

# THE PLANS Examiner

Volume 5, Number 2

City of Portland Development Review Team

November 1998

## Land Division Code Rewrite Project enters final phase

The Second Proposed Draft of the Land Division Code was published on September 28, after more than two years and many revisions. Now, the process of public comment and review has begun — again.

During the first week of October, the Bureau of Planning held two open houses to present and discuss the draft. The Planning Commission held its first public hearing on October 27. Now comes a series of Planning Commission work sessions: November 10, December 8 and December 15.

If the response to the proposed code is as positive as anticipated, the City Council could see the proposed draft code as early as January, 1999.

The Land Division Code, also known as Title 34, guides the first major step of any development — how land is divided into lots and streets and how utility services are integrated into the development. The new and improved draft of Title 34, instead of being a series of amendments, is a completely new code, written in clearer, more understandable language.

It also recommends changes, both large and small, to existing rules and practices. Major changes include:

- A new approach to calculating density which may allow slightly higher density on some sites than the current code. It may also remove barriers to providing connected streets and amenities, such as sidewalks, and make it easier to avoid developing on landslide- or flood-prone lands;

- Earlier public notice and involvement in the review process. This is designed to complement Blueprint 2000, with more required pre-application conferences and a neighborhood contact requirement. The focus is not necessarily on increased public involvement, but on more effective public involvement.

Smaller changes, which are nonetheless significant, include:

- More flexibility in lot dimensions and housing types — a Planned Unit Development-style approach;
- More specific requirements for flood- or landslide-prone sites;
- Meshing the existing tree ordinance with tree conservation efforts;
- Updating street design standards and creating a process to develop and adopt street plans;
- Clearly stating whether decisions are technical or land-use in nature;
- Coordinating the code with updates being done in stormwater management.

The complete Land Division Code Rewrite Project Report is available now through the Bureau of Planning. More than 70 copies of the 334-page document have already been distributed to interested individuals and groups. If you would like a free copy, call (503) 823-7700. It will be mailed to you, or you may pick it up on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor of the Portland Building.

If you have specific questions about the project, call Bob Glascock, (503) 823-7845.

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



### INSIDE

- 2 - TRACS ON TRACK
- 3 - RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STDS.
- 3 - BLUEPRINT 2000 UPDATE
- 4 - GAS EXPRESS; INSPECTIONS
- 5 - POSITIONS AVAILABLE

## New permit tracking software being customized for Blueprint 2000

It's called Tracking, Review and Construction System — TRACS, for short — and it will take the system of handling permit applications into a whole new dimension, from start to finish. TRACS is to be a key component of Blueprint 2000. When it goes online in July, 1999, it will allow all seven bureaus involved in the review process equal access to permit application details and status, and it will display groups of permits required for projects.

Data and electronic correspondence will be accessible to an entire team of plan reviewers simultaneously. Process management features will help the City coordinate management of complex projects. And you will be able to make a single call to find out the status of your permits.

“Once we get this new software working for us, the City will be able to offer more comprehensive project management,” says Margaret Mahoney, Bureau of Buildings director. “After a customer submits a complete application, the responsibility for tracking their permits through our review process will be ours.”

Right now, TRACS is in its initial development stage. City staff members and international computer software consultants, Synertech and CDSC, are working together to determine the information that will be needed to accurately follow permit activity from the early assistance stages through final inspections. The features will be built-in to the software and then tested for effectiveness. These consultants are also working on similar systems in Bellevue and Snohomish County, WA.

The beauty of the new software is its flexibility. Layers can be added to the initial design to allow the system to handle other construction-related data in addition to permit tracking.

Initially, the system will link with the City's Geographical Information System (GIS), allowing immediate access to property information, such as zoning, elevation, sewer locations and E-zones.

Interactive Voice Response (IVR) will also be added to allow inspectors to call in inspection results from the field. You'll be able to access the results by phone, reducing time-consuming travel to visit sites.



**Reaching for the roof** — New Development Services Building on SW 4th Avenue climbs toward completion in 1999.

## More restrictions on retail to be considered for industrial zones

The Planning Commission is set to hear a proposal on November 10, which will further restrict retail and office uses in the city's industrial and employment zones. The Bureau of Planning is proposing more protection for these zones through changes to the city's Zoning Code.

The sizes of office and retail uses are already limited in areas zoned EG1, EG2, IG1, IG2 and IH. The latest proposal complies with the region's Urban Growth Management Functional Plan, which requires cities and counties to restrict retail uses in industrial and employment areas. The regulations were also drafted in response to concerns from the city's industrial business and neighborhood associations.

The proposed changes spell out when a conditional use may be allowed for office and retail space in certain industrial and employment zones, as well as additional prohibitions on office and retail space, based on square footage.

