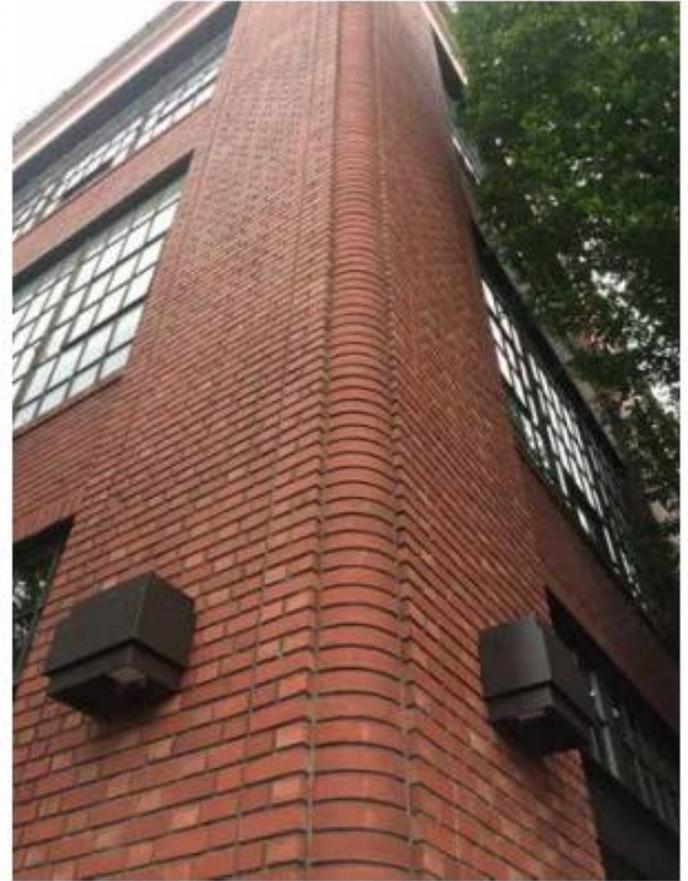
What's YOUR Vision for  
Sellwood-Moreland Main Streets?

Thursday, May 30, 6-8:30 PM

SMILE Station, 8210 SE 13th Avenue, Portland, OR 97202

*Sponsored by the Sellwood-Moreland Neighborhood Improvement League  
in partnership with the Portland Main Street Design Initiative*

# We've studied the common design "Patterns" of Main Streets



**ENTRIES + EDGES**

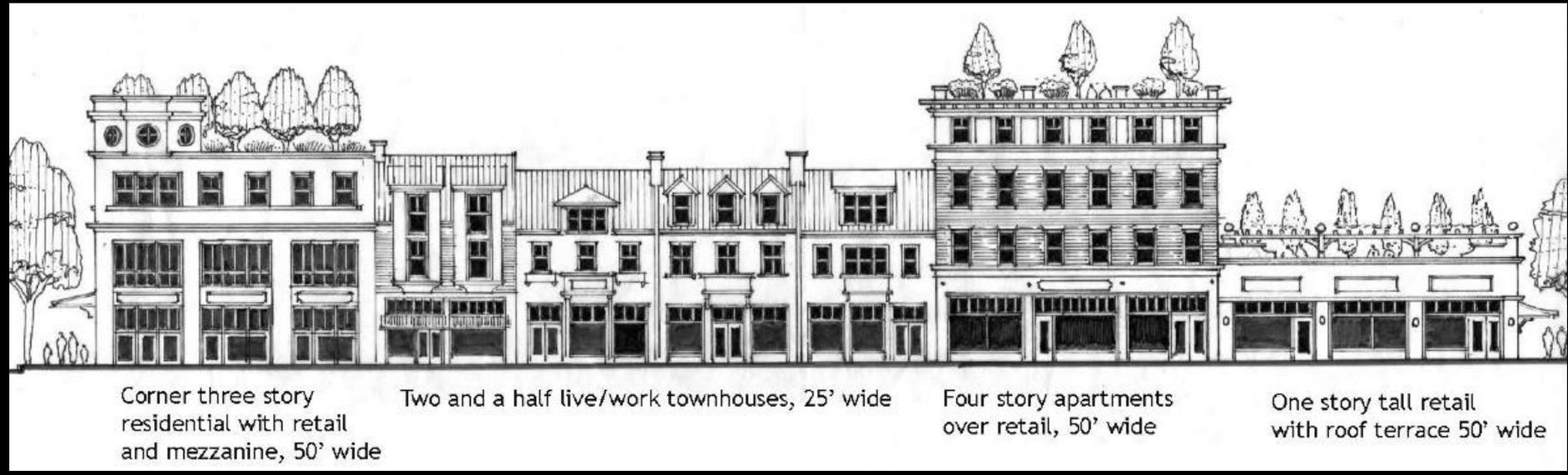




Mixed-use building scales:  
neighborhoods to city center  
- Timeless, cost-effective  
structural patterns establish a  
common proportional language

