

# Briefing

## COMMISSION MEMO

**Date:** 10/2/23

**To:** Historic Landmarks Commission

**From:** Staci Monroe, Design / Historic Review  
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**Re:** Briefing on Housing Regulatory Relief (HRR) Code Project  
Historic Landmarks Commission 10/9/23 hearing

This memo is regarding the upcoming briefing from the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) on the **HRR Code Project** on 10/9. The digital copy of the code package can be found at [efiles.portlandoregon.gov/record/16344107](https://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/record/16344107). BPS has also provided a memo to the Commission with an overview of the project.

The intent of this memo is to highlight some code amendments that are relevant to the work of the Historic Landmarks Commission concerning the public realm.

**Ground Floor Active Use** - Provides a 5-year waiver to the ground level active use and the ground level dimensional development standards that apply outside Central City and a 5-year waiver to the prohibition of residential on the ground floor within Central City.

- Ensuring the public realm is safe, vibrant and active is the essence of the hard work staff and the Historic Landmarks Commission do in the City's densest areas. Providing much needed housing **and** supporting efforts to ensure our main streets and core are safe, vibrant and active are **both** critical to the future of our City. There are some streets in Portland's highest density areas that should maintain the Code's current minimal regulations to ensure the health and longevity of existing active uses and maintain the vibrancy Portlanders love about the centers of their neighborhoods and visitors have loved about downtown.

**Security Gates and Lighting** - Creates a Design Review (DZ) exemption for security gates that are 50% open work and lighting on the ground floor that focuses downward.

- Security gates with high transparency promote safer and more vibrant sidewalks due to increased light and better surveillance and limits the surface for graffiti. BDS staff recommended to BPS 70% transparency, modeled after Portland City Council's 2021 emergency Ordinance and also New York City's regulations [nyc.gov/assets/sbs/downloads/pdf/neighborhoods/storefront-guide.pdf](https://nyc.gov/assets/sbs/downloads/pdf/neighborhoods/storefront-guide.pdf).
- Many owners of historic buildings are requesting security measures, such as gates, cameras, and lighting. An exemption for buildings otherwise subject to Design Review could be used as a guide for minimum expectations for similar measures applied to historic buildings; staff seeks your comments on this proposed exemption.

Please reach out with any questions.