



City of
PORTLAND, OREGON

Development Review Advisory Committee

Development Review Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
Thursday, December 19, 2024

DRAC Members Present:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sam Miller, Chair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eli Spevak | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kym Nguyen |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sean Green, Vice Chair | <input type="checkbox"/> Elizabeth Gomez | <input type="checkbox"/> Maurice Rahming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amy Vohs | <input type="checkbox"/> Jennifer Santhouse | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peggy Moretti |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Andy Dykeman | <input type="checkbox"/> Jill Cropp | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sam Rodriguez |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bobby Daniels | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kristian McCombs | |

City Staff Present:

Alice Nielsen, PP&D	Elshad Hajiyeu, PP&D	Mieke Keenan, PIT
Amy Fleck-Rosete, Prosper	Gabby Bruya, PP&D	Mitch Daugherty, Prosper
Beth Benton, PP&D	Ken Ray, PP&D	Moran Tracy, BPS
Brenda Fahey, PP&D	Kimberly Tallant, PP&D	Phil Nameny, BPS
Clark Goldenrod, PBOT	Kris Calvert, PP&D	Robert Irving, PP&D
David Kuhnhausen, PP&D	Kurt Krueger, PP&D	Robert Smith, Prosper
David O'Longaigh, PWB	Kyle O'Brien, PP&D	Ross Caron, PP&D
David Tebeau, PP&D	Leesha Posey, PP&D	Sadie Silkie, PP&D
Donnie Oliveira, CED	Matthew Berkow, PBOT	Terri Theisen, PIT
Doug Morgan, PP&D	Matt Rozzell, PP&D	Terry Kimmons, PFB

Guests Present:

Krista Bailey, Urban Renaissance Group	Matt Beilstein
Suzannah Stanley, Mackenzie	Michelle Schultz, GBD
Hilary Olsen, URG	

Meeting documents are available at the [Development Review Advisory Committee \(DRAC\) Past Events Webpage](#)

Meeting Notes

8:00 – 8:10am - DRAC Business

DRAC Recruitment Update

Ross Caron, PP&D

Ross Caron, DRAC Staff Liaison, announced that the City was actively recruiting for the following seats:

- Neighborhood Coalition Land Use Committees
- Environmental Conservation and Green Building
- Low-income Housing Developers
- Citywide Neighborhood Interests

Caron encouraged DRAC members and meeting attendees to share this information with colleagues who may be interested in serving on the DRAC. For more information about the recruitment and how to apply, please see [this article](#).

DRAC Chair & Co-Chair Elections at January 16th Meeting

Ross Caron, PP&D

Ross provided an overview of the election process for the DRAC Chair and Vice-Chair positions, which will take place at the next meeting. Members interested in these roles were encouraged to notify Ross in advance. He explained that interested DRAC members would have an opportunity to present their interests for seeking the positions at the next meeting. Ross clarified that current Chairs and Co-Chairs are eligible for reelection, with no term limits in place. The voting process will be conducted during the next meeting, once a quorum is confirmed.

Approval of November 21st DRAC Meeting Notes

Ross Caron, DRAC Liaison

The committee reviewed the minutes from the November meeting. A motion to approve the notes was put forward and seconded. The motion passed unanimously, with no objections or abstentions.

8:10 – 8:15am - PP&D Announcements

Ken Ray, PP&D Public Information Officer

PP&D Public Information Officer Ken Ray provided an update on:

DevHub for Inspections. Ken introduced a new feature of DevHub aimed at simplifying the inspection scheduling process. He explained that the updated platform allows users to quickly schedule inspections and see real-time results, which will reduce delays. The IVR system will continue to be available for those who prefer it. Ray emphasized that the update was designed to streamline

processes, and that more detail about DevHub for inspections would be provided at the January 2025 DRAC meeting.

For more information about in-progress/upcoming news, or to explore past issues, sign up for the Plans Examiner, PP&D's email newsletter: <https://www.portland.gov/ppd/plans-examiner-newsletter>.

