THE PLANS Examiner

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New Housing Policy created to serve changing population

"Now that we've completed an update to the City's Housing Policy, it's time to focus on implementation. Private sector investment in the production and preservation of housing, both market rate and affordable, is essential to maintaining livability in our city and our neighborhoods."
Commissioner Erik Sten

...to inform the building-design and construction community about development procedures, policies and events affecting their work with the City of Portland.

The City of Portland adopted its first Housing Policy in 1978. Population studies two years later showed that 18.3% of Portland's households were married couples with children. Sampling done in 1996 showed this number had dropped to 16%.

The city's changing demographics pointed toward the need to revisit the Housing Policy. In December 1998, after more than a year of public meetings, focus groups and community workshops, followed by Planning Commission reviews and recommendations, the City Council adopted the new Comprehensive Plan Housing Policy.

Commissioner Erik Sten, who replaces retired Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury as head of the Housing Policy Steering Committee, will lead the development of an action plan for the Policy.

The Housing Policy has one primary goal — to provide housing of different types, tenures, density, sizes, costs and locations to meet Portlander's needs and financial capabilities, now and in the future. Ensuring that an adequate supply of housing exists is first on the list of policies. Methods to meet this need include:

- Designating sufficient buildable land for residential development, while reducing the need for Urban Growth Boundary expansion;
- Developing ways to increase private investment in housing;
- Considering how regulations affect developers' ability to meet housing needs and demand;
- Making efficient use of existing housing;
- Making the best use of existing infrastructure, through infill development and by using vacant and under-developed land;
- Encouraging efficient housing design, which incorporates conservation and fits with the surroundings;
- Facilitating redevelopment of surface parking lots, zoned residential and mixed-use, to accommodate more housing and mixed-use development;
- Finding alternatives to demolishing existing, sound housing on residential lots;
- Reducing non-regulatory barriers to building on vacant residential sites;
- Limiting residential development in industrial sanctuaries.

Two additional policies call for no net loss of residential or multi-use land and the use of sustainable development to promote conservation, access to public transit and resource efficient design and construction.

To make these and the many other policies work, an approach to regulatory costs and fees is part of the Policy. Its main objectives are to improve affordability by making permit fees or System Development Charges the lowest amounts possible, while still recovering city service costs; make project timelines, outcomes and costs more predictable; and allow reduced parking requirements, under certain circumstances. No regulatory or zoning changes were adopted with the Policy.

The 142-page Comprehensive Plan Housing Policy has numerous strategies and objectives to achieve each of its 15 policies. If you would like a copy of the Adopted Comprehensive Plan Housing Policy or have questions about the Policy, call Cathey Briggs, Bureau of Planning project manager, **(503) 823-5637**.

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Blueprint 2000 takes first steps toward implementation

In January, the Portland City Council adopted the Phase II Report of the Blueprint 2000 Stakeholders Team. The report recommended that the city form the Office of Planning and Development Review (OPDR), combining the Bureaus of Buildings and Planning, and create interagency agreements to link the development review functions of other bureaus. These include the Bureaus of Environmental Services, Fire, Forestry, Transportation and Water. The City Council introduced and adopted an amendment to the report, which would separate the Planning Bureau's long-range planning functions from the new organization. This amendment included a provision that the mayor return to the City Council in May with a proposal for where to locate long-range planning.

On March 19, 1999, the OPDR becomes official. Staff and managers from the affected bureaus are meeting now on all aspects of the transition in order to make it as smooth as possible. The organizational structure is one of six building blocks that describe the elements in the development review process. The Blueprint 2000 staff is working on several of the building blocks with city staff from all of the development bureaus. Work is focusing on the details of entry point, early assistance, technical review and inspection and enforcement.

The Blueprint 2000 process, which led to the merger of the bureaus, began nearly two years ago. If you have questions about the project, call Bonnie Morris, project transition manager, **(503) 823-7883**, or Miriam Hecht, pilot project manager, **(503) 823-7722**.

Homeowner's Night gets new hours

The name and hours of Homeowner's Night are getting an upgrade. It's been a long time since we restricted one of the Bureau of Building's most popular programs to homeowners, so we thought the name needed to reflect its real purpose. Homeowner's Night is now called Residential Permit Night.

The second and more important change is in our hours. The Permit Center doors will be locked at 7:30 p.m., although staff will continue to serve customers until 8:00 p.m. This means everyone who comes in before the doors are locked will be helped. We hope this will lessen the disappointment of customers who come in just before we close, hoping to get their permits.

The Permit Center will still close at 2:00 p.m. on Thursdays and reopen at 5:00 p.m.

Proposed legislation would expand Facilities Permit Program

In 1998, the Bureau of Buildings launched its Facilities Permit Program (FPP). It has been an overwhelming success, but it has limitations that would be reduced, if a bill now before the Oregon Legislature passes.

