



The Plans Examiner

BDS ITAP Project Update

The Bureau of Development Services Information Technology Advancement Project Team (ITAP) and Managers continue to work diligently in moving forward to purchase our new Accela software, allowing new business practices to be developed and implemented. The statement of work and contract with Accela and the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the State are reviewed and we hope to go to Council with an ordinance by the end of June. Council's approval of these two foundational aspects of the project will be the next major project milestones.

Project Work Plan

Council's approval of the Accela contract and IGA with the State will allow us to develop a detailed project work plan. As the work plan is developed, we will share relevant aspects with stakeholder groups. We understand that everyone is interested to learn how the Accela software and associated hardware will change our current processes. We appreciate your patience as we move through these final stages of the project start-up and will continue to share new information as it becomes available.

If you have questions about the ITAP project, please contact Hank McDonald the ITAP Manager, 503-823-9258 or Hank.McDonald@portland.oregon.gov.

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BDS Fee Increases

Background

BDS collects fees under various fee schedules to fund inspections, plan review, permit issuance, land use review, customer assistance, and other functions. Since 1988, construction-related programs operated by BDS (approximately 90% of bureau functions) have been primarily self-supporting. BDS achieves this through a combination of strategies that allow the bureau to respond to increasing costs while being innovative and proactive in meeting changing customer needs.

- Repay a \$1.5 million loan from the City secured to ensure continued operations during the recession.
- Pursue cost recovery for services through fee increases.

Fee Increase Overview

BDS is proposing to increase most fees (except for Environmental Soils) by 8%. Due to significant historical funding issues, Environmental Soils fees will increase by 70%.

- Building permits (8%)
- Mechanical permits (8%)
- Electrical permits (8%)
- Plumbing permits (8%)
- Facilities Permit Program (8%)
- Site Development permits (5%)
- Environmental Soils Program (70%)
- Signs Program (8%)
- Zoning Program (5%)
- Noise Control Program (8%)
- Neighborhood Inspections (8%)
- Land Use Services (8%)
- Field Issued Remodel (FIR) Program hourly rate (8%)

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BDS Fee Increases Continued from page 1

If Fees are NOT Increased...

While BDS recognizes the impact that fee increases have on its customers, particularly in the current economic climate, moderate fee increases will be necessary in order to provide financial stability for BDS and ensure an acceptable level of services to bureau customers. **Not** increasing fees would have significant impact on both the bureau and our customers and stakeholders:

- **Service levels** would remain at unacceptably low levels, hindering development at a time when it's desperately needed.
- Bureau **reserves** would remain at critically low levels.
- **Cost recovery** efforts would slip.

Next Steps / For Further Information

The Portland City Council will review and listen

to public testimony regarding the proposed fee increases **at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 18, 2011** in City Council chambers. The Council will vote on the changes on Wednesday, May 25, 2011. If the ordinance is passed the fee increases will go into effect on July 1, 2011.

Multnomah County fees will also be affected, since the County contracts with the City of Portland for inspection and plan review services in the unincorporated areas within the Portland urban services boundary. The County Board of Commissioners will review the proposed fee increases on **Thursday, June 2, 2011** in the County Board Room, 501 SE Hawthorne, first floor.

The complete fee schedules will be available online in June at www.portlandonline.com/bds.

If you have questions about the fee increases, please contact Denise Kleim, BDS Administrative Services Manager, at (503) 823-7338 or denise.kleim@portland-oregon.gov.

Budget & Financial Plan Update

BDS submitted its fiscal year (FY) 2011-12 Requested Budget and 5-Year Financial Plan on January 31st. Both documents provide updates on BDS's financial status and highlight the bureau's balanced approach to addressing both its financial and staffing / service level issues.

Since the staff reductions in 2009 and 2010, BDS's financial status has stabilized, though the bureau's reserve fund remains low and projections call for slow growth in permit revenues for the next couple years. This modest revenue growth, combined with anticipated fee increases, should provide BDS with the ability to add staff in FY 2011-12.

BDS's budget includes two requests to add staff:

- A request for authorization to use \$1.5 million in anticipated permit revenues to add 13 positions in high-priority service areas throughout the bureau, along with 7 vacant positions to be carried over from the current budget. The bureau will continue to track revenues closely and will fill positions only as we have confidence in sustained revenue flow.
- A request for \$668,934 in one-time General Fund support to improve services and address chronic funding shortages by adding 5.5 FTE to the Neighbor-

hood Inspections, LUS, Noise Control, and Signs programs. BDS's Financial Plan shows that bureau revenues will support these positions in future years. If this request is approved, these positions will be filled in July because the General Fund monies will be immediately available.

