

THE PLANS Examiner

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City of Portland Office of Planning and Development Review

January 2001

Planning Bureau develops regulations for “telco hotels”

The “new economy” based on speedy communications has brought new challenges to developers, city planners and neighborhoods. Electronic Equipment Facilities (EEF), also called “telco hotels,” are beginning to occupy remodeled warehouses and office buildings in Northwest Portland, the Pearl District and Downtown’s West End. EEFs house electronic equipment for multiple Internet and telecommunications service providers and are likely to locate near telecommunications providers and multiple fiber optic lines.

The unique nature of these tenants requires unique building construction. Preferred buildings have tall ceilings, wide column spacing and few windows. Most require backup power generation systems. They operate around-the-clock with very few employees and need minimal parking. Many of the current “telco hotels” are situated along the route of the new Central City Streetcar Line, which is scheduled to be complete in 2001.

Unfortunately, these facilities contribute little to an active streetscape; most include little or no space for ground-floor retail, employ few and include no living space. In response to these public concerns, Portland’s Bureau of Planning (BOP) has initiated a fast-track planning project to address EEF development and foster pedestrian-friendly mixed-use development in parts of Northwest Portland and the Pearl District.

“We recognize that these facilities are important in the new economy, and we welcome them; but we’d like them to fit better into the

community’s vision for these changing areas,” says City Planner Barry Manning.

New regulatory measures will help shape EEF development. The regulations will include features that will help build a vibrant urban neighborhood, consistent with the vision for the area, but continue to allow EEF development. The proposal includes the following:

- Rezone IG1-zoned areas in the “Northwest Transition Area,” which roughly extends from NW Vaughn to NW Lovejoy and from NW 23rd to NW 12th to facilitate transit supportive, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development;
- Develop new regulations to address design issues and foster an active mixed-use environment. These could include the following components:
 - Retail square footage limitations;
 - Through streets on superblocks;
 - Windows in stories above ground floors;
 - Residential limitations in an industrial buffer;
 - Ground floor active use requirement near the streetcar and on major pedestrian streets;
 - Percentage of building area in active use near the streetcar;
 - Auto access limitations on the streetcar route.

In the interim, prior to adoption of new regulations, City staff from the Bureau of Planning and the Portland Development Commission will meet with EEF developers to discuss ways to improve design of any new facilities in the area.

The Office of Planning and Development Review works with the community and other bureaus to preserve and shape safe, vital and well planned urban environments.



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Lunch and Learn series continues with Base Zone Design Standards

The Office of Planning and Development Review (OPDR) is hosting a brown bag lunch presentation on Base Zone Design Standards (BZD), from noon to 1:30 p.m., Friday February 2, 2001, in the Development Services Center, 1900 SW 4th Avenue, second floor, room 2500 A.



This is one in a series of sessions created to assist builders, developers and other permit applicants with information needed to submit complete permit applications. Staff from the Bureau of Planning and from the Planning & Zoning Review Section of OPDR will tell how to apply Base Zone Design Standards in the development of houses, duplexes, rowhouses and manufactured dwellings, both for new construction and alterations or additions. They'll also be prepared to answer your questions.

The BZD regulations became part of the Zoning Code in September 1999. They affect the location of the main entrance, the window area on street-facing facades and the length of garage walls facing the street. If you have questions about the brown bag presentation, please contact Sterling Bennett, **503-823-5378**.

? DID YOU KNOW ?

- ▶ When requesting inspections through the City's IVR Inspection Request System, **503-823-7000**, be sure to get your confirmation number. IVR gives you a prompt to request the number at the end of the call. Your confirmation number can be used to verify that an inspection was successfully scheduled.
- ▶ The cut-off time for scheduling same day inspections is 6:00 a.m.
- ▶ In addition to processing inspection requests, IVR also provides plan review status reports via fax within minutes of your request. Choose option "4" from the main menu, and follow the prompts for entering your IVR number and fax number. IVR will fax the report to you. Or call **503-823-7357** to request the report by mail.
- ▶ To obtain general information about the Office of Planning and Development Review, call **503-823-7300**. Do not call the IVR line.