The 1993 legislation, which allowed the city to create the program, did not clearly define how it would work. After some experience, it became clear that the definition of "new construction" in the Oregon Administrative Rules, OAR 918-1000, limits the size and type of project that can be carried out under the program.

For example, tenant improvements are restricted to less than 25% of a floor space and the number of occupants who can be displaced during construction is less than 25%. Many customers, who have signed up for the program, often have work which exceeds these limitations.

If the bill passes, it will amend ORS 455.190 with a revised definition of "new construction" for the purpose of installations under the FPP. New construction **would not** include maintenance and repair work, interior tenant remodeling projects, accessibility upgrades and changes of occupancy from a higher to a lower occupancy risk division in commercial, industrial and government buildings.

The FPP currently allows owners and managers of large buildings and complexes to do minor tenant improvements and some minor maintenance and repair work without the need of individual permits. They work with the same inspector on all projects for plan review and inspections and are billed monthly for services rendered. The program was the first piece of Blueprint 2000 to be implemented.

Plan examiners get up to code April 1

The Bureau of Buildings plan review staff will be upgrading their knowledge in an all-day code change class on April 1. This means they won't be available to take in or review your building permit plans in the Permit Center or on the 9th floor.

The Permit Center will be open as usual, so you'll be able to get help from Planning, Document Control and Transportation and with miscellaneous permits. And there will be no change in Residential Permit Night, which will open at 5:00 p.m.

Spring classes offer the latest on codes

The 1999 Spring Educational Institute, sponsored by the Oregon Building Officials Association and Code Officials Education Consortium of Oregon, offers more than a couple of courses of interest to design professionals and contractors. The institute, March 16-19, at the Eugene Hilton, Eugene, will give attendees the opportunity for extensive coursework — two full days — on Means of Egress.

One-day courses include:

- 1997 UBC Update/1998 OSSC Amendments
- Post-Earthquake Safety Evaluations
- 1997 UBC Earthquake Regulations
- 1997 UBC Structural Update
- Floodplain Management and Floodproofing Techniques
- NEC/Overcurrent Protection
- Practical Applications of Plumbing Theory
- APA Wood Materials and Design.

Chuck Williams, staff engineer of ICBO's Northwest Regional Office, will teach both parts of the ICBO Means of Egress course. The two-day course is designed for architects, building designers and plans examiners. An additional $25 fee is required for ICBO workbooks.

The 1997 UBC Update/1998 OSSC Amendments course, taught by Steve Winstead, branch manager of Carl, Milef and Associates, Inc., will cover nonstructural provisions of the 1998 Oregon Structural Specialty Code. Differences between the 1996 and 1998 codes will be emphasized.

Daily fees are $125 for members and $150 for non-members. Fees for all ICBO courses are $150/member and $175/non-member and include the $25 workbook fee. The fee for the entire 4-day event is $350/member and $425/non-member, plus $25 for each ICBO course.

Continuing Education Credits are available. For registration information, call the OBOA Office, **(503) 873-1157**.

If you miss the OBOA Spring Educational Institute, you'll get a second chance to attend the 1997 UBC Update/1998 OSSC Amendments course. Bureau of Buildings and the Code Officials Education Consortium of Oregon is sponsoring a one-day seminar, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., April 1, at the Days Inn-City Center, Portland.

Registration deadline is March 29, but class size is limited, so register early. The fee is $50 and includes lunch, refreshments and course handouts.

For registration information, call Stan Scotton, Bureau of Buildings, **(503) 823-7599**, or Kylia Hammon, **(503) 823-7351**.

Code changed to stop "changing image" signs

Whether you think changing-image signs are unsightly, dangerous or just another way to advertise, the Portland City Council unanimously passed an ordinance on February 11 to stop their advance onto Portland's urban landscape.

The ordinance amended Title 32, the city's sign code. New language in the code defines a changing image sign as "any sign which, through the use of moving structural elements, flashing or sequential lights, lighting elements or other automated method, results in movement, the appearance of movement or change of sign image or text."

Signs, which were properly permitted by the city and were already in place when the ordinance went into effect, are "grandfathered" in and may continue to be maintained and repaired. The only alterations now allowed to these signs are simple ones and those that would transform them into static signs, without changing images.

Except for simple changes, an alterations permit is needed to make changes to signs. For example, no permit is needed to repaint an existing sign or install new face panels on electric signs to change a name, but a permit is required to paint the sign larger or change lighting from fluorescent to neon.

Commissioner Charlie Hales has agreed to convene a group of interested persons to discuss the issues of changing-image signs in greater depth and determine if there are compromises to which sign owners, residents and the city can agree.

