

# DESIGN OVERLAY ZONE ASSESSMENT (DOZA)

---

## PRELIMINARY REPORT OF FINDINGS

September 22, 2016

**WALKER | MACY**

Angelo Planning Group

Pyatok Associates

Leland Consulting Group

# DESIGN OVERLAY ZONE ASSESSMENT (DOZA)

---

## FINAL REPORT OUTLINE

### 1. Executive Summary

### 2. Review of Peer Cities

COMPLETED

7/22/16

### 3. Findings

A. Introduction and Methodology

COMPLETED

B. Over-arching Observations

INTERIM REPORT

C. Specific Findings

INTERIM REPORT

Interviews

COMPLETED

Questionnaire

RESULTS COLLECTED

Site Evaluations

IN PROGRESS

TODAY

### 4. Recommendations

A. Process

B. Tools

## INTRODUCTION

---

**Interim report of findings** based on research to date

**Emerging themes** evident in initial exploration

**Recommendations will follow** in next phase

## **METHODOLOGY**

---

**Interviews with Stakeholders**

**Public Questionnaire**

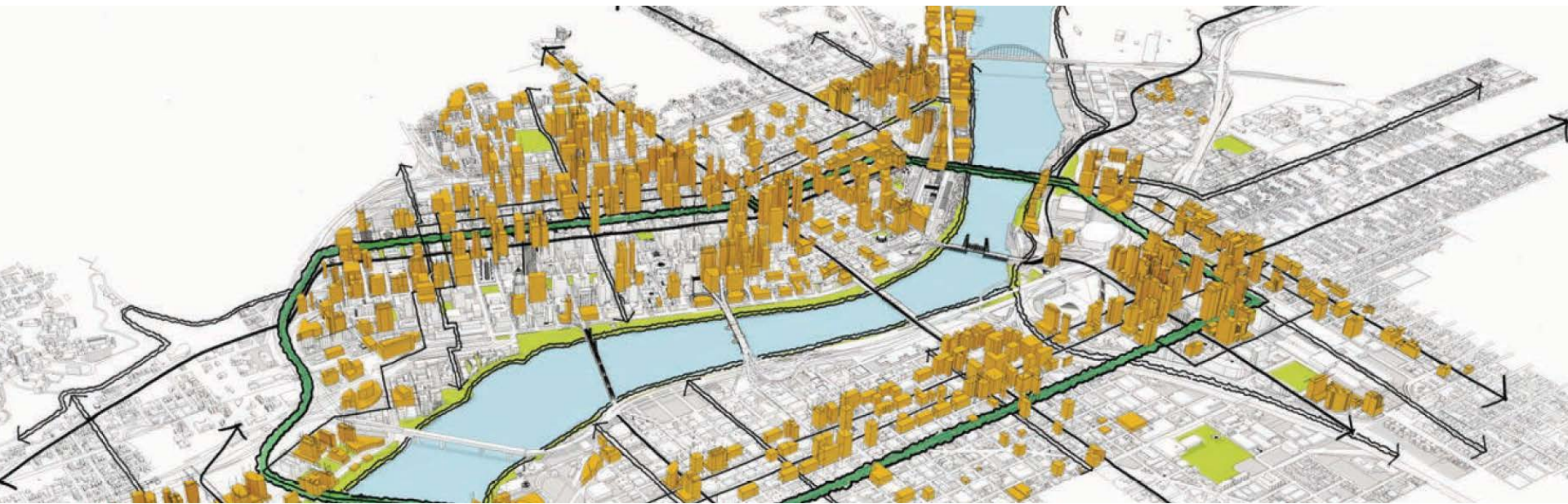
**Assessments of Example Projects**

## OVER-ARCHING OBSERVATIONS

---

### 1. PORTLAND IS NATIONAL MODEL FOR GOOD URBAN DESIGN

Continued achievement of **creativity, variety, and place-specific results in the built environment** is perhaps being **discouraged by the current procedures and standards of review.**



## OVER-ARCHING OBSERVATIONS

---

### 2. COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR THOUGHTFUL DESIGN

The process of shaping implementation tools, such as the d-overlay, has not been linked closely enough to **community-driven urban design planning**.

