

## Transformer Siting Path to Approval

### For projects subject to Design Review or Historic Resource Review:

Step 1 – Schematic design phase will include an Early Assistance appointment and/or Pre-Application conference with City staff

1. Bureau of Development Services planner communicates the following to applicant:
  - a. Plan for power on-site: contact your power company to understand your power needs. Specifically, the size of the utility provider’s transformer and electrical room.
  - b. Identify your ground floor activation requirements (Zoning Code/land use approval criteria)
2. If planner finds no Code or Design/Historic Resource Review issues with the proposed location for a transformer on site:
  - a. Transformer is located on site
3. If planner finds Code or Design/Historic Resource Review regulations not met with the proposed location[s] for a transformer on site:
  - a. Applicant works with power provider to identify other suitable locations on private property. If unsuccessful, applicant follows ‘initial submittal’ guidelines in TRN 8.13, co-signed by utility, to request locating transformer in a vault in the ROW (*and city staff and applicant can get started on locating the vault to maximize trees and allow for utility needs*), or
  - b. Applicant can pursue further discussion to study design solutions in a Design Advice Request or additional Early Assistance meetings to allow transformer on site
    - i. If a solution is found:
      1. Transformer is located on site
    - ii. If no solutions:
      1. Follow step 3.a above

### For projects subject to permit only:

City websites\* set expectation to:

- a. Plan for power on-site: contact your power company to understand your power needs. Specifically, the size of the utility provider’s transformer and electrical room.
- b. Identify your ground floor activation requirements (Zoning Code)

Step 1 – Permit is submitted

1. If Bureau of Development Services planner finds no Zoning Code issues with transformer on site:
  - a. Transformer is located on site
2. If planner finds a Zoning Code issue with a transformer on site:
  - a. Applicant works with power provider to identify other suitable locations on private property to meet the Zoning Code regulations. If unsuccessful, applicant follows ‘initial submittal’ guidelines in TRN 8.13, co-signed by utility, to request locating transformer in a vault in the ROW (*and city staff and applicant can get started on locating the vault to maximize trees and allow for utility needs*), or
  - b. Applicant can pursue an Adjustment land use review to not meet Code

\* [Utility Vault Permitting and Leasing for Development | Portland.gov](#)

For all applications refer to ‘Guidance for Siting Electrical Transformers’ document for additional information on the right-of-way exceptions process and considerations for siting electrical transformers at the building’s street facing edge, found on the above web pages.