



# City of Portland Design Commission

## Briefing

### MEMORANDUM

**Date:** April 11, 2022  
**To:** Portland Design Commission  
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Tim Heron, BDS, Design & Historic Review Team  
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**Re:** Plan for Power – Private Transformers & the ROW Briefing on April 21, 2022

The Portland Bureau of Transportation and Bureau of Development Services will be briefing the Design Commission and the Historic Landmarks Commission on Plan for Power – Private Transformers and the Right of Way.

Background:

PBOT is updating requirements for approving the siting of utility infrastructure in the right-of-way for the benefit of the adjacent property owner. Siting this infrastructure (electrical transformers, fuel tanks, etc.) in the right-of-way can help developments meet requirements for ground floor activation, but can also reduce or eliminate spaces for street trees, impinge on the pedestrian through zone, and force utility connections to the building closer together which can violate clearance requirements.

PBOT and BDS worked together (with outreach to PGE and PPL) to revise the approval process in a manner that maintains an approval path that supports ground floor activation policies, but modifies the process to permit this infrastructure in the right-of-way by exception only. Updated submittal requirements in TRN 8.13 includes documenting that the applicant was unable to identify a suitable location with their service provider and City staff on-site in a manner that satisfies ground floor activation requirements in the zoning code and design and historic overlays (if applicable).

PBOT and BDS are seeking your input and comments on the proposal.

Attached:

- *Plan for Power Slides for DC 4-21-22*
- *Guidance for Siting Electrical Transformers - 10.27.21 DRAFT*