At City Council's direction, the budget also reflects a 1.5% General Fund cut in the bureau's total General Fund appropriation, which we are recommending against implementing.

Other key steps in the budget process include:

- May 19th – City Council holds public hearing on budget.
- June 16th – Council adopts the final budget.
- July 1st – FY 2011-12 budget goes into effect.

You can find all of the bureau's budget and financial plan documents, plus information about the BDS Budget Advisory Committee, on the BDS website at www.portlandonline.com/bds/index.cfm?c=53730.

If you have questions about the BDS budget or any of the budget documents, please contact BDS Administrative Services Manager Denise Kleim at (503) 823-7338.

Residential Seismic Strengthening

We are pleased to announce the Residential Seismic Strengthening Program for one and two family residential buildings. Earthquakes are sudden and without warning. Strong ground shaking can cause severe damage to buildings, cracking walls, toppling chimneys or even shifting buildings off their foundation. Older buildings and homes are especially at risk because they often lack adequate anchorage to their foundation and were not designed to resist the shaking and movement expected from earthquakes today.

The Residential Seismic Strengthening Program is intended to provide homeowners and contractors a simple guide to evaluating existing homes to determine if certain improvements would be beneficial in order to reduce the risk of earthquake damage.

"Providing homeowners streamlined and simple programs to improve the safety of their home is something that we strive to do," stated Paul Scarlett, Bureau of Development Services Director. "This program is a great way to do just that, especially in light of the recent earthquakes happening around the world."

The standards set forth in the program are based on FEMA recommendations and provisions of the 2006 International Existing Building Code and focus on how to anchor the home to its foundation and strengthen cripple walls, if necessary.

A [Residential Seismic Strengthening Program](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds) webpage has been developed and can be found under *Quick Links* at www.portlandoregon.gov/bds.

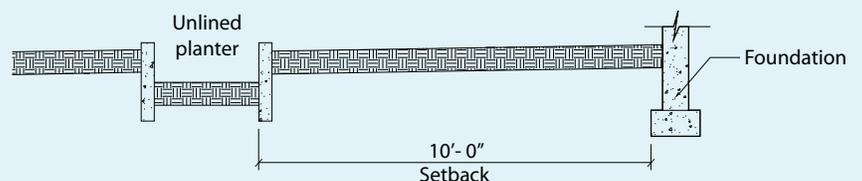
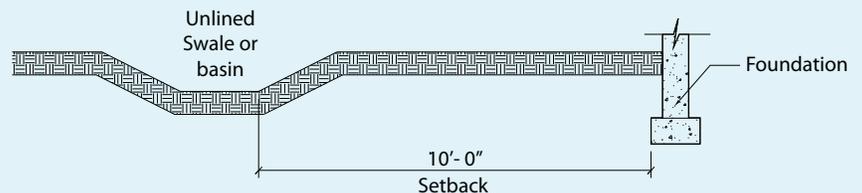
For more information about the Bureau of Development Services and the program and services it provides to the City of Portland please visit www.portlandoregon.gov/bds.

Any Residential Seismic questions please contact Jim Nicks, Inspection Manager 503.823.1054 or Jim.Nicks@portlandoregon.gov.

Do you know?

How the required setback is measured between a building foundation and a vegetated stormwater facility? While the 2008 Stormwater Management Manual indicates that the setback is measured from the center of the facility, we actually measure from where the stormwater accumulates, from the facility's low point.

We use the low point as it provides flexibility to the "swale" and "basin" locations. In flat bottomed "planters," where the low point is at the edge of the facility, setbacks are measured from the edge, rather than the center. When setbacks cannot be met, lined facilities remain an option.



If you need more help on stormwater vegetated facilities, call Bureau of Environmental Services. You can leave a message on our hotline message center at 503-823-7761 and we will call you back within a day.

CORNER

GREEN BUILDING

Creating a Recycled Concrete Patio or Path



From recent inquiries to the Regional Green Building Hotline

You will need:

- Broken concrete chunks or slabs of same thickness (minimum 6" wide to maximum 18" wide)
- Quarter-minus angular gravel or sand
- Kneeling pad
- Mason's line or leveling string
- Shovel
- Mallet
- Gloves
- Long level
- 18" – 24" length of scrap 2x4
- String and stakes or flexible metal edging
- Weed fabric
- Broom
- Bucket
- Rake
- Plate compactor

Tips

- One cubic yard of gravel (27 cubic feet) covers 162 square feet at a depth of 2 inches.
- Existing concrete paths or slabs are usually three to four inches thick.
- Old, aged concrete has a patina and looks more interesting than newer concrete. Concrete chunks can be stained with environmentally friendly stains as well.
- Take breaks! This is heavy work.