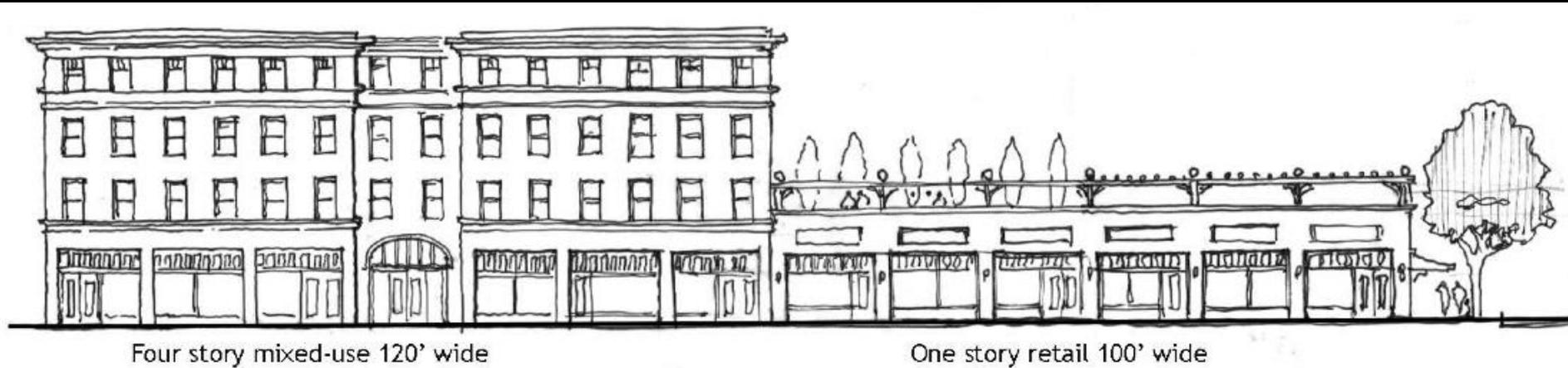


# Similarly scaled and proportioned windows and horizontal bands on



Context is more about a well communicated, an easily replicable architectural form-language, NOT merely “what is next door”. Many contemporary buildings lack this comprehensive form-language that integrates new and old into a harmonious urban fabric.

A precise and teachable form-language that is also flexible, malleable



Mixed-Use Main Street building types  
Qamar and Associates Inc. 2019

1. Adaptable and resilient - Consistent window alignments and simple forms enable future modifications, and interior wall shifts
2. Psychology of scale - well proportioned horizontal cornices make tall buildings feel better scaled to the pedestrian

Multi-story, full block buildings, like central city Meyer and Frank, adhere to the same human scaled and proportioned windows, and horizontal proportioning techniques



Seven story apartment over retail, 200' wide





Urban Design Panel  
May 2019

Before and after

Qamar & Associates  
Architecture + Town Planning



Urban Design Panel  
May 2019

Before and after

Qamar & Associates  
Architecture + Town Planning



# MAIN ST. DESIGN AWARDS 2019

# New Portland buildings reflecting time-tested techniques of Human-scaled Form Language.

Resilient, affordable, and harmonious with past and future

1. Resilient - Timeless design doesn't go out of fashion
2. Affordable - Simple construction with tall/narrow windows stacked and arrayed in orderly rhythms is more cost efficient



# New Portland mixed-use and apartment buildings

Harmonious with their local neighborhood and regional contexts



# Burnside Arcades, Portland, OR

Modern buildings can reflect traditional patterns + proportions



# More Modern Portland mixed-use and apartment buildings



Horizontally and vertically aligned windows, base, cornices, bay windows - 3-4 story mixed-use.

Contemporary but compatible, contextual, and traditional within the neighborhood and region.

