



December 13, 2021

To: Mayor Wheeler and Portland City Council

Re: Testimony - **Potential Amendments to Historic Resources Code Project Recommended Draft**

Restore Oregon helps preserve, reuse and pass forward meaningful places and spaces in communities across the state. As a non-profit educational and advocacy organization, we believe that historic resources (officially designated or not) are a vibrant part of the solution to our most pressing challenges. The Historic Resources Code Project (HRCP) provides important means and tools to utilize preservation inclusively and to advance the City's goals.

This testimony is focused on the "HRCP Potential Amendments Package," released on December 1, 2021. Restore Oregon appreciates your (and staffs) hard work to evaluate all the public testimony and synthesize it into eight potential amendments for review and further consideration. Thank you!

All the potential amendments are ways to support affordable housing and overall balance the needs of the City. Amendment 4 clarifies and simplifies the code and we like it. But based on our previous testimony, **Restore Oregon wholeheartedly supports the incorporation of Amendments #3, #5, and #6, as presented, into the HRCP Recommended Draft.**

Amendment #3 - we strongly support Commissioner Rubio's amendment to address the demolition criteria section of the HRCP to eliminate a stand alone criteria and add/strengthen the evaluation to acknowledge and consider "...value to the community, and association with historically marginalized individuals or communities" and "the economic consequences for the owner and the community."

Demolition is a forever loss, so demolition review must be done right. We believe the "no economic value" standard, if left in, will promote intentional neglect by owners who ignore routine maintenance as a path to demolishing important historical structures. It should not be the only criteria for demolition. This potential amendment *takes a balanced approach* that considers the economic and non-economic value of a historic resource -- and its impact on the community.

Amendment #5 - we strongly support Commissioner Mapps' amendment to give the Portland Historic Landmarks Commission equal footing with the Planning and Sustainability Commission when considering creation or removal of historic district designations. If the two commissions reached differing conclusions on a given matter, both commissions would offer their recommendations to the City Council. As currently written, the proposed rules would omit the Landmarks Commission from these important decisions so this amendment is a much-needed fix.

Amendment #6 - we strongly support Commissioner Mapps's amendment to retain Portland's long-standing qualifications for membership on the Landmarks Commission. Unless amended, the professional experience qualifications for appointment to the commission would be diluted. We believe city commissions should always provide the best expertise available.

Restore Oregon thanks you for this hard work with a common commitment to creating a livable, affordable, equitable, and sustainable city. Restore Oregon requests the Council **adopt the HRCP with Amendments #3, #5, and #6.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nicole Possert".

Nicole Possert
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matthew M. Davis".

Matthew M. Davis
Board President