

To the Portland Planning Commission, [sent via MapApp 8/26/2025]

After careful review, the Multnomah Neighborhood Association (MNA) formally opposes the proposed zoning change identified by the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability's (BPS) Affordable Housing Opportunity Project (AHOP) for Property 10: the Sears Armory Site.

During MNA's July General meeting, many residents expressed strong opposition to the rezoning of this site from EG2 to CM2, citing the critical role this property plays in supporting emergency response capabilities for residents on the west side of the Willamette River. There is no assurance that an Emergency Staging Facility, the original planned use of the Sears site, would be allowed under the CM2 zone.

We are particularly troubled that no contingency plans or alternative sites have been presented or discussed to ensure that emergency preparedness and response infrastructure will remain should this site be redeveloped. The absence of such planning raises significant risks to public safety, a matter of utmost concern to our neighborhood. Given that CM2 zoning would allow for the City to develop a 3 to 4 story permanent housing structure on the site, does not give Multnomah residents confidence that the City has any emergency staging facility future plans for the site.

Recent natural disaster events across our country serve as a stark reminder of why having a dedicated emergency staging facility with the flexibility of use is essential. In this year already, the devastating wildfires in Palisades, California, and catastrophic flooding in Texas local communities have been left without immediate access to critical services. With climate change as a constant threat, it is not a matter of *if* but *when* a comparable disaster will strike Portland. The entire westside of the Willamette River currently depends on rapid deployment of emergency resources, all of which are staged on the Eastside. Eliminating or diminishing this site's role in emergency operations would place westside residents' lives at severe risk during times of crisis.

For these reasons, the Multnomah Neighborhood Association formally opposes the proposed zoning change for Property 10: Sears Armory Site as outlined in the AHOP Proposal Draft. We respectfully request that this property be removed from the AHOP rezoning proposal so that the essential emergency response functions it supports are not compromised.

We appreciate your attention to these concerns and urge that further consideration be given before moving forward. Thank you for prioritizing the long-term safety, and lives, for the Portland residents west of the Willamette River.

Sincerely,

Diane Parrish
President
Multnomah Neighborhood Association