8:15 – 8:45am – Update on Small Business Office

Mitch Daugherty, Prosper Portland

Amy Fleck-Rosete, Prosper Portland

Mitch Daugherty, Prosper Portland's Office of Small Business Manager, introduced himself to the group and provided a summary of his professional background before joining Prosper Portland two months prior to manage and launch the Office of Small Business. Amy Fleck-Rosete, Prosper Portland Project Manager, introduced herself and explained that she is providing project management support for the launch of the office.

Dougherty outlined the four pillars of the Office of Small Business and acknowledged that these will be modified based on community engagement that will occur while the office is built out:

- **Website (Front Door):** The new webpage is targeted to be release in March or early April 2025 and intended to serve as a central online resource for new and existing small businesses. The website will include step-by-step guides, resources, links, and contacts for personal assistance. The webpage is based in part on San Francisco's small business office webpage and will emphasize the importance of working with the office's community liaisons, stressing the importance of face-to-face contact. It will also serve as a jumping off point to other small business focused city and organization webpages and resources.

If DRAC members or meeting attendees have resources they'd like added, please email them to Ross Caron at ross.caron@portlandoregon.gov.

- **Community Liaisons:** Prosper is in the process of bringing on board four community liaison staff (one per City Council district) that will serve as direct points of contact for the community, planning to have two on board by end of January 2025. An important goal includes proactive outreach and long-term relationships with the community, not just single-issue resolution(s). Need to maintain relationships with community and regular check-ins and follow-ups meetings with community members will be held.
- **Cross-Bureau Collaboration/Coordination:** Prosper Portland has been working closely with the City's permitting bureaus (e.g., PP&D, PBOT, Water Bureau, Parks, etc.) to reduce confusion, aligning information, and expedite problem-solving, and collaborating on providing services and resources that small businesses need to be successful. Collaboration includes monthly reoccurring meetings, feedback loops, and alignment on grant programs.

- **Celebrating Small Businesses:** Acknowledging and celebrating the small businesses that are already out there is important and will be a focus of the office. The office will focus on empathy, inclusivity, and providing support for existing small businesses, as well as new ones. Plans for city-wide events, newsletters, and marketing that highlight success stories.

DRAC Member, Eli Spevak, asked how Prosper Portland’s Tax Increment Financing (TIF) resources that were recently passed by Council will fit into the work of the new Small Business Office. Fleck-Rosete noted the Office of Small Business is a new initiative aimed at guiding small businesses through all available resources, including TIF (Tax Increment Financing) opportunities. As additional TIF districts come online, the Development and Investment team at Prosper Portland anticipates hiring or reallocating staff to support these new areas. Fleck-Rosete stated that details are still being determined, but the Office of Small Business is focused on serving as a central “front door” to direct business owners to the correct TIF grants or contacts, ensuring they are aware of and can access relevant programs.

DRAC Chair, Sam Miller, noted that some minority, female, and LGBTQ business owners have felt excluded from Prosper Portland’s grants or loans. He asked if the new Small Business Office would address these equity gaps to ensure everyone can access available funding. Daugherty acknowledged many had been unaware of existing resources. The new office will be focused on addressing this gap by using an intentional outreach approach being led by the new community liaisons who will be a point of contact for all the other Prosper and City resources. In addition, they are planning on holding “know your community” type functions and developing a newsletters to engage and involve the community in the work of the new office. The goal will be to proactively guide underserved small business owners/start-ups to ensure they know about grants, loans and services at the beginning of the process.

8:45 – 9:30 - Discussion with Donnie Oliveira, Deputy City Administrator for Community and Economic Development

Donnie Oliveira, Deputy City Administrator for Community and Economic Development

Donnie Oliveira introduced himself and outlined his role and responsibilities as the Deputy City Administrator for the [Community and Economic Development Service Area](#) and provided an overview of his focus areas for the presentation. Oliveira began by describing Portland’s transition to a new form of government that came into effect on January 1. He explained that a lot of work has been happening to test the new form of government over the last six months and gave kudos to the current Mayor for leading this transition effort. These efforts have allowed the City Administrator and Deputy City Administrators to largely set-up the administrative functions and it will be up to the new Mayor and Council members to determine how to take things from here.

