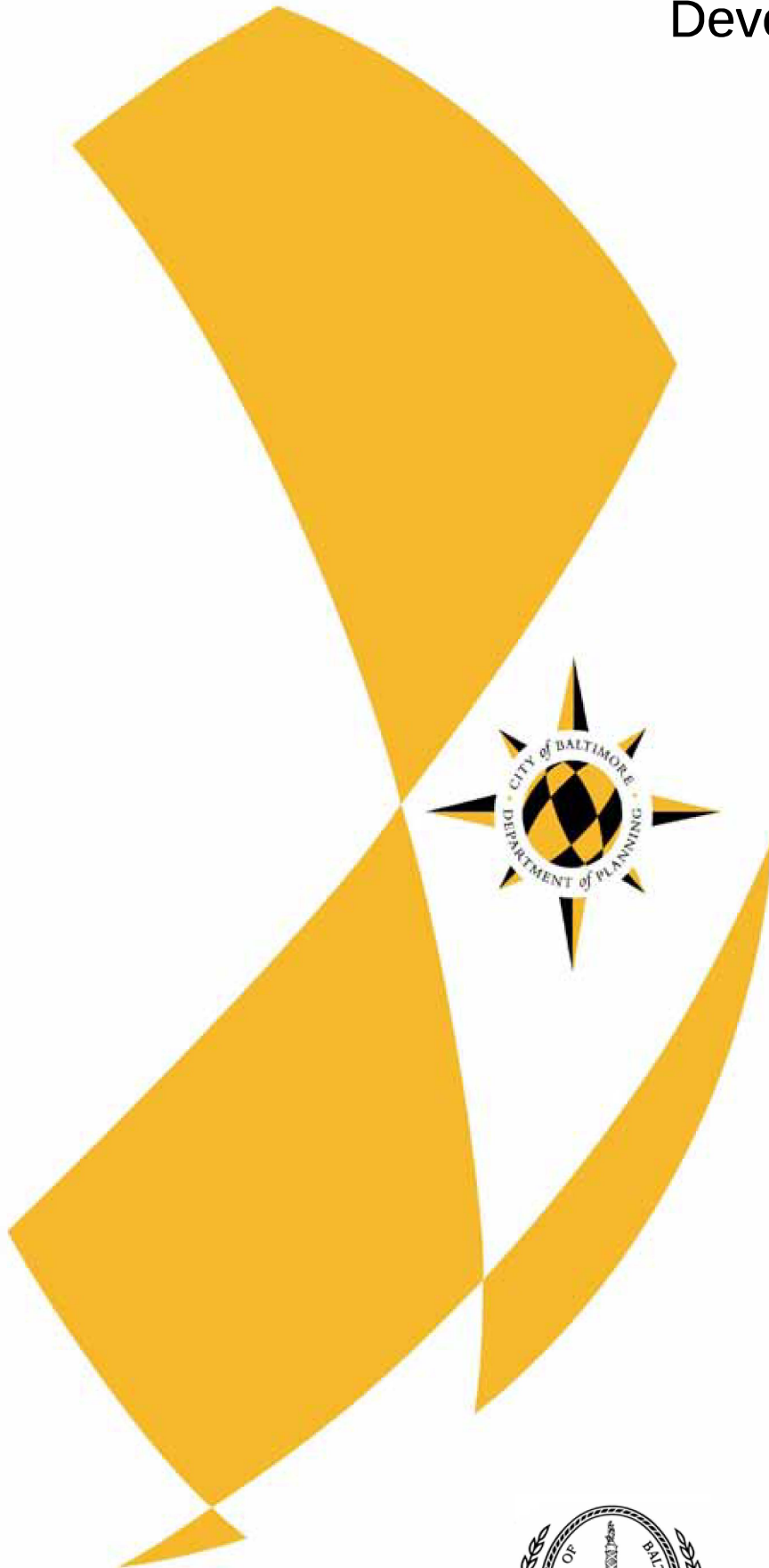
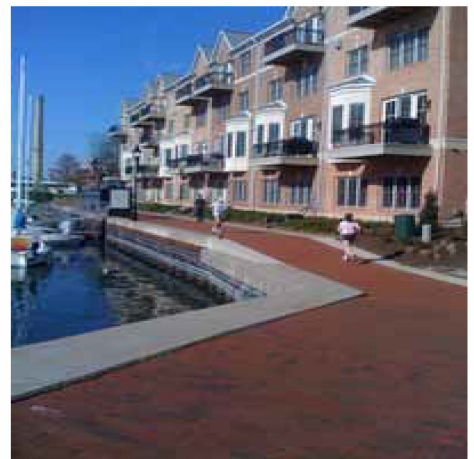
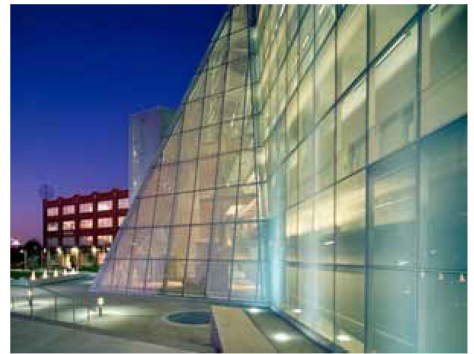