The Bureau of Planning report on Commercial Restrictions in Industrial and Employment Zones became available on October 27. To request a copy, call **(503) 823-7700**. After November 3, you may call this number to get the specific time of the hearing, which will be held in Room C, Portland Building, 1120 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Ave., Portland.

For more information about this project, call Jill Grenda, **(503) 823-6876**, or Susan Hartnett, **(503) 823-7984**.

## Proposed residential design standards to Planning Commission

After more than a year of development and public discussion, a set of proposed Base Zone Design Standards for most new residential development will go before the Planning Commission on November 24. If approved, new 1- and 2-family construction, manufactured housing and attached single-family dwellings will be required to place more emphasis on the entrance to the dwelling and less on the garage.

Concern over certain new construction and its affect on the overall livability of Portland's neighborhoods is the underlying reason for the new standards. Houses where the garage dominates the facade and the dwelling sits toward the back of the lot tend to keep people isolated. And many homes now being built in the city don't offer a clear view of the street, opening up opportunities for crimes to go unwitnessed.

The new standards will relate to main entrances, porches and balconies, street-facing windows, garages and driveway spacing. They would be added to the development standards that already exist in the Zoning Code, where such things as setbacks, height and lot coverage are regulated. Homes to be built on flag lots or in RF and R20, the city's lowest density zones, are exempt from the proposed standards.

When implemented, projects will be checked for compliance during the permit process. If the standards aren't met, you may apply for an adjustment through a land use review, and possibly have a standard waived or modified, depending on the circumstances.

On October 26, the most recently revised version of the Base Zone Design Standards came off the presses. It incorporates the public input received during the last year. To request a free copy, call the Bureau of Planning, (503) 823-7700.

Public testimony will be heard at a Planning Commission meeting on November 24, followed by two Planning Commission work sessions on December 8 and 15. Though public testimony won't be heard at the work sessions, all are welcome to attend. A decision by the Planning Commission is expected after the second work session.

For specific times and locations of the public hearing and work sessions, please call a week before the dates. For more information about the project, call Mark Bello, (503) 823-7810, or Julia Gisler, (503) 823-7624.

## Blueprint 2000 moves ahead

As with anything new, the processes that will make Blueprint 2000 (BP2K) a fully operational program are being pilot tested and re-tested. Right now, the focus is on new single-family residential permits. These pilot tests will continue until July, 1999.

Thirty permit applications for new single-family homes, submitted between September 23 and September 30, were divided into two groups:

- ① half were put into a "control" group, to be watched as they move through the traditional process;
- ② the rest were given to a process manager for more personal handling, also called "process management."

The applicants in the process management group were introduced to the program by Mike Hayakawa, one of BP2K's process managers. He continues to be their main contact throughout the permit process. He helped identify potential problems at the front end of the process; he collects information from the applicant and works with the bureaus involved in reviewing the application. When items are missing from an application, Hayakawa compiles the list of needed information and forwards it to the applicant as one package. All the permits needed to complete a project are coordinated by one person, reducing the need for the applicant to deal with several different plan reviewers in different bureaus.

Once the initial pilot test is complete, the applicants from both groups will be interviewed to determine what worked well and what can be improved. The final results will point the way to using process management in all aspects of development review and the BP2K goal of creating a seamless process for all types of development.

---

## Announcing...

### BP2K brown bag lunch meetings

To familiarize city staff and interested persons with Blueprint 2000, the BP2K team is hosting a series of brown-bag-lunch speakers in November and December. The meetings are open to all and are scheduled from noon to 1 p.m. in the Portland Building. The dates are November 5 and 19, and December 3 and 17.

To find out the speaker of the week, specific location and the topic, call Donna Ault, (503) 823-5521, the week of the meeting.

## Heating up with the Gas Express

The Gas Express hit Portland's streets in March and already it's a huge success. The program, created to reduce furnace downtime when converting to gas, has more than 70 licensed heating contractors participating. With the first full winter heating season starting, the program is about to get a real test.

If you're a heating contractor, you can join the Gas Express by attending a free one- to two-hour orientation at NW Natural. After you've completed the orientation, you may call NW Natural directly after a furnace installation, when you're ready to do the air test and turn on the gas meter. Then, you have 30 days in which to get the installation inspected by the city.

Gas Express, a joint program between the City and NW Natural, cuts down on the number of inspection trips and gets the furnace up and running more quickly. When it's cold, this feature is a real selling point for customers converting to gas.

To sign up for the next Gas Express orientation, call Al Baracco, NW Natural, (503) 721-2465. You'll be contacted with the date and time as soon as there are enough participants for a class.

