

Arlington Heights - Forest Park - Goose Hollow - Hillside - Linnton - Northwest District
Northwest Heights - Old Town - Pearl District - Portland Downtown - Sylvan-Highlands



July 24, 2019

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners

We are writing in support of Southeast Uplift's request to allow reasonable time for public input and discussion regarding proposed changes to section 3.96 of city code, which governs public participation and neighborhood associations.

We respectfully request a full 60-day period for public consideration and comment between the adoption and release of the 3.96 Committee's proposed draft code and Council action. Note that neither the Council nor our organizations meet regularly during the month of August.

We strongly value the inclusion of all voices in addressing civic concerns in an accessible and transparent manner. Since 3.96 establishes the city's framework for implementing such values it is essential that those principles are applied to the process that reforms it.

That process to date, with sudden or missing public notices and difficult to locate information, raises serious concerns that our member associations will lose vital partnerships with the city land use and transportation bureaus and other city agencies that have long collaborated with us to provide better outcomes for all Portlanders. We fear that losing these relationships will effectively eliminate neighborhood associations.

The current process is polar opposite to the last time the 3.96 code and Standards were reviewed and updated. That was a four-year process, involving the public through a series of 27 public meetings of the advisory committee, with three public workshops as the work progressed. The result was a robust, comprehensive working document that was adopted by City Council in July 2005 after a three-month period of public comment following the release of the committee's recommendations in April.

It is essential that the current review process include authentic opportunities for all communities to reflect on the outcomes implied in the proposed language and for Council to have the time to thoughtfully review community concerns.

We look forward to working with you to realize Mayor Wheeler's desire to add to, rather than subtract from, the city's ongoing efforts to ensure a productive and mutual relationship with all Portlanders.

Respectfully,


Kristin Shorey

President, Neighbors West-Northwest

Westside neighborhoods working toward a livable and sustainable future