# Development Guidebook

Requirements for Building in Baltimore City



Thomas J. Stosur  
Director

Catherine E. Pugh  
Mayor

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## INTRODUCTION

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Thomas J. Stosur  
Director

This Development Guidebook outlines the development process for all who are interested to invest in Baltimore City including developers, engineers, architects and property owners. We appreciate your interest and hope this Guidebook will help you understand the development process and its requirements.

Our development process begins with a pre-development review meeting that allows developers to share their proposals with the Department of Planning staff. Renovations and rehabilitation projects may not require further reviews and may proceed directly to building permits. However, new construction and significant development plans will continue through various review processes as outlined in the Guidebook.

I encourage all developers and builders to carefully and thoroughly refer to the applicable sections of this development guidebook. Department of Planning staff is available at all stages of development review to assist applicants through all required review processes.

We constantly strive to streamline and improve our development review process. Examples of this include Planning Commission adoption of new Subdivision Regulations, which went in to effect on January 1, 2011, as well as our efforts toward adoption of a new Baltimore City Zoning Code and a separate landscape ordinance. Please see <http://www.rewritebaltimore.org/> and [www.transformbaltimore.net](http://www.transformbaltimore.net) for more information on this, and continue to inform us of your suggestions for further improvements.

I would also like to remind all investors and developers to be mindful and consider the environment and sustainability. The Baltimore Office of Sustainability, housed within the Planning Department, is available to assist with this.