If you have questions or to request a copy of the ordinance, call Kermit Robinson, **(503) 823-7619**, or email **robinsonk@ci.portland.or.us**.

Coming soon: 1-hour construction class

John Lappe Architects will be offering a class on one-hour wood frame construction on April 21 at the Janzten Beach Doubletree Inn. The time is still to be determined. Credit will be available to AIA members. For more information about times and registration, call John Lappe Architects, **(503) 243-2837**.

How To Reach Us

All Area Code 503 – Monday through Friday – 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
(e) = Electronic Messaging System...please leave detailed information...your call will be returned.
While browsing the internet, visit our home pages — **www.ci.portland.or.us/buildings** and **www.europa.com/pdxplan**

BUILDINGS — Administration	823-7308
Building Code Questions	823-7310 (e)(press 5)
Fire Code Questions	823-7366
Blueprint 2000	823-7822
24-hour Inspection Request Recording	823-7000 (e)
Inspection Section — 1 & 2 Family Dwellings	823-7388
Commercial { Plumbing	823-7302
Commercial { Building & Mechanical	823-7303
Commercial { Electrical	823-7304
Permit Center	823-7310
Permit Center FAX	823-3018
Appointment for One & Two-family Building Permits FAX request only	823-3018
Permit Information (how to apply & fees)	
Combination, Building & Street Use	823-7385
All Others	823-7363
Permit Status	823-7357
Permit Records	
Document Control/Current Applications	823-7357 (e)
Microfilm Records/Issued Permits	823-7385
Inspection Records/Finalled Permits	823-7660
Building Record Center FAX	823-7994
Septic Tanks/Cesspools	823-7247
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	
Development Engineering	823-7761
Construction & Demolition Recycling Info	823-7107
Industrial Source Control	823-7585
FIRE BUREAU	
Development Standards, Sprinklers, Alarms Rich Butcher	823-3802
Flammable Liquids, Tanks, Hazardous Processes Doug Friant	823-3935
NEWSLETTER CONTACT - Ann Kohler	823-7886
PLANNING & ZONING – Information	823-7526

TRANSPORTATION	
Development Requirements and/or Right-of-Way Policy Glenn Pierce	823-7079
Minor Partitions Cherrie Eudaly	823-7081
Local Improvement Districts Lola Gailey	823-7563
Street Permit Engineering Jerry Markesino	823-7057
Transportation Plan Review Alex Bejarano	823-7575
Systems Development Charge Joyce Reyman	823-6108
TREES (7a.m. - 3:30 p.m.)	
Pruning/Planning/Removal Permits	
N / NE – Joe Hintz	823-4025
NW / SW – Charley Davis	823-4523
Southeast – Ned Sodja	823-4440
Tree Cutting Ordinance Myles Black	823-4018
Transportation Improvements Joe Hintz	823-4025
Commercial Planning and Development Vincent Salomone	823-4011
WATER	
Water Service Information	823-7368
Hydrant Permits	823-7368
Plan Review – Tom Chambers	823-7477
Vern Freeman	823-7489
Subdivision Planning – Hill Hampton	823-7485
Backflow Valve Installation Requirements Dave Barrigan	823-7479

A Bi-monthly Publication of the City of Portland Development Review Team

Commissioner Charlie Hales, 823-4682

Bureau of Buildings 823-7300 Margaret Mahoney, Director

Bureau of Planning 823-7700 David Knowles, Director

Office of Transportation 823-7185 Vic Rhodes, Director

Fire Bureau 823-3700 Jim Crawford, Fire Marshal

Water Bureau 823-7404 Mike Rosenberger, Administrator

Bureau of Environmental Services 823-7740 Dean Marriott, Director

Bureau of Parks & Recreation Forestry Division 823-4489 Brian McNerney, Urban Forestry Manager

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We want to hear from you!

If you have comments about the Plans Examiner newsletter or have suggestions for stories you'd like to see covered in the future, please call Ann Kohler, **(503) 823-7886**.

The City of Portland's Permit Center is located in the Portland Building at 1120 SW 5th Ave. The Center is open weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except Thursdays when the Center closes at 2 p.m. The Center is open for homeowners and residential contractors every Thursday night from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

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Development Review Team
PO Box 8120
Portland OR 97207-8120

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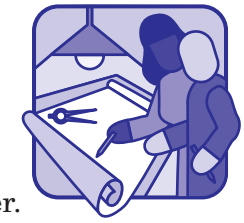
City of Portland
Office of Planning and Development Review
March 1999

Top 21 tips for easier permitting

Please take time to read and use the following tips to help you turn in complete information to get your application accepted the first time around. You may not need all the tips for your project, but it's still worth your time to read them.