Easy pay with credit cards coming to the Development Services Center

You've been asking to use your credit cards to pay permit and other city fees in the Development Services Center. Well, we've got great news. This spring we'll have the system up and running. We already have approval and a bank to provide the service, now we're getting the electronic piece of the puzzle into place. Once we get going, we'll be able to accept VISA and Mastercard.

We know it's been a long wait, and we thank you for your patience.

Planning effort focuses on downtown's "West End"

The area of downtown Portland between SW 9th and 14th Avenues and Market and Couch streets is the focus of an ongoing planning effort. It's the part of downtown at the western edge of the Park Blocks that includes the Galleria, the Central Library, the Portland Art Museum and many older hotels and small businesses. The district hasn't seen much in the way of privately-financed new development in the past 20 years.

But with the Portland Streetcar scheduled to open in Summer 2001, business and property owners along the line began working in 1997 to build on the private and public investment in transportation infrastructure. The Portland Development Commission and the Portland Office of Transportation matched private dollars to finance the planning effort. By Summer 1999, the group had completed the West End Vision Plan, which advocated for a vibrant mixed-use district and proposed strategic public investments and greater development flexibility. Perhaps the most far-reaching proposal was to change the zoning pattern, established as part of the Downtown Plan (1972) in about three-quarters of the district, from residential to commercial and double the allowable square footage of new buildings.

City Council accepted the West End Vision Plan in October 1999 and directed the Bureau of Planning to evaluate the proposed changes. At a public hearing, the Portland Planning Commission considered the bureau's West End Proposal. The proposal outlines measured steps toward change offering many more regulatory carrots than sticks.

A very limited area is proposed for rezoning. Instead, a number of incentives are proposed to attract new residential development. These will work along with incentives already in place for commercial development, such as those for public art, fountains and childcare facilities.

Specifically, the West End Proposal offers "floor area ratio" (the building square footage in relation to the site area) bonuses for middle-income housing, large housing units and underground parking, among others, with an eye to providing a range of housing opportunities near the arts, entertainment and shopping amenities that make the district so attractive.

The Portland Planning Commission will devote its January 9 and February 13 meetings to West End issues. If the Commission votes on February 13 to forward its recommendations, a City Council public hearing may occur in April 2001. Adopted changes could be in place as early as May 2001.

City seeks lower flood insurance rates

In February 2001, the City of Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services will formally apply to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to reduce flood insurance rates citywide by at least 10 percent. By joining the federal Community Rating System (CRS), property owners citywide who are required to pay National Flood Insurance could save on insurance for properties located in an identified 100-year floodplain.

The City expects a rating of at least "8 points" by federal officials, which would allow a 10 percent discount on the rate Portland property owners currently pay for flood insurance. Points are awarded for floodplain activities that exceed minimum National Floodplain Insurance Standards, and the discount is based on these points. These activities include:

- Outreach projects
- Open space preservation
- Higher regulatory standards
- Acquisition and relocation
- Flood warning program

The higher the regulatory standards, the more points awarded. An active program to acquire frequently-flooded properties from willing sellers is also a factor.

A final ranking from FEMA is expected 12 to 18 months after the agency receives the City's application.

Signs and banners get final City Council hearing

The ordinance affecting signs and banners of all kinds got a final consideration before the City Council on December 20. The ordinance, which creates a comprehensive new Title 32, deals with allowable sizes for signs, where they may be placed and for what length of time. The Council approved a series of amendments clarifying the new standards for portable signs and other temporary signs in response to concerns raised at an earlier hearing. Permit fees are also spelled out in the ordinance.

As we go to print, the ordinance is due for a December 27th City Council vote. If passed, it becomes effective March 1, 2001.

Refer to the article, summarizing the ordinance, which appeared in the November Plans Examiner. Or visit our Web site at www.opdr.ci.portland.or.us, and click on "What's New on This Site?" to find a link to the Plans Examiner.

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The City Council also discussed the possibility of imposing a limited short-term moratorium on EEFs along the streetcar route where current zoning does not foster mixed-use development.

After addressing the issue in Northwest Portland and the Pearl District, the Bureau of Planning will consider developing new regulations to address Electronic Equipment Facilities citywide. The goal is to have citywide EEF rules adopted within six to 12 months.

