



**Bureau of
Development
Services** FROM CONCEPT
TO CONSTRUCTION

BUREAU OVERVIEW

Bureau Mandate

The City of Portland has been regulating construction since the late 1800s. BDS administers State regulations for building, plumbing, electrical, heating and ventilating. BDS is also responsible for administering the Portland Zoning Code, which regulates land use and development including allowed uses, design and scale of buildings, site planning, landscaping, trees and parking. BDS also responds to concerns of the community related to compliance with building, zoning, and property maintenance codes (Title 29) by working with property owners to achieve compliance with City regulations.

A variety of other local regulations adopted within the City Code are administered by BDS, including Original Art Murals, Erosion Control, portions of Trees, Floating Structures, and Signs.

BDS is instrumental in enhancing the safety of buildings and the livability and economic vitality of Portland's neighborhoods and is an integral part of the City of Portland. Our stakeholders include developers, builders, residents, tenants, homeowners and neighborhood associations.

Bureau Mission

The Bureau of Development Services (BDS) promotes safety, livability, and economic vitality through efficient and collaborative application of building and development codes.

Bureau Vision

BDS' vision is to be the best development services agency in the country by deploying development review systems that meet the time-sensitive needs of the development industry, and by addressing neighborhood organizations' and citizens' concerns about the quality of development and access to development-related information.

Functional Areas & Work

Director's Office

Director's Office sets policies and guides the bureau in meeting its mission and goals. Equity, technology, staffing levels, and service delivery are several focus areas of this office.

Business Operations & Finance Services

Business Operations & Finance Services administers a variety of services to BDS staff, including human resources, budget and finance, training, safety, and emergency management.

Land Use Services

Land Use Services staff implements the goals and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan, by administering the Portland Zoning Code (Title 33).

Plan Review/Permitting Services

Plan Review/Permitting Services staff manage the flow of the permitting process, review building and mechanical plans for structures, and help customers understand and apply code regulations regarding life safety, energy conservation, accessibility, and other related issues.

Inspections Services

Inspections Services performs permit inspections on one- and two-family residences, multi-family dwellings, and commercial, retail, and industrial construction projects.

Public Information & Enforcement Services

Public Information & Enforcement Services develop BDS Codes and Policy, improves public access to information, and implements customer service improvements suggestions, where possible. Enforcement Program staff investigates and resolves issues reported on construction, zoning, dangerous buildings, property maintenance and signs.



BDS Projects

Strategic Plan

- The BDS Strategic Plan is a living, relevant, and practical 5-year Plan to guide the bureau in all areas of work.
- Focus areas include: Efficient & Effective Services, High Performing & Diverse Workforce, Communication & Community Engagement, High Quality Customer Service, Equity Plan Implementation, and Technology Integration.
- The bureau is currently working with a consultant to finalize the Plan documents and intends to begin implementing the new Plan in Spring 2017.

Development Review and Inspection Technology Program (formerly “ITAP”)

- Bureau of Development Services sponsored project to upgrade the City's current legacy permit and case management system which has been in use since 1999.
- Project to move the City's currently paper-based development review, land use review, enforcement and inspection process to a paperless web-based process from start to finish.
- This project is funded through permit and land use review fees.

What will the program do?

- Allow online submittal and management of permit and land use review applications and reviews from home or office 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Allow electronic inspection routing, field data entry and remote field staff access to property and permit data.
- Provide public access to digital records through PortlandOnline and PortlandMaps.



Significant Issues

Staffing & Service Levels

BDS is committed to excellence in its programs and services while remaining fiscally responsible. Since autumn 2011, construction has increased at a fast and consistent rate. This increase in work has generated high revenues for the bureau, establishing a strong financial reserve. Additionally the high volume of work and revenue has allowed the bureau to add back approximately 166 positions over the past 5 years.

BDS has been challenged to meet its service level goals while still striving to provide the best customer service possible. BDS has taken a multifaceted approach to addressing its workload including contracting out for services, augmenting staff with staff from other jurisdictions, adding internal recruitment staff, prioritizing hiring, and continuing to look at ways to streamline business processes. The Bureau is developing a comprehensive multi-year succession plan and new employee retention strategies to proactively address future staffing needs.

Many development review cases depend upon approval by other City Bureaus, collectively referred to as BDS' interagency (IA) partners. Therefore, many turnaround timelines for land use reviews and permit applications are tied to staffing levels at those Bureaus. BDS works with our IA partners to provide information to support those Bureau's budget requests to improve overall development review service levels.

Workplace & Employee Culture

BDS is committed to building a vibrant, positive and productive work place. Its employees are its greatest resource and investment. As an organization, BDS continuously assesses and monitors its strengths and identifies opportunities for improvement with the goal of making BDS a great and effective place to work, conduct business, and serve its customers and community.