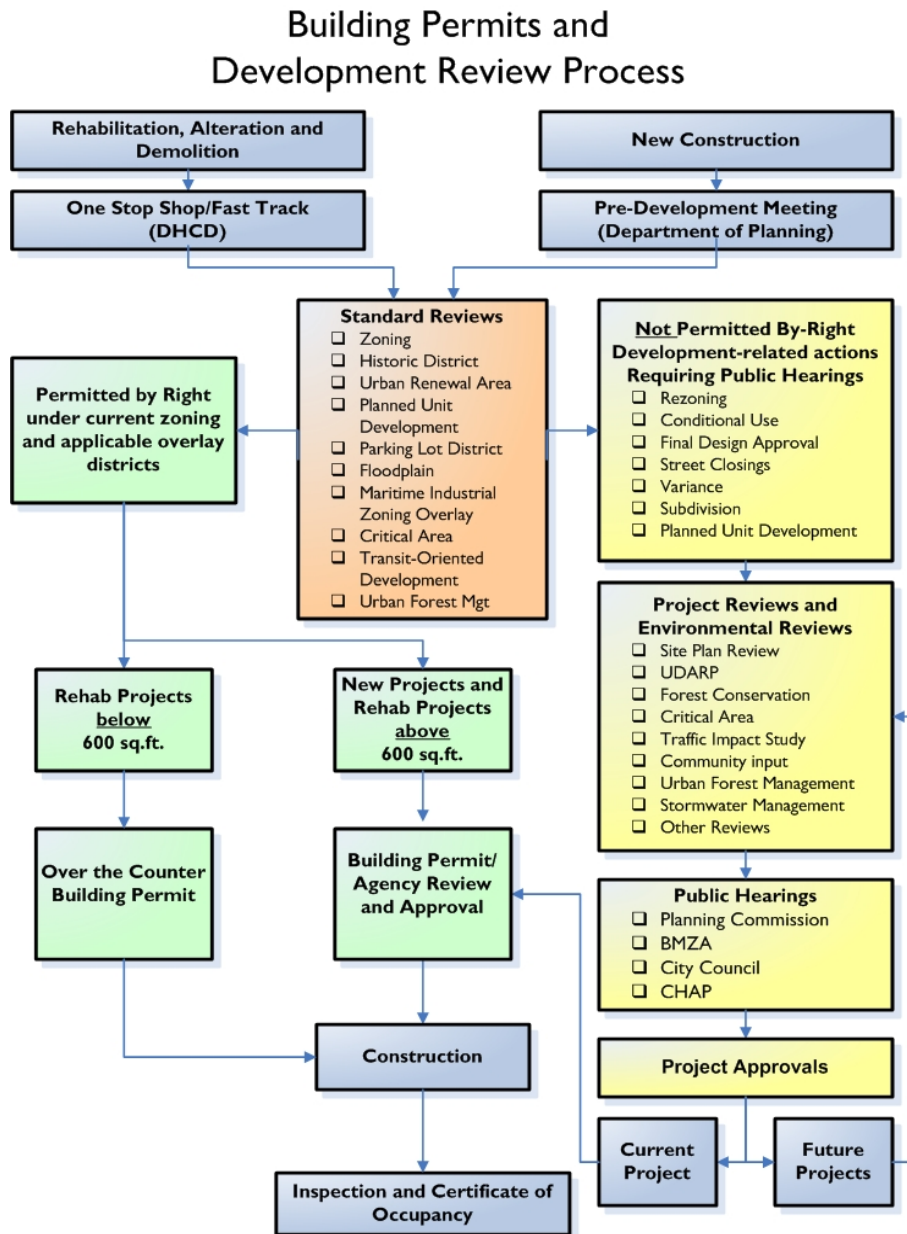
We truly appreciate your interest in developing in Baltimore.

*Thomas J. Stosur*

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# OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

## Development Process Flow Chart



## Agencies & Review Bodies

A variety of agencies, commissions, and other review bodies may play a role in the development approval process, depending on their applicability to the scope and nature of a proposed project. A brief description of each entity and its role follows below.

- *City Council*

The [City Council](#) is the City's legislative body, with the power to enact all ordinances and resolutions. City Council members are elected from fourteen districts, and the President is elected at-large, by all voters of the City. The fifteen City Council members, along with the Mayor, act only by ordinance, resolution or motion. They adopt and may alter the annual budget and confirm the Mayor's appointments. The City Council is responsible for the appropriation of General Obligation bonds. The City Council determines its own rules of procedure, and its meetings are open to the public.

- *Planning Commission*

The City Charter defines the key responsibilities of the [Planning Commission](#) as: preparing and updating plans showing the physical development of the City; developing a capital budget and six-year capital development program for consideration of the Board of Estimates; developing and maintaining a Comprehensive Master Plan for the City; reviewing all proposals for the subdivision of land within the City for conformance to specified standards; and reviewing all proposed amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance and making recommendations to the City Council. The Planning Commission relies on the staff of the Department of Planning to accomplish these mandates, as well as to carry out new and expanded responsibilities commissioners have assumed over the years. The Commission meets regularly throughout the year, and its meetings are open to the public.

- *Department of Planning*

The mission of the [Department of Planning](#) is to provide the highest level services and leadership in urban and strategic planning, historical and architectural preservation, zoning, design, development, and capital budgeting to promote the sustained economic, social, and community development of the City of Baltimore.

The Department has established six planning divisions to help it carry out its mission: Office of the Director, Land Use and Urban Design, Comprehensive Planning, Research and Strategic Planning, Historical and Architectural Preservation, and the Office of Sustainability.

- *Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC)*

The [Site Plan Review Committee](#) is a multi-agency review body intended to ensure that proposed development complies with Baltimore City's Zoning Code, the Subdivision Rules and Regulations, Building Codes, and other commonly accepted transportation, environmental and institutional guidelines and requirements. The recommendations of the SPRC are intended to ensure safe, functional, efficient and orderly development with high standards of design. The committee meets weekly to review plans according to its official published guidelines.