Under this model, Oliveira explained that the City Council expands to twelve members who will elect a president and set up committees. The cadence of Council meetings will switch from twice weekly to twice monthly, and a majority of policy development will move from Council to the committee level. Oliveira explained that while this structure aims to streamline legislation and specialize Council

members' focus areas, it also shifts much of the workload from weekly Council meetings to [newly formed committees](#). He noted that many procedural questions remain, such as how those committees will interact with the Mayor, the City Administrator, and the various City bureaus that rely on Council direction.

There is a high likelihood that one or two of these committees will interact with permitting and development given that there is a lot of attention on this topic. How exactly these relationships will work between groups such as DRAC and the Planning Commission is yet to be determined, but it will likely require a high level of coordination and staff support.

Oliveira explained that previously, Portland's five commissioners acted as bureau heads and had direct input on shaping bureau budgets. Now, the Mayor will propose a consolidated budget for all bureaus, and the twelve-member Council will amend or adopt it. Oliveira highlighted the financial challenges the City faces, particularly with the expiration of federal COVID-19 relief funds that had temporarily supported key programs. He emphasized the Mayor-elect's high-priority goals, specifically addressing homelessness, boosting affordable housing production, and stimulating economic recovery, and noted that those objectives will require substantial, sustained funding. Maintaining stable revenue streams and forging stronger partnerships with county and state entities will be crucial.

Continuing, Oliveira outlined the focus on strengthening inter-bureau coordination, particularly around infrastructure, housing, and economic development, since Council offices will no longer directly oversee individual bureaus. He encouraged continued communication with committees (like DRAC) so that operational improvements can align with the on-the-ground realities of permitting, development, small business needs, and housing production.

Oliveira also touched on the complexities of funding the permitting system, which has historically been cyclical and fee driven. He acknowledged that layoffs and rehiring's within the Bureau of Development Services (now part of PP&D) have impacted staff morale and continuity of expertise. In the near term, Oliveira is working to protect PP&D from the general fund cut request and that no staff layoffs are being looked at. However, it is highly likely that PP&D will need to cut all vacant positions.

Oliveira stated that they are aware of broader city-wide challenges around retaining a skilled workforce: salary pressures, inflation, and limited budgets place strain on day-to-day operations. Oliveira stressed that City leadership is working to avoid layoffs whenever possible, stressing the importance of retaining institutional knowledge at a time when Portland needs its most experienced employees to support the new government structure. Oliveira provided a short recap of the information provided and opened up time for questions.

Sam Miller, DRAC Chair, asked if Oliveira believed the Mayor Wilson's outreach to Multnomah County and other regional entities would reduce the longstanding disconnects in addressing homelessness. Oliveira stated that the Mayor-elect's early efforts already indicate a more cooperative approach. He

emphasized that the County's future Chief Operating Officer (COO) hire could heavily influence how effectively the City and County share resources and responsibilities.

Continuing, Miller asked Oliveira about maintaining housing initiatives given the loss of federal dollars and the perceived lack of private investor confidence in Portland. Oliveira acknowledged the challenge, referencing recent discussions with equity firms that remain cautious about local conditions. He spoke to the City's efforts to strengthen partnerships with state and federal agencies while exploring new revenue or cost-sharing mechanisms to mitigate shortfalls.

Peggy Moretti, DRAC member, asked about preserving existing structures as part of solving the housing crisis, especially considering the climate benefits and affordability potential of building reuse. Oliveira agreed on the importance of reuse and acknowledged that adaptive preservation or rehabilitation can be more complex to finance but is increasingly on the City's radar. He cited the City's approach of integrating older buildings into development strategies, although details are still forming.

Eli Spevek, DRAC member, was curious about how thoroughly the new Council members would be briefed on the budgeting process, as they will have considerable authority but limited policy staff. Oliveira stated that the incoming Council's orientation is constrained by time and the broad scope of topics they must learn. While the transition team sets up key briefings, there is no guarantee each new Councilor will receive an in-depth overview of complicated budget processes. He reaffirmed the administration's readiness to assist, though the final decision rests with Council leadership.