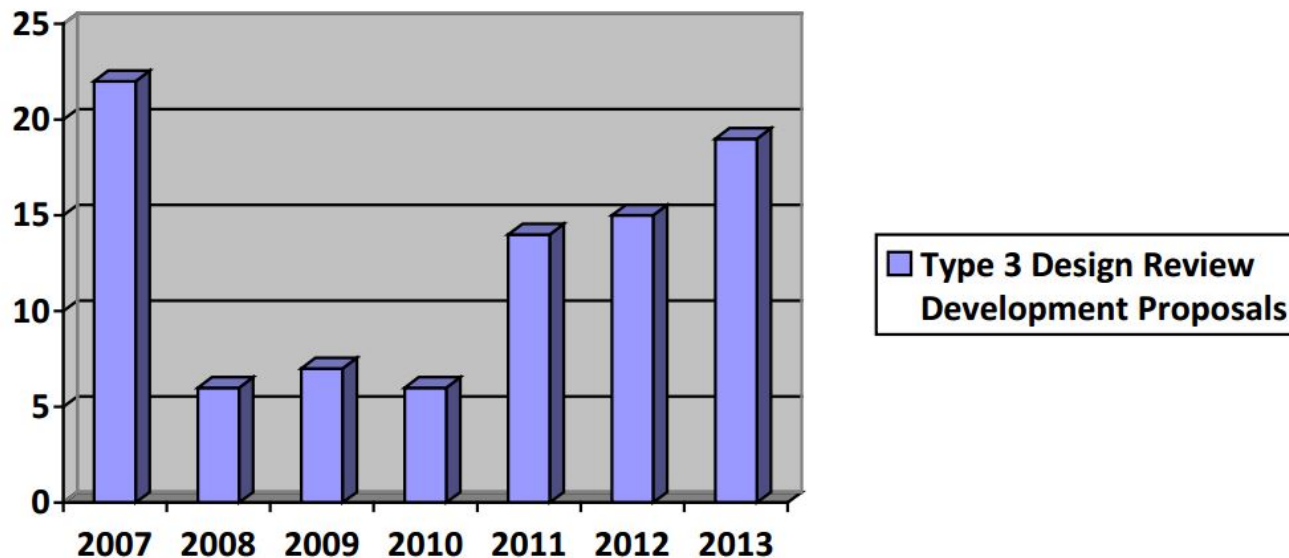


## OVER-ARCHING OBSERVATIONS

---

### 3. GOOD INTENTIONS FRUSTRATED BY CURRENT VOLUME

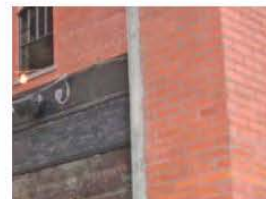
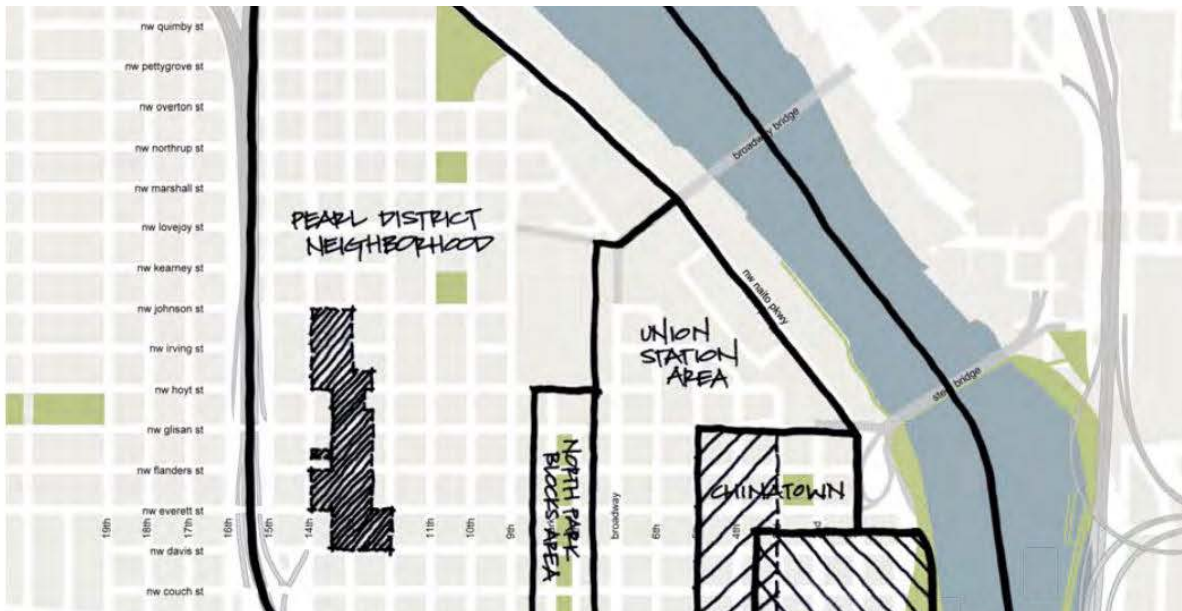
There is a need to consider ways of **reducing the workload**, as well as managing the workload, more effectively.



# OVER-ARCHING OBSERVATIONS

## 4. HAVING THE RIGHT TOOLS IS CRITICAL

Consolidating and simplifying review criteria, as well as providing a method for contextual application, would be very useful.



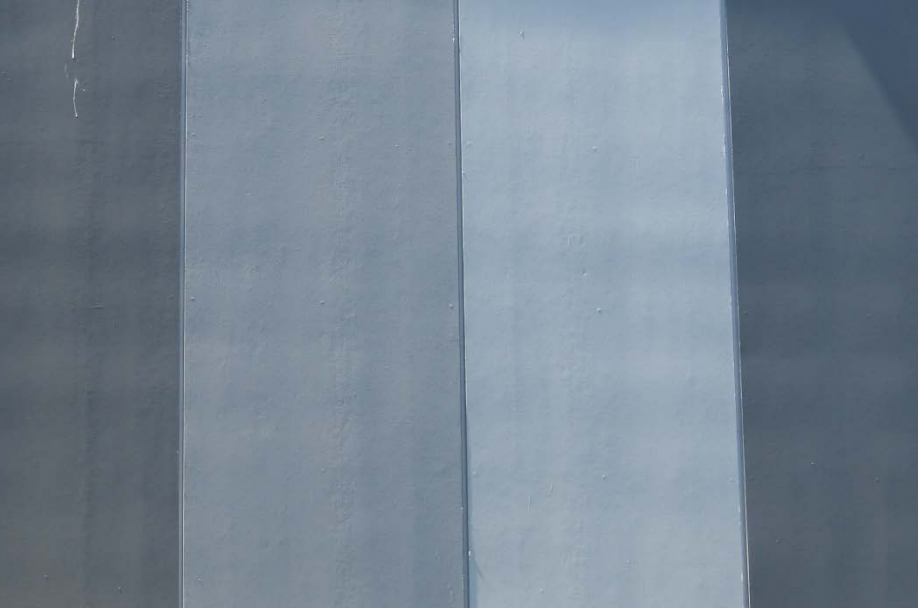


## OVER-ARCHING OBSERVATIONS

---

### 5. SHIFT TOWARD DETAILS AND AWAY FROM THE BIG PICTURE

The **amount of detail** discussed regarding building components up front may not be allowing sufficient discussion of **larger issues of context, neighborhood character, massing, and relationship to the street.**



## OVER-ARCHING OBSERVATIONS

---

### 6. PROCESS AND COLLABORATION

For both City staff and Design Commission, instilling a **greater spirit of collaborative problem-solving** than problem-finding would be useful in creating positive outcomes.