Method:

1. Obtain pavers by breaking up a concrete path or drive on your property. Ask your neighbors or local construction sites for extra concrete or call the Metro Recycling Info Hotline for a rubble depot near you (may charge a fee).



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HELPFUL RESOURCES

Regional Green Building Hotline

503-823-5431 | www.buildgreen411.com

Got questions on construction strategies, materials, financial incentives?



Green Development Resource Center



Greenhotline

Local Salvaged Building Materials and Tool Libraries

Boneyard NW www.boneyardnw.com

Online commercial building materials exchange from Metro.

Craigslist.org

Local depots with reclaimed and recycled building materials.

Freecycle.org

Lots of free stuff from your neighbors.

Habitat ReStore www.pdxrestore.org

- Portland Metro | 503-283-6247 | 66 SE Morrison Street, Portland, OR 97214
- Washington County | 503-906-3823 | 13475 SW Millikan Way, Beaverton, OR 97005
- Materials donations accepted and are tax deductible.
- Purchases help build houses for low-income families.

Metro Recycling Information Hotline

- 503-224-3000
- Find a recycling depot near you supplying recycled concrete.

Lending libraries for home and garden tools. Check them out!

North Portland Tool Library

www.northportlandtoolibrary.org

Northeast Portland Tool Library

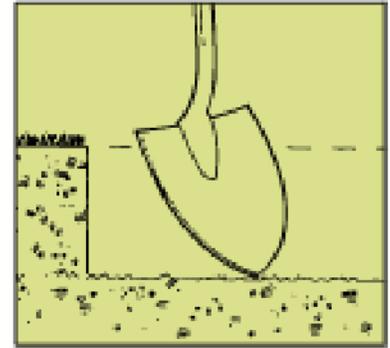
www.neptl.org

Southeast Portland Tool Library

www.septl.org

Creating a Recycled Concrete Patio or Path Continued from page 4

2. Determine the boundaries of your new patio or path. Mark with stakes and string or flexible edging around the perimeter.
3. Dig to a depth of four inches plus the thickness of the concrete pieces. Selecting concrete chunks of the same thickness greatly simplifies construction. Tamp down the excavated soil bed with your feet or the plate compactor.
4. Unroll and lay the landscape fabric over the soil and overlap any fabric edges. To allow grass to grow up between the pavers, omit this step.
5. Place a bed of two inches of quarter-minus angular gravel over the landscape fabric. Rake it over so it is level and smooth. Wet the gravel prior to laying the pavers.
6. Arrange and fit the concrete pieces, smooth side up. Avoid using very small pieces as these have a tendency to move, and very large pieces, which are hard to work with. Keep smaller spacing on a patio to accommodate furniture (one inch maximum); paths can have larger spaces (three inches). For tightly-fitted pieces in a patio ensure a slight slope away from your house foundation. Drainage will naturally occur in the voids between the pavers as well.
7. Tamp down the pieces with the mallet and 2x4 and check with a level or a length of leveling string, set to height of top of pavers, between two stakes.
8. Use a broom to fill in the voids and spaces in-between the pavers with the remaining gravel to the level of the top of the pavers.
9. Alternatives to gravel or sand in-between the pavers can be grass or "steppable" groundcovers planted in soil. Some good choices for low maintenance are Woolly Thyme, Mother of Thyme, Blue Star Creeper (for sunny areas), Dwarf Mondo Grass, Irish Moss and Scotch Moss (for shady areas).
10. Enjoy your recycled patio or garden path!



Tree Project

On April 13, 2011 the Portland City Council unanimously adopted milestone legislation to protect and enhance Portland's urban forest. Three years in the making, the Citywide Tree Project streamlines and strengthens the City's requirements around trees.

"The Tree Project has been a journey," proclaimed Mayor Sam Adams. "Thanks to our community's tenacity, the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability's leadership and critical assistance from other city bureaus, dozens of disparate viewpoints have been woven into a cohesive framework for the future of our trees."

Led by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, multiple City bureaus and community stakeholders tackled tough policy questions and tradeoffs to produce the proposal presented to Portland's Planning Commission and Urban Forestry Commission last year, and then later to the City Council.

The result is a cohesive regulatory framework, designed to support City goals for tree canopy and healthy watersheds, smart urban development and neighborhood livability. Portland's new tree rules will encourage preservation of large healthy trees and ensure that trees are routinely planted as new development takes place. The project also standardizes and streamlines the City's

tree removal and pruning permit requirements, making them more consistent, fair and user-friendly.