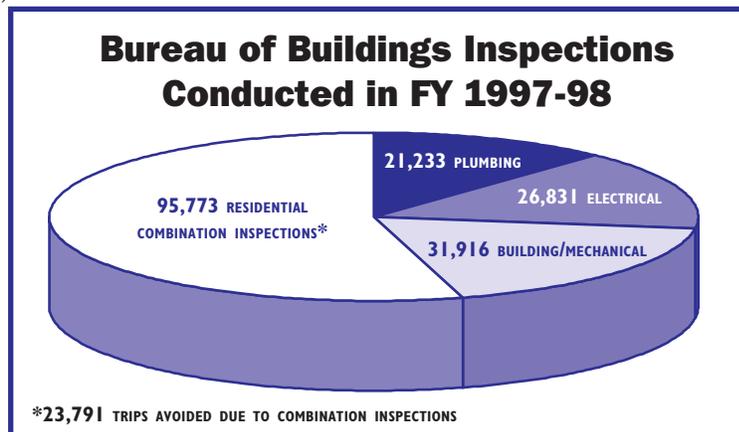
## Tell customers what to expect when they request an inspection

If you're a contractor or subcontractor, and you call to request a residential inspection, you have a pretty good idea of what to expect. You know that if you call (503) 823-7000 by 7 a.m., it's likely that we'll be out to inspect your job that day. You know that you can request morning or afternoon, and we'll make every effort to get there, but we can't really guarantee the time slot. And if you have concerns or need to tell us something specific about your schedule or the area to be inspected, you know you can call between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. and speak directly to your inspector.

But if you're having your customer call in the inspection request, they probably need a little coaching in advance. Please tell them that it's very difficult for the inspector to get to the job site at a specific time. Let them know that they can speak to an inspector and ask questions — **only** if they call (503) 823-7388 between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. Our support staff will help them identify the inspector

they need to speak to, even if it's someone who is substituting during vacation or sick leave.

Your customers will be more satisfied with the process, if they know what to expect before they call for that important inspection.



## Reminder...

### October 1 deadline for work in Balch Creek/NW Hills

With the fall and winter rains right around the corner, it's time to stop ground-disturbing work in the Balch Creek and NW Hills Environmental Zones. All exposed earth must now be covered, in accordance with your approved landscape plans. All construction, including sewer, water and utility trenching, that exposes soil to directly to stormwater is prohibited between October 1 and April 30.

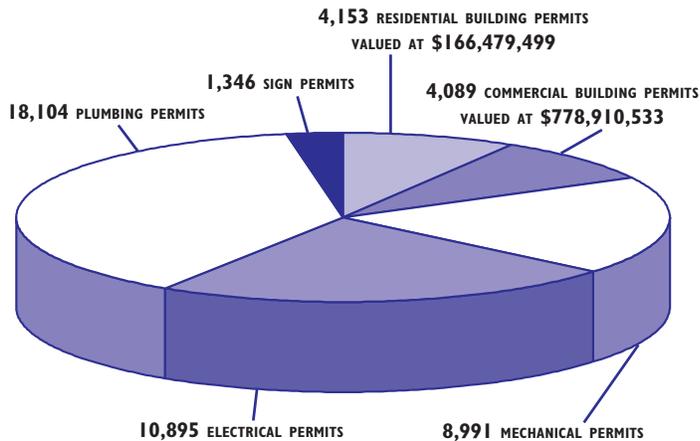
If you have questions about regulations for the Balch Creek Watershed, call George Helm, (503) 823-7201, or the Bureau of Planning, (503) 823-7526.

## More residential combination inspectors certified

In October, four more inspectors became fully certified to conduct residential combination inspections. Jim Jones, Darrell George, Nora Mullane and Steve Ault are the latest inspectors to be authorized to do mechanical, plumbing, structural and electrical inspections. Now, 60% of the City's residential inspectors are certified in all four specialties.

Three more classes are in process in various specialties. According to Jeff Eldredge, combination inspections supervisor, the training program is right on schedule. Though some fully-certified inspectors have taken positions in other jurisdictions, new inspectors are being trained quickly to keep things moving.

## Bureau of Buildings Permits Issued in FY 1997-98



### Reminder:

#### Code and Program Guides still available by subscription

If you're looking for the latest code interpretations or want to find out about specific programs and procedures, subscribing to the Code and Program Guide series is a worthwhile investment.

For just \$65, you'll get a binder, printed divider pages and the latest information on building codes. Code Guides answer frequently-asked questions in an easy-to-follow format. Program Guides go into greater detail, often describing steps in a process and including the necessary forms to get you started.