It is important to view **applicants as people who are trying to build communities**, giving them due respect in the process.



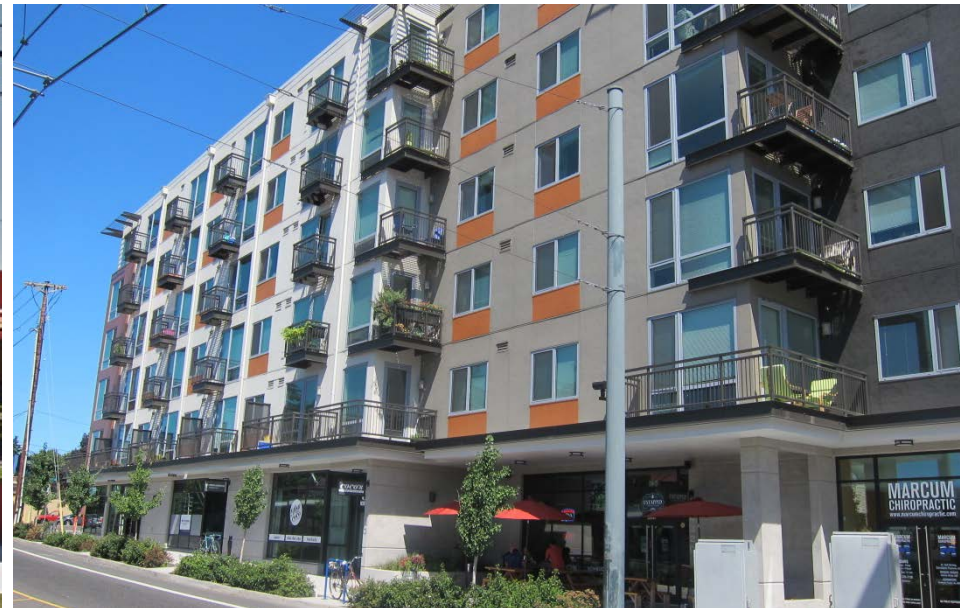
## OVER-ARCHING OBSERVATIONS

---

### 7. CURRENT SYSTEM DOESN'T REFLECT VARYING IMPACT OF SCALE

Standards and procedures could be structured to make it **easier for the small end of the spectrum to flourish**, even if design results are not ideal.

**Thresholds for larger projects**, such as those that occupy entire blocks, could be restructured to ensure that such projects **receive greater scrutiny** both through design review and by involving the public in the review process.



## **MORE SPECIFIC FINDINGS**

---

**These findings emerged primarily from interviews;** the other two aspects of research will be integrated.

**1. PROCESSES**

**2. REVIEW CRITERIA**

**3. OTHER ITEMS**

# 1. PROCESSES

---

## A. GENERAL

1. **Public notice** seems inadequate
2. **Dialog** between neighborhoods and development teams **is unstructured**
3. **List of submittals is not always appropriate** to the typical stages of the design process
4. **Design toward “the middle”** in order to gain approval
5. **Lack of coordination** with PBOT and other agencies
6. Lack of **follow-up inspections**

## 1. PROCESSES

---

### B. NON-DISCRETIONARY PLAN CHECK

1. Community Design Standards don't appear to **reflect individual neighborhoods or districts**
- 2 **Not possible to seek adjustments to CDS** without opening up the entire project up to review

# 1. PROCESSES

---

## C. DISCRETIONARY DESIGN REVIEW

1. Many design teams have a **preference for working with staff**
- 2 **Staff takes cues from the Design Commission** about details and materials
3. Conflicts with **other agencies**
4. Not clear **who has the final authority** when there are conflicts
- 5 **Basic elements** not determined early enough
- 6 **Staff training program** needs expansion
7. **Administrative interpretations** of guidelines are not available

