

# Residential Alterations, Additions and Demolitions

**Category:** Residential Construction

**Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2014 \_\_\_\_\_, Director

**Responsible Bureau Section:** Development Services Center  
1900 SW Fourth Avenue  
Portland, OR 97201  
503-823-7310

Residential Inspections  
1900 SW Fourth Avenue  
Portland, OR 97201  
503-823-7388

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Program Guide is to distinguish between minor and major residential remodels/alterations/additions and to specify at what point the work will be classified as a demolition. Based on these distinctions, the Bureau of Developments Services (BDS) will be able to more consistently apply the codes and infrastructure requirements and provide appropriate reviews that accurately relate to the scope of work to be conducted.

## II. BACKGROUND

Neither the State Building Codes nor the Portland City Code defines “demolition” or distinguishes between major and minor residential alterations (remodels) or additions. Consequently, when an applicant applies for a permit to alter or add to an existing residential structure, City staff must determine the appropriate reviews, fees and inspections with little guidance. This can lead to inconsistent customer service and, if a significant portion of an existing structure is being removed, no assurance that the remaining portion is structurally sound and appropriate to accommodate the new construction. Moreover, because there is no definition of “demolition,” the potential for inconsistency is increased. Therefore, in order to increase efficiency, consistency and safety, BDS has developed this Program Guide to outline clear guidelines to assist in the review and inspection of residential alteration, addition and demolition projects.

## III. DEFINITIONS

**Addition –**

**Alteration –**

**Building –**

**Exterior footprint area –**

**Exterior wall –**

**Habitable space –**

**Perimeter foundation –**

**IV. MINOR AND MAJOR RESIDENTIAL ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS AND DEMOLITIONS**

The following matrix provides the criteria for a minor residential alteration or addition, a major residential alteration or addition and a residential demolition.

<b>MINOR REMODELS/ADDITIONS</b>	<b>MAJOR REMODELS/ADDITIONS</b>	<b>DEMOLITIONS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25% or less of existing perimeter foundation will be altered, abandoned or removed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more than 25% of the existing perimeter foundation will be altered, abandoned or removed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all of the existing perimeter foundation will be altered, abandoned or removed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• foundation repair or replacement is only work to be done under the permit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the permit is for foundation repair or replacement, plus any other foundation work</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any new story is added, including a basement or other below-grade structure. Raising a structure to meet the required headroom in a basement is considered the same as creating a basement</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% or less of the exterior wall area on any floor will be increased or replaced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increasing or replacing more than 50% of the exterior wall area on any floor. If the floor under an exterior wall is removed, it will be treated as if the wall was removed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• replacing more than 50% of the first floor exterior wall area</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,000 square feet or less are to be added to the existing structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more than 1,000 square feet are added to the existing structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• none of the existing structure is maintained</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% or less of the exterior footprint area of the existing structure is to be added</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more than 100% of the existing footprint area of the structure is added</li> </ul>	

## **V. PERMITS, PLAN REVIEW AND INSPECTIONS**

### **Major and demolition:**

- structural observation report will be required to evaluate the existing foundation (and walls?) that will remain
- plan review will not be done over the counter; 15 days (same as new construction)
- how much needs to be maintained to retain non-conforming status?
- Need to develop criteria for participation in FIR program
- Will voluntary courtesy notice be requested for major alterations?
- “Major alteration/addition” as separate permit type from minor
- Inspections for major same as new construction; any remaining elements in major alteration must meet current code
- Fees for major alterations and additions to be same as demo and new construction

### **Other considerations:**

- Is only “habitable space” included in floor area calculation? [gross floor area vs. net floor area]
- How will decks and balconies be treated?

## **VI. FEES AND REVIEWS BY OTHER AGENCIES**

- A. PBOT**
- B. BES**
- C. Water Bureau**
- D. Parks and Recreation**
- E. Urban Forestry**
- F. School Construction Excise Tax**

## **V. PROS AND CONS**

The following table will assist applicants in deciding the scope of residential alterations and additions by providing the advantages of minor, major and demolition:

### **MINOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS**

<u>PROS</u>	<u>CONS</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not trigger system development charges (SDCs)</li> <li>• Minimum review time if plans and permit application are complete</li> <li>• Not treated as new construction for financing</li> <li>• Does not impact status of nonconforming uses, if floor area expansions is be approved through a Type II nonconforming situation review</li> <li>• Does not impact the status of nonconforming development unless the change is to a nonconforming building element.</li> <li>• Does not trigger tree or landscaping requirements.</li> <li>• Current building codes apply only to remodeled/added space</li> <li>• May be able to qualify for exemption for Historic Resource Review in Historic Districts and Conservation Districts, depending on the work proposed.</li> <li>• Can generally qualify to use the Community Design Standards instead of Design Review in Design overlay zones.</li> <li>• Fewer fees</li> <li>• Single permit (not demolition and new construction)</li> <li>• Eligible for FIR Program</li> <li>• [TRIGGERS FOR SURVEY]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For larger projects that do not meet the criteria of major remodel, no structural engineer reviews plans, so there is potential for undetected structural issues</li> <li>• Will need to legalize any existing unpermitted work</li> </ul>

**MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS**

<u>PROS</u>	<u>CONS</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not trigger system development charges (SDCs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For larger projects that do not meet the criteria of major remodel,</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum review time if plans and permit application are complete</li> <li>• Not treated as new construction for financing</li> <li>• Does not impact status of nonconforming uses, if floor area expansions is be approved through a Type II nonconforming situation review</li> <li>• Does not impact the status of nonconforming development unless the change is to a nonconforming building element.</li> <li>• Does not trigger tree or landscaping requirements.</li> <li>• Current building codes apply only to remodeled/added space</li> <li>• May be able to qualify for exemption for Historic Resource Review in Historic Districts and Conservation Districts, depending on the work proposed.</li> <li>• Can generally qualify to use the Community Design Standards instead of Design Review in Design overlay zones.</li> <li>• Fewer fees</li> <li>• Single permit (not demolition and new construction)</li> <li>• Eligible for FIR Program?</li> <li>• [TRIGGERS FOR SURVEY]</li> </ul>	<p>no structural engineer reviews plans, so there is potential for undetected structural issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will need to legalize any existing unpermitted work</li> </ul>
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**DEMOLITIONS**

<p><u>PROS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not trigger system development charges (SDCs)</li> <li>• Minimum review time if plans and permit application are complete</li> <li>• Not treated as new construction for financing</li> <li>• Does not impact status of nonconforming uses, if floor area</li> </ul>	<p><u>CONS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For larger projects that do not meet the criteria of major remodel, no structural engineer reviews plans, so there is potential for undetected structural issues</li> <li>• Will need to legalize any existing unpermitted work</li> </ul>
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<p>expansions is be approved through a Type II nonconforming situation review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Does not impact the status of nonconforming development unless the change is to a nonconforming building element.</li><li>• Does not trigger tree or landscaping requirements.</li><li>• Current building codes apply only to remodeled/added space</li><li>• May be able to qualify for exemption for Historic Resource Review in Historic Districts and Conservation Districts, depending on the work proposed.</li><li>• Can generally qualify to use the Community Design Standards instead of Design Review in Design overlay zones.</li><li>• Fewer fees</li><li>• Single permit (not demolition and new construction)</li><li>• [TRIGGERS FOR SURVEY]</li></ul>	
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