Once you subscribe, you can renew each year for \$15. The renewal entitles you to all the updates and additions to your binder. You'll also receive new interpretations as they become available.

To request a subscription order form, call **(503) 823-7308**.

### She knows the code

Lori Graham has joined the Bureau of Buildings staff as a program coordinator. She'll be working with Kermit Robinson, code development specialist, writing and updating Code and Program Guides and handling City code-related issues. Graham came to Portland from the Washington State Building Code Council, Olympia, where she dealt with state codes and represented the agency on the national level.

## Positions Available

### Building Plan Examiner II

- Salary range: \$22.10 – \$25.59 per hr.
- Reviews building permit applications, building plans, plot plans and specifications for erection or alteration of commercial and complex residential structures.
- State of Oregon Plans Examiner certifications required.

### Building Inspector

- Salary range: \$21.12 – \$24.45 per hr.
- Inspects commercial and/or residential buildings for structural and/or mechanical code compliance.
- State of Oregon Structural Inspector certifications required.
- Commercial Inspection positions also require Mechanical certifications and are paid an additional 80 cents per hour.

### Electrical Inspector

- Salary range: \$21.12 – \$24.45 per hr.
- Inspects electrical installations in commercial and/or residential buildings for code compliance.
- State of Oregon Electrical Inspector certifications required.

### Plumbing Inspector

- Salary range: \$21.12 – \$24.45 per hr.
- Inspects plumbing in commercial and/or residential buildings for code compliance.
- State of Oregon Plumbing Inspector certifications required.

To receive an application or to request information on how to obtain State of Oregon certifications, call the Bureau of Buildings, **(503) 823-7423**.

Applications will be accepted until all vacancies are filled.

The City of Portland is an EEO/AA employer.

# 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](http://www.ci.portland.or.us/buildings) and [www.europa.com/pdxplan](http://www.europa.com/pdxplan)

<b>BUILDINGS</b> — Administration	823-7308	<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	
Building Code Questions	823-7310 (e)(press 5)	Development Requirements and/or Right-of-Way Policy	
Fire Code Questions	823-7366	Glenn Pierce	823-7079
<b>24-hour Inspection Request Recording</b>	823-7000 (e)	Minor Partitions	
Inspection Section		Cherrie Eudaly	823-7081
Commercial {	1 & 2 Family Dwellings	823-7388	
	Plumbing	823-7302	
	Building & Mechanical	823-7303	
	Electrical	823-7304	
Permit Center	823-7310	Local Improvement Districts	
Permit Center FAX	823-3018	Lola Gailey	823-7563
Appointment for One & Two-family Building Permits		Street Permit Engineering	
FAX request only	823-3018	Jerry Markesino	823-7057
Permit Information (how to apply & fees)		Transportation Plan Review	
Combination, Building & Street Use	823-7385	Alex Bejarano	823-7575
All Others	823-7363	Systems Development Charge	
<b>Permit Status</b>	823-7357	Joyce Reyman	823-6108
<b>Permit Records</b>			
Document Control/Current Applications	823-7357 (e)	<b>TREES (7a.m. - 3:30 p.m.)</b>	
Microfilm Records/Issued Permits	823-7385	Pruning/Planning/Removal Permits	
Inspection Records/Finalled Permits	823-7660	N / NE – Joe Hintz	823-4025
Building Record Center FAX	823-7994	NW / SW – Charley Davis	823-4523
Septic Tanks/Cesspools	823-7247	Southeast – Ned Sodja	823-4440
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>		Tree Cutting Ordinance	
Development Engineering	823-7761	Myles Black	823-4018
Construction & Demolition Recycling Info	823-7107	Transportation Improvements	
Industrial Source Control	823-7585	Joe Hintz	823-4025
<b>FIRE BUREAU</b>		Commercial Planning and Development	
Development Standards, Sprinklers, Alarms		Vincent Salomone	823-4011
Rich Butcher	823-3802	<b>WATER</b>	
Flammable Liquids, Tanks, Hazardous Processes		Water Service Information	823-7368
Doug Friant	823-3935	Hydrant Permits	823-7368
<b>NEWSLETTER CONTACT</b> - Ann Kohler	823-7886	Plan Review – Tom Chambers	823-7477
<b>PLANNING &amp; ZONING</b> – Information	823-7526	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**

**Commissioners**  
Gretchen Miller Kafoury, 823-4151  
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



Printed on recycled paper.

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.

**We want to hear from you!**

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 8 p.m.

**BULK RATE**  
**AUTO**  
**U.S. POSTAGE PAID**  
**Portland, OR**  
**Permit No. 653**

**City of Portland**  
**Development Review Team**  
**PO Box 8120**  
**Portland OR 97207-8120**

