

Submitter: Susan Schubert
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Housing and Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB974

I oppose the elimination of Design Review as proposed in the SB974-1 Amendment "Section 12 (5) on page 10 and Section 13 (5)" on page 11.

Buildings that will stand for over 50 years have a major impact on their neighbors and should be well designed.

Communities embrace denser housing when they're confident it will look good.

Residents of affordable housing deserve good design, too.

Attention to design (i.e., building form, relating to context, durable and low-maintenance materials, energy efficiency, access to sun and light, etc.) are in fact critical ingredients in making buildings more cost efficient and affordable, long-lasting, and livable for ALL incomes.

Design matters: When new larger infill developments relate to their context, they can fit seamlessly. When they don't, they stick out like a sore thumb, calling attention to gentrification and disrupting the success of the business districts.

Critical points to make regarding time and cost:

Design Review in Portland underwent an administrative and legislative overhaul (DOZA) in Summer of 2021, investing significant resources, to streamline the process and make it more predictable for investors.

Design Review in Portland does not apply to small residential development and is limited to a very small percentage of the City.

Design Review in Portland complies with current State law that requires a clear and objective standards approach. When Design Review is pursued, per Zoning Ordinance, Design Review is not able to require the applicant to reduce or increase the total floor area or height.

Critical points to make regarding why Design Review has value

Design Review in Portland came about in the 1970s to address downtown blight and is a significant reason why Portland became a world-renowned, pedestrian-friendly place. Maintaining Design Review will help continue that success as Portland enters an era of recovery.

Maintaining Design Review is an important part of continuing Portland's planning legacy and helping Portland recover, to once again be a favored destination for Oregonians and visitors from abroad.

Design Review in Portland expanded in the 1990s and 2000s, in concert with higher densities, to areas slated for significant growth to ensure development in neighborhood cores will have positive impacts.

Design Review in Portland supports high-density residential development.

Design Review in Portland ensures that even those living in low-income affordable

housing are provided with the opportunity to live in with dignity in durable, safe and well-connected developments.

Design Review in Portland supports the goals and policies of Portland's Comprehensive Plan, specifically Goals 3 and 4 which require the creation of complete, healthy and well-connected neighborhoods.

Design Review in Portland ensures development promotes a vibrant streetscape and waterfront, which is vital to Portland's economic recovery that Portlanders desperately need and want, especially in downtown.

Design Review in Portland ensures development is resilient and will be lasting.

Design Review in Portland strengthens areas by guiding development to improve visibility, safety and access to and within the public realm, supporting vibrant places designed for people.

Design Review in Portland supports development that builds on context, contributes to the public realm, and provides high quality and resilient buildings and public spaces.

If you'd like to read more about why Design Review has value, to cater your comments, see: [Reports and Archive | Portland.gov](#)