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111-2023

Communication

Request of Brett Friederick to address Council regarding Bureau of Development Services and housing crisis

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A brief description of Communication: The current state of the Portland Bureau of Development Services contributes to the housing crisis

Agenda Items

111 Communications in [February 8, 2023 Council Agenda](#)

Placed on File

Requested Agenda Type

Communications

Date and Time Information

Requested Council Date
February 8, 2023

From: [Brett Friederick](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Subject: Brett Friederick written testimony for City Council meeting 2/8/23
Date: Tuesday, February 7, 2023 9:27:10 PM

Hello, my name is Brett Friederick, and today I'm speaking on one of the challenges that prevents affordable housing from being created in Portland. The permitting process through the Portland Bureau of Development Services.

I work for a local architecture and construction company that specializes in ADUs and additions. Almost all of our work helps increase the density of Portland and is for middle or low income level clients.

Portland desperately needs housing at these income levels. However, most residential permits, such as building permits for ADUs, can take many months to be approved.

Governor Tina Kotek has announced a statewide housing production goal of 36,000 new housing units a year.

I am very concerned that the delay in permits being released will impact the ability of Portland to produce enough housing to counteract the suffering occurring around us.

In addition, if we are not careful in creating the right system for permitting, it will mean that permits for very large residential projects will end up being an even greater percentage of the housing units created. This could end up funneling more wealth to top individuals, and not making Portland more equitable.

I believe that one of the best paths towards making Portland equitable is to make it easier for middle class citizens to be able to develop multiple units on their properties, as the housing units they can afford to build will naturally be of a small, personal, and affordable scale.

I believe that the Bureau of Development Services has an excellent program that can be adapted to allow for this kind of development. The field issuance remodel program, also called the FIR program.

From portland.gov:

"The FIR program was implemented in 2003 as a pilot permit guide program to serve contractors who perform recurring residential alterations, additions on one or two-family dwellings and accessory structures (new and existing) to streamline the plan review and inspection process."

From my experience, the FIR program is the best way for smaller scale, equitable, and responsive residential development to occur in Portland. Most building permits are able to be approved within a month of the application date.

I recommend that the city council propose to the Bureau of Development Services an expansion of the FIR program to include all types of housing under the Residential Infill project. This would open up the program to ADUs and smaller multi unit buildings such as duplexes and quadplexes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brett Friederick (Sent from Mobile)