



May 20, 2020

Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
1900 SW 4th Ave
Suite 7100
Portland, OR
97201

Re: Expiration Date Extension Project

Chair Spevak and the members of the Planning and Sustainability Commission,

TVA Architects is writing in support of the Expiration Date Extension Project, with suggestions on how the project could be improved. The impacts of COVID-19 are clear to all those who work in the architecture, development and construction industries. While many projects are still moving forward, necessary social distancing requirements are affecting every aspect of project timelines, including design, financing, permitting and construction. Other projects have been paused, with the intent to resume, as clients evaluate economic conditions.

Ensuring that there is a shovel ready pipeline of construction projects will be an important part of the city's economic recovery. For this to happen, it is important that proposals that have been reviewed through Portland's rigorous Design Review system do not lose their approvals.

We are however concerned that the code language proposed in section 33.730.130 will only help a very small number of projects. As written, final decisions that become effective in the second half of 2020 would have their expiration dates extended from the second half of 2023, to January 1, 2024—at most, a six month extension. This will not help projects that have been reviewed and approved in recent years.

We instead suggest that all projects whose final approval would have expired on or after January 1, 2019 have their expiration dates extended a further three years beyond their original expiration dates.

Furthermore, we ask that the Bureau of Development Services work to keep projects that have a building permit under review active. A building permit typically expires after six

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months of inactivity. While this can be extended, the extension is discretionary with no certainty that it will be approved.

A building permit that lapses will have a particular impact on projects that were submitted for review prior to January 1, 2020, under the 2014 edition of the Oregon Structural Specialty Code (OSSC). A project would then need to be resubmitted for review against the 2019 edition of the OSSC—a code which was not published until October 1, 2019. Redesigning a project for the new building code could have substantial impacts, and would certainly add to the project's schedule and budget. This can be avoided, as long as active building permit applications are allowed to remain active.

We would like to thank the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and the Bureau of Development Services for taking on the Expiration Date Extension Project. With changes, we believe it can act as a crucial stimulus to Portland's economy, without requiring any public dollars.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Iain MacKenzie', written in a cursive style.

Iain MacKenzie AIA,
Associate,
TVA Architects