For more information about the proposed plan for Electronic Equipment Facilities and the Northwest Transition Area, call Barry Manning, **503-823-7965**, or e-mail, bmanning@ci.portland.or.us.



Visit the OPDR Web site

If you're wondering whether or not you need to get an electrical permit, or if you want to know the fees for mechanical permits, go online to <http://www.opdr.ci.portland.or.us>. The Office of Planning and Development Review Web site puts a wealth of information at your fingertips. Here are a few of the things you'll find on our site right now.

- Appeals forms
- Tri-County Permit forms
- How to apply for mechanical, electrical and plumbing permits
- Details of the Facilities Permit Program
- Up to date information on the new Noise Control Task Force
- Instructions for how to use OPDR's new IVR Inspection Request System
- Information on the Development Services Center
- Issues handled by the Nuisance Division and where to call for help
- Details on inspections
- The latest issue of the Plans Examiner
- Who to call for assistance

The Web site offers much more, and it's currently being redesigned to better serve you. If you have suggestions for things you'd like to see on the site, e-mail us at opdr@ci.portland.or.us.

Holiday Schedule

Please mark your calendars.
The Development Services Center and other city offices will be closed for the following holidays:

- Monday, January 15** — Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
Monday, February 19 — President's Day

Development Services Center Hours

7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Monday — Friday

**5:00 – 7:30 p.m., Thursday
Residential Permit Night**

Code Maintenance 2001 to clarify and amend City Zoning Code

The Office of Planning and Development Review has launched Code Maintenance 2001, an amendment package that is part of continuing effort to improve clarity and structure of the Portland Zoning Code. Since 1990, approximately 270 amendments have been completed as part of past legislative packages, including the Code Maintenance 2000 project. Code Maintenance 2001 will address 80 amendments to the Zoning Code.

The selected amendments all meet the following criteria:

- Work within the Blueprint 2000 guidelines, which call for regulatory reform to provide predictable, seamless delivery of the City’s development review functions;
- Improve the clarity and usability of the Zoning Code without changing the intent behind specific regulations and clarify wording that may be open to interpretation;
- Address ongoing problems with administration of existing Code language, which may result in a minor policy change with low significance;
- Help implement the City’s Comprehensive Plan and be consistent with its existing policies and objectives.

Fifteen amendments address technical problems, such as inconsistent or ambiguous wording, incorrect placement of lines on maps and typographical errors; 51 amendments are being made to

clarify existing language, making the Code easier to read and use; and another 14 are minor policy amendments, which address ongoing administrative problems with the Code.

The most significant of these minor policy amendments will:

- Refine the definition of a “site.”;
- Clarify the definition of parking to differentiate between parking lots and lots used for the storage of new or fleet vehicles;
- Amend impact mitigation plan requirements to allow institutions to complete either an impact mitigation plan or a conditional use master plan;
- Clarify requirements for waiver of Type III land use appeal fees.

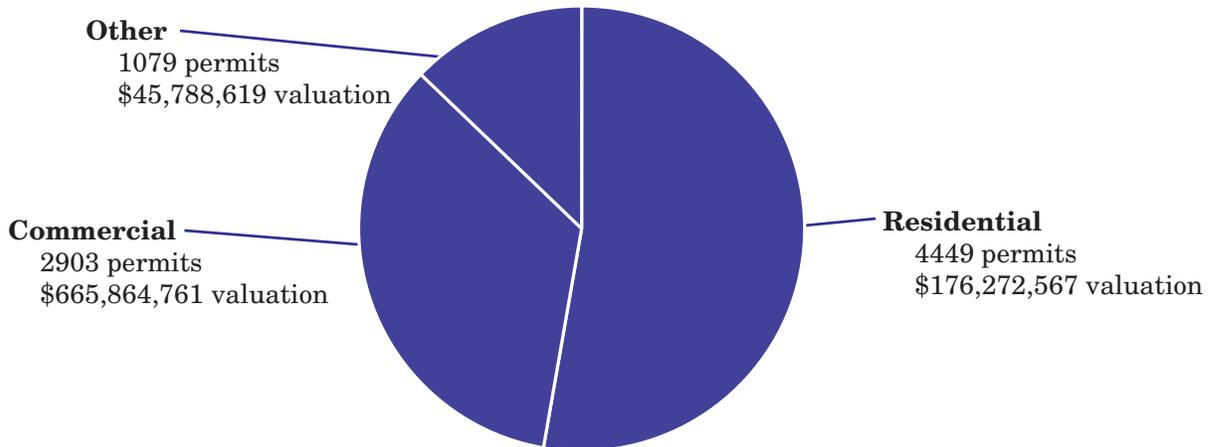
Code Maintenance 2001 began in November with the selection of the 80 proposed amendments from a database of over 880 amendment requests received from City staff, the development community and neighborhoods. The City Council is tentatively scheduled to review the proposed amendments in August 2001. Prior to City Council review, the Office of Planning and Development Review will hold at least one open house to explain the proposed amendments and meet with the Citywide Land Use Forum and other interested organizations, as requested.