# We have strategies for adding Density with Compatibility AND Context



Existing mixed-use buildings can add density above with common tools like stepbacks to keep compatibility + increase housing

# We have strategies for adding Density with Compatibility AND Context

3rd and 4th story stepbacks

2-stories at street



## Streetfront Stepbacks to adjust building height in relation to street width

# We have strategies for adding Density with Compatibility AND Context



Street front sloped roofs and dormers  
adjust building height in relation to street width

# THE HUMAN SCALED FORM-LANGUAGE OF BUILDINGS, PUBLIC PLACES AND CITIES



# THE BIG QUESTIONS

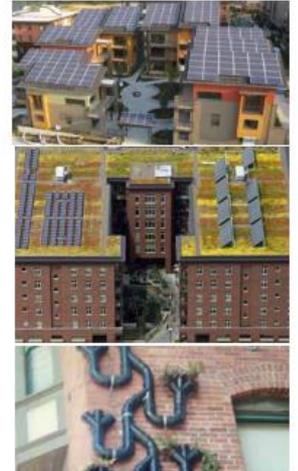
- How do we grow in smart, sustainable, equitable, and affordable ways?
- How do we build in ways that are respectful to Portland's unique and valued architectural character and distinct cultural identity?
- How do we maintain room for innovation?
- How do fill in the gaps where most needed to create more 20-minute neighborhoods for ALL of Portland?

## SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

The Division Green Street/Main Plan reflects the community's strong preference for sustainable design and green building strategies for both new and existing buildings. Along our older street cars main streets with many vintage buildings, the Portland Main Street Design Handbook highlights the importance of existing building reuse as critical strategy for realizing our sustainability and climate protection goals.

### SUSTAINABILITY GUIDELINES

- Promote sustainability, resiliency, and green building design practices.
- Employ adaptive reuse and retrofits where possible including relocating structures rather than demolition. (See examples on page 39)
- As much as possible, maintain sun, air, light for building occupants, adjacent residents and businesses.
- Use High Performance building design approaches for energy and water reductions (e.g. zero energy buildings, LEED, Passivehaus)
- Provide innovative stormwater management features that support green infrastructure functions (green roofs, living walls, etc)



# WHAT IS THE VISION FOR THE CITY?

- How might we collaborate to help guide the vision?
- What are the methods we can/should use to engage the community in this kind of visioning?
  - Main Street Design Guidelines?
  - Design Charettes?
  - Town Hall meetings?
  - Visual Preference Survey?
- What are the tools we can use to foster the vision?
  - Overlays? Plan Districts, Special District designations?
  - Alternative Design District or Innovation Design District
  - Incentives to foster leadership in demonstrating the most innovative design approaches?



*Images by Rick Potestio*

# DOZA Citywide Design Policy

**New citywide design policy being decided NOW – DOZA - first major update in 30 years**

## **Concerns:**

1. **Very little outreach by City, particularly for the East Side**
2. **Sixty-five Foot Trigger for Design Commission Review is way too high for narrow Vintage Main Streets (six story buildings)**
3. **Thirteen undesignated historic districts are at risk (Hawthorne, Alberta, Belmont, Sellwood, Freemont, Montavilla, etc)**
4. **“Future Work” for main streets is identified for these Low-Rise Vintage Areas in staff report (p. 52-53) but does not seem a priority for staff or Planning Commission and may not happen unless we advocate for funding and staff with decisionmakers and the Mayor.**

## **Comments due November 15<sup>th</sup>**

- **Weigh in online – it’s easy via the Map App**
- **Send a letter, or**
- **Call the Mayor’s office (503) 823-4120**
- **Learn More: [www.pdxmainstreets/doza](http://www.pdxmainstreets/doza)**

**Our East Side Main Streets need us - Advocate NOW**

# Who are we building for? Who decides?

Planners, Policymakers, Developers, Architects?

**You have a right to have a voice.**

**PDX Main Streets is helping engage communities with proactive tools to determine their goals and design priorities to shape and a more livable, affordable and sustainable future.**



The Portland Main Streets Design Initiative supports communities with tools, education, and policy advocacy to advance design literacy and innovation.

Learn More: [www.pdxmainstreets.org](http://www.pdxmainstreets.org) | [www.divisiondesigninitiative.org](http://www.divisiondesigninitiative.org)  
Follow us @ [ilovepdxmainstreets](https://www.instagram.com/ilovepdxmainstreets) | [www.facebook.com/ilovepdxmainstreets](https://www.facebook.com/ilovepdxmainstreets)  
Contact: [ilovepdxmainstreets@gmail.com](mailto:ilovepdxmainstreets@gmail.com)

# DESIGN GUIDELINES

99% DRAFT | JUNE 2018



Learn more at:

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