1. You'll need to bring in four complete **sets** of plans, which are dark enough to be copied.

2. One of the drawings, in your complete set of plans, is the site plan. It must show **everything on and relating to the site**. It's important to see all the elements on a single drawing to determine how they fit together.



3. Site plans need to show the relationship of all uses, activities and improvements and utilities on the lot and the adjacent streets and properties. **The city has specific site plan handouts for residential and commercial development**. Be sure to get one and use it. Items that are often missing, especially on commercial plans, include:
   - Where the buildings are located on the property;
   - Street names and locations;
   - Lot dimensions and property lines, which match the legal description;
   - Elevations and slopes on all sides of the property;
   - Elevations on all sides of the structure.

4. Non-single-family remodels, tenant improvements or other improvements, when the value of the project exceeds $25,000 or there are parking changes, may require upgrades to landscaping and vehicle and bicycle parking. A complete site plan, showing parking and landscaping detail, is required. For residential remodels, where a garage or driveway is being altered, check with Planning to be sure you have allowed the required space for parking on your property.

5. You can make an appointment to submit your application. For a new single-family residence or duplex, fax your request to the Permit Center, **(503) 823-3018**. For commercial appointments, call Glenn Havener, **(503) 823-4198**. With an appointment, you won't have to wait in line and you can pick a time to fit your schedule.

6. Always bring the property's legal description. Even if the property doesn't have an address, it will always have a legal description. Your site's legal and tax account number are on your tax statement.

7. When requesting a revision to an issued permit, bring in a copy of the original approved plans. Being able to compare the approved and revised plans greatly facilitates our ability to review your revision quickly. The city's copies of the approved plans (including microfilm) are not always available.

8. Commercial contractors, please remember when you are applying for a mechanical permit, bring three sets of separate mechanical drawings. This is as easy as copying the mechanical pages from your complete set of plans.

9. If your project is going through, or has gone through, a land use review, bring us information showing that the final decision has been recorded. Make sure your application includes how all conditions of approval have been met. If your project is a land division, applications for construction on individual lots cannot be accepted until the final plat has been approved by the city and has been delivered to the county for recording. Permits cannot be issued until the final plat is recorded.

10. If you're changing the shape, size or height of a structure, you must turn in a complete set of plans for the site. This includes retaining walls, outbuildings and fences.

11. If you anticipate being able to have your permit for a tenant improvement or alteration issued the same day that you bring in your application, it's important that you don't wait until late in the day. Even if you're well prepared, it still takes time to set up the application in our computer system, review your plans and process the permits and fees. To be on the safe side, allow a minimum of three hours.

12. If you are given an instruction sheet or handout for your project, be sure to use it. It will give you specific information about what's needed to complete your application.

13. Know the value and the square footage of your project. How much is it going to cost to complete?

14. Is your job part of a larger project? We'll need to know that when you apply for your permit.

15. It's important that you talk with someone in the Planning Bureau before designing your project and submitting your application. Get zoning and land use information in advance by calling **(503) 823-7526**, or by coming into the Permit Center.

16. If you are not the contractor, be sure to bring the contractor's name, phone number and contractor's board (CCB) number with its expiration date.

17. If the property ownership has changed in the past six months, bring proof of the new ownership.

18. Have your check, made out to City of Portland, ready to pay for your permits. Leave the amount blank. We'll tell you the correct amount.

19. When demolishing a structure, a site plan is required, showing lot dimensions and location of structures on the lot, including setbacks and streets. You must also bring a letter of approval from the property owner.

20. Be prepared to provide a clear and complete description of the proposed work.

21. If we reject your permit application because your information is incomplete, this doesn't mean you'll be turned away without getting help. We'll explain what's missing and where you can find the information. When you have completed your application, resubmit the plans and documents to the intake technician.

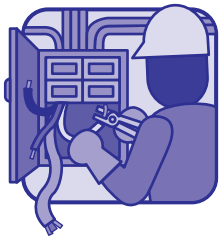
Permit Center Hours

- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday — 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Thursday — 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Thursday — 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. — *Residential Permit Night for residential customers only.*

Please note: Transportation-related permits, such as for neighborhood parking and hooded meters, are **not** available on Residential Permit Night. For these, come during regular daytime business hours.

Where to find help before you come to the Permit Center

The brochure rack, right next to the Permit Center's entrance, has many self-help brochures for residential remodeling. Many take a step-by-step approach to help you get your project done right.



Getting here and where to park

The Permit Center is located conveniently on the Transit Mall and within blocks of MAX. We don't recommend the meter parking near the Portland Building, because it doesn't allow enough time to transact your business. However, meters are free after 6:00 p.m. Your best bets are the parking garages in the area. See the "Smart Park" brochure in the rack outside the Permit Center for locations.

When we move to our new building in mid-1999, parking will be available in the building and at the long-term meters in the area. The new location is also on the Transit Mall.