Initiatives include an employee workplace survey, an assessment of BDS' organizational structure and internal work culture, development of a streamlined performance evaluation form created to give timely feedback to all employees, and the expansion of training and workforce development resources. All of these efforts are focused on building employee trust and morale, empowerment, and an inclusive, fair and respectful work environment that enhances teamwork, job satisfaction, and opportunities for advancement.

Significant Issues (continued)

In addition, the bureau believes that those closest to the work often have the best ideas for innovation. Staff actively contribute their ideas and recommendations during the annual budget planning process. The bureau also maintains a strong labor-management partnership and approach to addressing issues of interest to all employees in the bureau.

Equity & Inclusion

BDS is committed to pursuing equity in its staffing, its programs and services, and its interactions with customers and the community. The BDS 5-year Racial Equity Plan, formally adopted in October of 2016, incorporates: an equity assessment of all operations; focusing recruitment to produce a more diverse applicant pool; extensive outreach to diverse communities; and applying an “equity lens” to bureau programs and services. In 2015 and 2016, BDS added staff positions to support the Bureau’s equity work and expanded the membership of the Bureau Equity Committee (BEC). These additional resources are focused on staff training, devising data tracking mechanisms to monitor progress in achieving objectives, and developing public engagement capabilities.

In 2017, BDS plans to reinstate the following equity of service programs: Residential Permit Night (evening hours targeted to homeowners), Get Legal (helping to bring completed development work into compliance) and Small Business Assistance.

General Fund

In addition to its fee-supported construction programs, BDS receives some General Fund support for its Neighborhood Inspections and Land Use Services programs, which implement local City codes. The services provided by these programs are essential to neighborhood livability and protect the health, safety, and welfare of Portland residents. State law prohibits BDS from using construction permit revenues for these programs, and they cannot operate effectively without adequate support from the General Fund.

Affordable Housing, Tenant Protections, and Distressed Properties

In light of the 2015 declaration of a housing and homeless emergency in Portland, the Portland Housing Bureau (PHB) and the Bureau of Development Services (BDS) have been working collaboratively to coordinate efforts to support the development of affordable housing. These efforts have included streamlining the review and permitting process for affordable housing projects and enhancing outreach efforts to better promote PHB affordable housing opportunities. In addition, work is underway to implement

an Inclusionary Housing Program to provide incentives for developers to incorporate affordable housing units into their projects.

BDS is also helping to develop a proposal for a mandatory rental inspection program to improve service to vulnerable populations and address concerns over no cause evictions for reporting basic habitability violations.

The Bureau’s Enforcement Program continues to implement the Extremely Distressed Property Enforcement Program (EDPEP), which coordinates with the Portland Police Bureau to address properties that impact public safety and health and sanitation concerns for the community. Along with this effort, BDS supports the City Auditor’s endeavor to bring a list of vacant and abandoned homes to City Council for foreclosure action on a quarterly basis, as a means to force corrections to chronic and long standing violations impacting the community.