"Trees are an essential part of having a vibrant city. They help clean our air and water, as well as keep us cool in the summer," stated Bureau of Environmental Services Director Dean Marriott. "The new tree code provides a great step forward as the community tries to grow more trees and protect the ones we have."

City Council also directed a set of actions to improve customer service and public access to tree-related information and programs. These include a new single point of contact for the public, a 24-hour tree hotline, an updated tree permit tracking system, and development of a Community Tree Manual.

Commissioner Dan Saltzman noted that, "Completing this phase of the work is an important step, but success will ultimately be measured in terms of more trees across Portland, and community confidence in our ability to implement and enforce the rules."

The Tree Project components will be phased in over three years so staff can prepare to implement the new codes, while providing information to developers, arborists and Portland residents.

For more information about the Citywide Tree Project, please visit www.portlandonline.com/bps/trees.

Development Services Center Hours of Operation & Service Availability

If you are planning a visit to the City of Portland's Development Services Center (DSC) to ask general questions, purchase or submit any type of permit (building, trade, commercial or residential), or submit a land use review application, please visit the DSC webpage (<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds/dsc>) before making the trip downtown. It contains important information on the DSC hours of operations and service availability limitations that apply during our regular business hours.

Reminder:

*The Bureau of Development Services and all City offices will be **closed** in observance of:*

- *Memorial Day - Monday, May 30th*
- *Fourth of July - Monday, July 4th*

Online in 2011

To receive the Paperless Plans Examiner:

1. Go online to www.portlandoregon.gov/bds
2. On the left side of the BDS Home Page, under Quick Links, click on Join Our Mailing Lists

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How to Reach Us

Visit us in person at
1900 SW 4th Avenue
Portland, OR 97201

BDS Main Office

Monday - Friday
8:00 am to 5:00 pm
(503) 823-7300
(503) 823-6868 TTY

Development Services Center

Tuesday - Friday
8:00 am to 3:00 pm
Closed Mondays

On the Internet visit:

www.portlandoregon.gov/bds

Building Code Information 503-823-1456 (e)	BUREAU OF PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY
Fire Code Information 503-823-7300	Regional Green Building Hotline..... 503-823-5431
Planning & Zoning Information..... 503-823-7526	TRANSPORTATION
24-hour Inspection Request Recording 503-823-7000 (e)	Development Requirements, Right-of-Way Policy, Land Divisions and Transportation Plan Review
Inspection Section, 1 & 2 Family Dwellings 503-823-7388	Kurt Krueger 503-823-6964
Commercial, Plumbing 503-823-7302	Local Improvement Districts, Andrew Aebi 503-823-5648
Building & Mechanical..... 503-823-7303	Street Permit Engineering, Chon Wong..... 503-823-7050
Electrical 503-823-7304	Systems Development Charge
Development Services Center 503-823-7310 (e)	Richard Eisenhauer 503-823-6108
Development Services Center FAX..... 503-823-3018	TREES - Urban Forestry (7:00 am - 3:30 pm)..... 503-823-4489
Information, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, sewer, and sign permits..... 503-823-7363	Pruning/Planning/Removal Permits
Newsletter Contact, Colleen Poole..... 503-823-7889	N, Luke Miller 503-823-4511
Permitting Services, Fee estimate and	N, Jim Field 503-823-4011
Permit status via voice mail..... 503-823-7357 (e)	S, Ned Sodja..... 503-823-4440
Permitting resource and records..... 503-823-7660	S, Dave Kahler..... 503-823-1691
FAX requests for records 503-823-7765	Tree Cutting Ordinance and Commercial Planning and Development, Charley Davis 503-823-4523
Septic Tanks / Cesspools 503-823-6892	Transportation Improvements, Joe Hintz 503-823-4025
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	Residential Development & Improvement
Development Assistance 503-823-7761	Myles Black..... 503-823-4018
Industrial Source Control..... 503-823-7585	WATER
FIRE BUREAU	Water Service Information..... 503-823-7368
Development Standards, Sprinklers, Alarms	Hydrant Permits..... 503-823-7368
Nate Takara 503-823-3810	Plan Review, Mari Moore..... 503-823-7368
Flammable Liquids, Tanks, Hazardous Processes	Subdivision Planning, Rick Nelson 503-823-7475
Bob Happel 503-823-3934	Backflow Valve Installation Requirements, Dave Barrigan..... 503-823-7479