Citing staff morale and retention, Miller wondered about preventing further layoffs in fee-supported bureaus like PP&D, which have already faced repeated budget crunches. Oliveira acknowledged that it is an ongoing struggle to balance current operations with the long-term need for financial sustainability. He mentioned that budget requests have tried to hold PP&D "harmless" from additional cuts, but that rising labor and operational costs could still force tough decisions.

9:30 – 9:45 – Code Alignment Project Update

Mieke Keenan, Permit Improvement Team

Morgan Tracy, BPS

Mieke Keenan with the Permit Improvement Team (PIT) and Morgan Tracy with the Bureau of Planning & Sustainability (BPS) provided an update on the Code Alignment Project, an ongoing effort aimed at reducing permit delays and confusion by addressing inconsistencies in the City's development codes. This initiative is like BPS' RICAP (Regulatory Improvement Code Amendment Packages).

The first project coming out of this effort, focuses primarily on Titles 11, 17, and 21, which regulate right-of-way improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, and utility installations. Although private property regulations under Title 24, Building Code, and Title 33, Zoning Code, are not the main targets of this initial phase, Keenan noted that changes to right-of-way codes often have ripple

effects for development on private property, so they plan to keep codes synchronized where necessary.

A major focus of the project is reviewing the various thresholds that trigger infrastructure upgrades—like sidewalk or water meter improvements—whenever a permit application crosses certain valuation or development criteria. Keenan and Tracy explained that these thresholds, sometimes last updated decades ago, vary widely between different code sections and can be confusing for both applicants and staff. The misalignment can lead to project redesigns, added costs, and delays when requirements are unexpectedly triggered. By aligning and/or clarifying these thresholds, the project aims to boost predictability and streamline the overall development process.

They also outlined a plan to develop a “code database,” which would systematically capture recurring conflicts, prioritize issues for resolution, and serve as a reference point for ongoing amendments. This database approach mirrors how Title 33 is periodically revised under RICAP, though it will focus on infrastructure-related codes. Importantly, Mieke and Morgan highlighted that this is the first time multiple bureaus (e.g., PBOT, BES, Water, PP&D) have formed a unified team to reconcile overlapping regulations, and will allow more comprehensive amendments. They invited DRAC members to submit specific examples of code-related problems so the team can evaluate and address those in future updates.

Suzannah Stanley, meeting guest, asked how the Code Alignment Project would coordinate with Title 33, particularly nonconforming upgrades. She expressed concern that changes to right-of-way regulations could conflict with Title 33 if not handled in tandem. Tracy clarified that while the team recognizes the connection between right-of-way improvements and private-property standards, major Title 33 amendments are beyond this project’s immediate scope. The City will track any Title 33 conflicts that arise and will look to address them in a future code amendment packages.

Miller wondered if aligning thresholds across multiple code sections might inadvertently burden smaller-scale developers or businesses with disproportionate upgrade costs. He asked whether the project would differentiate between minor tenant improvements and larger construction projects. Keenan explained that right-sizing upgrade triggers is one of the project’s priorities. By updating outdated thresholds and ensuring they scale appropriately for different project scopes, it should lessen the shock of unforeseen infrastructure requirements and related costs.

9:45 – 10:00 - Pulse of the Industry

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Suzannah Stanley, noted increased discussion around large-scale public events and sports venues, referencing potential Major League Baseball expansion in Portland and other venue projects. The idea is that bringing major events to the city could spur economic benefits, attract visitors, and boost community morale.

Peggy Moretti, DRAC member, spoke to the importance of preserving and reusing existing buildings, both from an environmental standpoint and to help address housing needs. Moretti is interested in engaging DRAC members in exploring data to determine if it demonstrates a conflict between historic preservation mandates and the development of more affordable housing related to recent state legislation. Ross Caron, DRAC Staff Liaison, stated that he'd work with the committee Chairs and PP&D leadership to add this to an upcoming DRAC agenda.

The next DRAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 20, 2025.
Meeting notes prepared by Ross Caron (PP&D).

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