To find out more about Code Maintenance 2001, call Douglas Hardy, project manager, **503-823-7816**.

Permit Volume through November, 2000

Total permits issued 8,431

Total valuation \$887,925,947



The Plans Examiner is a bi-monthly publication of the city of Portland
 Office of Planning and Development Review
 Commissioner Charlie Hales, 503-823-4682

How To Reach Us

All Area Code 503
 Monday through Friday
 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 (e) = Electronic Messaging System
 Please leave detailed information.
 Your call will be returned.

While browsing the internet,
 visit our home pages —
www.opdr.ci.portland.or.us and
www.planning.ci.portland.or.us/

OPDR — Administration	503-823-7308	TRANSPORTATION	
Building Code Questions	503-823-7310 (e)(4)	Development Requirements and/or Right-of-Way Policy	
Fire Code Questions	503-823-7366	Glenn Pierce	503-823-7079
Blueprint 2000	503-823-7822	Minor Partitions—Cherrie Eudaly	503-823-7081
24-hour Inspection Request Recording	503-823-7000 (e)	Local Improvement Districts	
Inspection Section — 1 & 2 Family Dwellings	503-823-7388	Matt Brown	503-823-7027
Commercial {	Plumbing	Street Permit Engineering	
	Building & Mechanical	Jerry Markesino	503-823-7057
	Electrical	Transportation Plan Review	
Development Services Center	503-823-7310	Joyce Reyman	503-823-6108
Development Services Center FAX	503-823-3018	Systems Development Charge	
Trade Permits	503-823-7363	Joyce Reyman	503-823-6108
Newsletter Contact — Ann Kohler	503-823-7886	TREES — Urban Forestry (7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.)	
Permit Status	503-823-7357	Pruning/Planning/Removal Permits	
Permit Records		N / NE — Luke Miller	503-823-4511
Document Control/Current Applications	503-823-7357 (e)	NW / SW — Charley Davis	503-823-4523
Inspection Records/Finalled Permits	503-823-7660	Southeast — Ned Sodja	503-823-4440
Building Record Center FAX	503-823-7765	Tree Cutting Ordinance	
Septic Tanks/Cesspools	503-823-7247	Frank Krawczyk	503-823-4011
Planning & Zoning – Information	503-823-7526	Transportation Improvements	
		Joe Hintz	503-823-4025
		Commercial Planning and Development	
		Frank Krawczyk	503-823-4011
		Residential Development and Improvement	
		Myles Black	503-823-4018
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES		WATER	
Development Engineering	503-823-7761	Water Service Information	503-823-7368
Construction & Demolition Recycling Info	503-823-7107	Hydrant Permits	503-823-7368
Industrial Source Control	503-823-7585	Plan Review — Tom Chambers	503-823-7477
		Vern Freeman	503-823-7489
FIRE BUREAU		Subdivision Planning — Hill Hampton	503-823-7485
Development Standards, Sprinklers, Alarms		Backflow Valve Installation Requirements	
Rich Butcher	503-823-3802	Dave Barrigan	503-823-7479
Flammable Liquids, Tanks, Hazardous Processes			
Doug Friant	503-823-3935		

Development Services Center

1900 SW 4th Ave.

Hours
 7:30 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.

The Center is also open
 Thursday from
 5:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.
 for Residential Permit Night.



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!

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