# 1. PROCESSES

---

## D. TYPE III (Design Commission with support by City staff)

1. Process adds **significant time and cost**
2. Information requested is **not always appropriate to the design process**
3. Considerable discussion of **details, materials, utilities, and building services**
4. **Number and length** of meetings
5. **Guidelines are not cited during deliberations**; personal preferences seem to dominate some deliberations
6. DAR now occurs **too late**



# 1. PROCESSES

---

## D. TYPE III (Design Commission with support by City staff)

7. **Management** of Commission meetings is missing
8. Clarify the Council's "**charter**" for the **Design Commission**
9. **Building massing** not necessarily discussed and approved at first meeting
10. "**Unacceptable Materials**" list is limiting
11. Commissioner **attendance** varies—catching up can be disruptive
12. Commission is **overloaded**
  - Second commission
  - Different threshold
  - Focusing the scope

## 2. REVIEW CRITERIA

---

### A. COMMUNITY DESIGN STANDARDS

1. Standards address parts of buildings but **do not sufficiently address relationship to context**
2. Numerous standards with **repetition and overlap**
- 3 **One-size-fits-all** approach
- 4 Do not recognize the many **diverse parts of Portland**
- 5 **Combination of some standards has produced unintentionally awkward results**, such as off-putting recessed ground floors with little visual interest



## 2. REVIEW CRITERIA

---

### B. DESIGN GUIDELINES

#### Central City Fundamentals and Subdistrict Design Guidelines

1. Some discretionary guidelines are **too vague**
2. Do not readily apply to **outlying areas**
3. **Effective in shaping many buildings** within and near the center
4. **Applicable guidelines** not always cited at hearings

## **2. REVIEW CRITERIA**

---

### **B. DESIGN GUIDELINES**

#### **Community Design Guidelines and Special District Guidelines**

- 1. Just placing the d-overlay on an area or corridor would not ensure desirable outcomes.**
- 2. Guidelines are not tailored to specific geographic/cultural areas.**

### 3. OTHER ITEMS

---

- **Corridors currently without any design standards or review** are seeing development that is mixed in quality and thoughtfulness
- Many newer buildings in areas without any standards are **coarser in grain and streetscapes.**
- **Wide difference of viewpoints** between some designers and many community residents.
- Issues related to development are often confused with what is **allowed by basic zoning standards.**

# DESIGN OVERLAY ZONE ASSESSMENT (DOZA)

---

## FINAL REPORT OUTLINE

### 1. Executive Summary

### 2. Review of Peer Cities

COMPLETED

### 3. Findings

#### A. Introduction and Methodology

COMPLETED

#### B. Over-arching Observations

INTERIM REPORT

#### C. Specific Findings

INTERIM REPORT

Interviews

COMPLETED

Questionnaire

RESULTS COLLECTED

Site Evaluations

IN PROGRESS

### 4. Recommendations

#### A. Process

#### B. Tools

# DESIGN OVERLAY ZONE ASSESSMENT (DOZA)

---

## FINAL REPORT OUTLINE

### 1. Executive Summary

### 2. Review of Peer Cities

COMPLETED

7/22/16

### 3. Findings

A. Introduction and Methodology

COMPLETED

B. Over-arching Observations

INTERIM REPORT

C. Specific Findings

INTERIM REPORT

Interviews

COMPLETED

Questionnaire

RESULTS COLLECTED

Site Evaluations

IN PROGRESS

TODAY

tentatively  
11/17/16 and

### 4. Recommendations

A. Process

B. Tools

12/08/16

# DESIGN OVERLAY ZONE ASSESSMENT (DOZA)

---

## FINAL REPORT OUTLINE

### Appendices

Report on Peer Cities

Interviews and Major Themes

Citywide Questionnaire

Site Evaluations

70 Broad Brush Evaluations

14 More detailed evaluations



## DESIGN OVERLAY ZONE ASSESSMENT (DOZA)

---

**Thank you for listening!**

**Comments/Questions?**

**WALKER | MACY**

Angelo Planning Group

Pyatok Associates

Leland Consulting Group