



September 11, 2019

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Members of Portland City Council,

We are writing to express concerns about the Code Change 3.96 proposed by the Office of Community & Civic Life.

We acknowledge the systems of oppression that have shaped Portland's development and shut many out of decision making, and strongly support expanding civic engagement to address this disparity and elevate the voices of marginalized groups.

We acknowledge the neighborhood system as an essential route to participatory democracy and as the sole form of jurisdictional representation available to Portlanders under our commission form of government. Neighborhood associations must retain their full recognition, privileges and support.

As a Neighborhood Association, we were alarmed as we learned of Civic Life's process mismanagement during development of revisions to Code 3.96. Civic Life provided no direct notification to neighborhood associations regarding 8 meetings and 3 draft rewrites and allowed only limited neighborhood representation on the code change committee. The bureau has struggled to follow the city's own Public Involvement Principles. Reporting on public records revealed a troubling internal bias. Taken together, these things discredit the code change process to date and call into question Civic Life's stated objectives.

Civic Life has advanced through this process a notion that dismantling of the neighborhood system in code is a meaningful step toward inclusion of other groups. Inviting groups to the table does not and should not require this tradeoff. Such a suggestion is unfounded. To date, Civic Life's substantive plan for explicit inclusion of more community groups remains elusive.

Civic Life must re-orient this effort to acceptable standards and complete its process in no less than 18 months with a higher level of oversight and accountability from city leadership. **Until this is accomplished, we ask that you vote NO on 3.96 as written.**

Regards,

Roseway Neighborhood Association Board