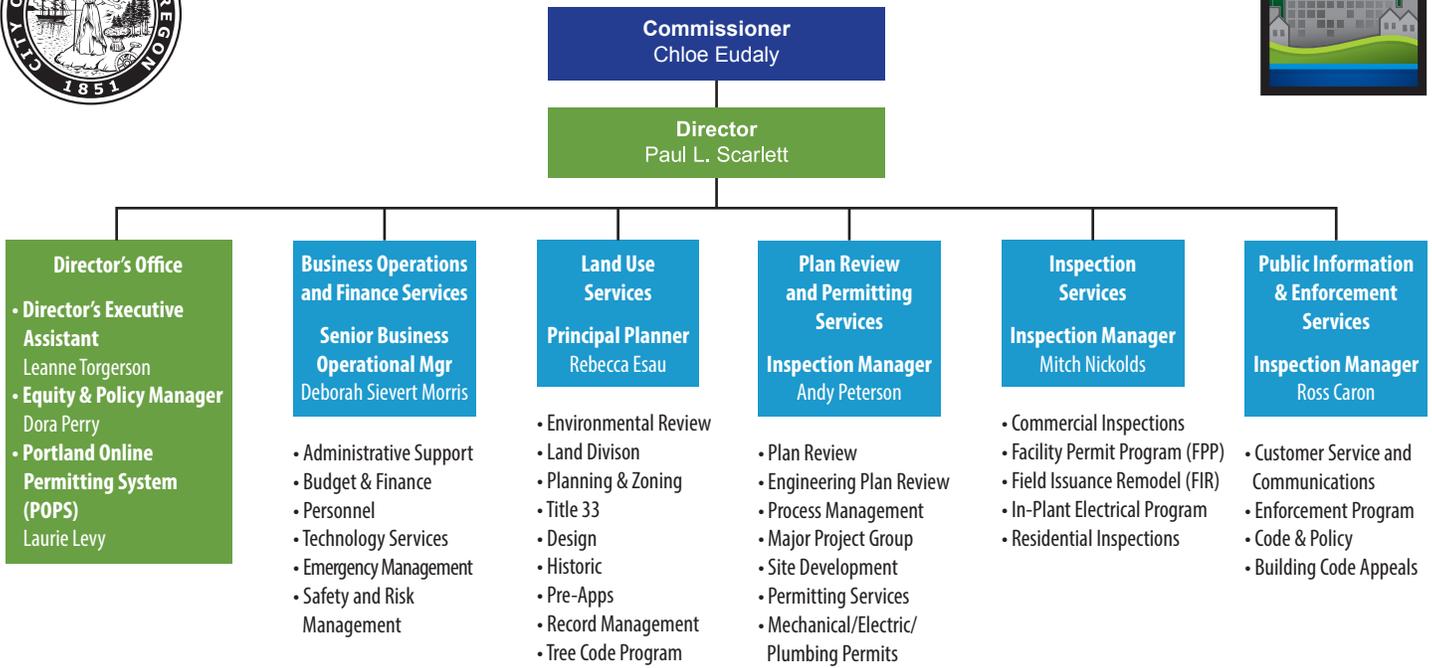
Code and Policy Projects

The code and policy team strives to develop and update city codes related to construction activities. Some significant projects include:

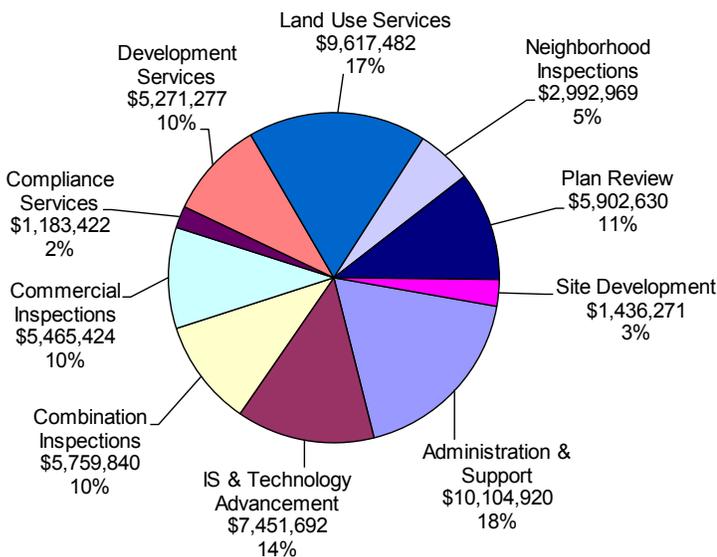
- **Demolitions:** In response to community concerns regarding demolition of residential structures, in 2015 the team facilitated changes to City code that improve communication between developers and neighborhood associations.
- **Accessory Short-Term Rentals:** To address an expanding industry of short-term rentals in the City, the coordinated development of new regulations in 2014, and in 2016 helped prepare new rules intended to improve compliance with those City codes.
- **Marijuana:** The team works with the Office of Neighborhood Involvement and Portland Fire & Rescue to develop guidance documents for people seeking permits for marijuana-related businesses.
- **Trade Permits:** The team coordinated a new process to begin expiring and voiding trade permits in accordance with state and local code requirements. Previously, trade permits remained open indefinitely in the City permit database creating confusion for customers and staff.
- **Sign Code:** BDS is working on updating the City’s Sign Code to clean up technical issues, clarify ambiguous provisions and amend provisions to align the Code with current sign technologies.
- **Unreinforced Masonry:** BDS is working with the Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM) to require property owners to seismically retrofit unreinforced masonry buildings.



Bureau of Development Services Organizational Chart



Bureau Programs FY 2016-17 Revised Adopted Budget (\$55.2 million)



How We're Funded

Approximately 97% of BDS's budget is funded with fees and charges. Construction-related programs are 100% funded with this source of revenue.

BDS receives approximately 3% support from the City's General Fund for several local programs that provide key services to the entire community, including Land use Services and Neighborhood Inspections.

BDS Facts at a Glance

- Commissioner: Chloe Eudaly
- Director: Paul L. Scarlett
- FY 2016-17 Full-time Budgeted FTE: 373.67
- FY 2016-17 Part-time Budgeted FTE: 2.7
- FY 2016-17 Total Budget: \$55.2 m

Yearly Workload Averages (based on past three FY2013-16)

- 887 Land Use Review & Final Plat applications
- 10,983 Building permits (residential & commercial)
- 157,074 Inspections
- 542 Building code violations
- 5,001 Zoning code violation cases, inspections, and letters
- 6,571 Housing & nuisance intakes

To help ensure equal access to City programs, services and activities, the City of Portland will provide translation, reasonably modify policies/procedures and provide auxiliary aids/services/alternative formats to persons with disabilities. For accommodations, translations, complaints, and information, call 503-823-7300, TTY 503-823-6868, use Oregon Relay Service: 711, come to 1900 SW 4th Ave, 5th Floor, Portland, OR 97201, or email bds@portlandoregon.gov.