

To: North Portland Land Use Group (NPLUG)
From: Cole Grisham, Friends of Cathedral Park
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Subject: Health Overlay Zone

Introduction

North Portland is a vibrant, diverse community of single and multi-family homes, commercial centers, and industrial preserves situated at the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette rivers. Our eleven neighborhoods face increasing growth and density in the coming years. The City of Portland Comprehensive Plan identifies inner neighborhood areas such as North Portland as ideal for increased density. The plan recognizes, however, that increased density carries with it the challenge of maintaining a healthy, connected city where residents have access to clean air, accessible green space, and vibrant employment centers.

In order to meet the coming growth in our community without compromising the health and well being of our residents, North Portland's neighborhood representatives recommend a health overlay zone. This zone applies specific land use, design, and monitoring requirements on new development in North Portland to mitigate negative health and safety impacts. The health overlay zone supports a vision along with goals and strategies outlined below that together preserve and enhance our way of life while accommodating new development in our community.

Our community draws inspiration for our recommendations from two key sources. Portland's comprehensive plan update, Policy 4.28.d, encourages design and land use patterns that mitigate negative air quality and noise impacts in Portland neighborhoods, especially near high vehicle traffic areas, and other sources of air pollution. Similarly, Portland's Climate Action Plan (CAP) goals 1-4 aim to reduce the environmental impacts of new development through more sustainable land use and design principles.

Vision

A North Portland community that preserves and enhances the health and well being of its residents while accommodating growth and density needs.

Goals

To achieve our vision, North Portland's neighborhoods propose the following three goals:

- *Better Air and Water Quality:* Land use, design, and monitoring requirements that reduce or minimize the negative impact of future development on energy demand, air conditioning use, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, heat-related illness and mortality, and water quality.
- *Reduced Noise Pollution:* Land use, design, and monitoring requirements that reduce or minimize the negative impact of future development on unwanted or distressing sound.
- *Increased Safety:* Land use, design, and monitoring requirements that reduce or minimize the negative impact of future development on criminal activity and emergency preparedness.

Strategies

Goals provide benchmarks by which to measure progress towards our vision. Each goal, however, is supported by specific, actionable strategies that residents, community leaders, and City of Portland staff can use to better our community. We provide an illustrative list of strategies below based on NPLUG discussions, but we expect individual neighborhood association meetings to generate and refine strategies to best fit our community vision.

Better Air and Water Quality

- Install air-monitoring stations in North Portland neighborhoods
- Improve storm water management design standards for new developments
- Require low-emissions freight vehicles
- Preserve and build connections between existing green spaces
- Require air filtration in all new housing developments
- Plant trees that will help filter the air of carbon dioxide, harmful particulates, and other atmospheric contaminants in all new housing developments

Reduced Noise Pollution

- Improve noise abatement design standards for new developments
- Install noise abatement walls or similar constructs between residential areas and freight corridors

Increased Safety

- Educate residents on emergency preparedness procedures
- Improve coordination between neighborhood organizations and Portland Police Bureau North Precinct services
- Improve coordination between neighborhood organizations and Portland Fire and Rescue
- Improve coordination with other neighborhood, city, county, and state emergency and safety preparedness groups

Conclusion

These goals and strategies support our community vision of a North Portland that accommodates future growth and density without compromising our health, safety, or well being. By incorporating these elements into the City of Portland comprehensive plan update, we may ensure our community is ready and capable of meeting future growth needs while guaranteeing existing and future residents enjoy a healthy, safe, and vibrant North Portland.