– *Urban Design & Architectural Review Panel (UDARP)*

The goal of the [Urban Design and Architectural Review Panel](#) is to achieve the highest quality for the planned and built environment of Baltimore City by providing the Planning Commission and the Department of Planning with design review expertise in the areas of urban design, architecture, and landscape design for all proposed master planning efforts and significant development projects.

Specifically, the Panel is empowered to provide review and professional design assistance of signature sites, significant projects that are proposed in renewal and/or conservation areas, Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), and master plans. City sponsored projects and those in which the City is providing financial or legislative support may be required to have Panel review. Additionally, projects that require zoning changes or variances and/or Planning Commission final design approval may be reviewed by the Panel.

The Panel is comprised of individuals who bring expertise in various aspects of architectural, urban, and landscape design. Their advice and recommendations are advisory. Members are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Director of Planning.

○ *Commission for Historical & Architectural Preservation (CHAP)*

Baltimore City's [Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation](#) (CHAP) has helped to preserve our City's historic neighborhoods and sites since 1964. Over 10,000 buildings have been designated by CHAP as either local landmarks or part of a local historic district, making the Baltimore City preservation program the most encompassing one in Maryland.

The CHAP Mission is to enhance and promote the culture and economy of Baltimore through the preservation of buildings, structures, sites and neighborhoods that have aesthetic, historic and architectural value. CHAP goals include preserving historic architecture and monuments; reclaiming broken neighborhoods; preventing demolition by neglect; and integrating our City's past into its future. CHAP programs include: survey and designation of districts and landmarks; permit and plans review; Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits; Baltimore National Heritage Area; Monument Restoration; Edgar Allan Poe House Museum and events; technical assistance and research for neighborhoods and public spaces.

○ *Board of Municipal & Zoning Appeals (BMZA)*

The [BMZA](#) hears and determines all zoning appeals (variances and conditional uses), basing its decisions on what will promote the health, security, morals, and general welfare of the community. The board has these general goals: it prevents the overcrowding of land; avoids undue concentration of population; provides adequate light and air; secures safety from fire, panic, and other dangers; reduces congestion in the streets; helps for adequate transportation, water, sewers, schools, parks, and other public services.



- *Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD)*  
The Department of Housing and Community Development includes the following divisions involved in the development review process:
  - *Office of Permits & Building Inspections*  
Baltimore Housing's [Office of Permits & Building Inspections](#) enforces the Baltimore City Building Code, as well as State laws pertaining to construction and occupancy. This office issues building permits and provides subsequent inspections for: construction, alteration, electrical, mechanical and plumbing work in both commercial and residential structures.
  - *Zoning Administrator*  
The [Office of the Zoning Administrator](#) is responsible for insuring that construction activity and land use complies with the City's zoning code. Primary responsibilities include issuing zoning authorizations and use permits, inspecting structures and reviewing land uses to ensure compliance with the zoning code, and initiating appropriate actions when zoning violations exist. In addition, the Zoning Administrator maintains permanent records of all maps adopted under the zoning code; all amendments to the zoning code; applications for and approvals of conditional uses and variances; and appeals taken to the Board of Municipal Zoning Appeals (BMZA). The office receives, files, and forwards to the BMZA applications for conditional uses, variances, appeals, and other matters on which the Board is required to act; and determines use, lot, and bulk regulations.
  - *Housing Code Enforcement*  
To maintain safe and attractive neighborhoods throughout the city, Baltimore Housing's [Code Enforcement Division](#) enforces the city's housing, zoning, building and related codes.
- *Department of Transportation*  
The [Department of Transportation](#) provides the City of Baltimore with a comprehensive and modern transportation system that integrates all modes of travel and provides mobility and accessibility in a convenient, safe and cost-effective manner. Transportation's primary roles in development review are to participate in the Site Plan Review Committee, to implement the Traffic Impact Study (TIS) program, and to review Developer's Agreements and permit applications.

### **Pre-Development Meetings**

The Department of Planning encourages all developers and/or property owners, experienced or inexperienced, to meet with staff before undertaking a major development or renovation project. The purpose of this meeting, known as the Pre-Development Meeting, is to supply the developer with information related to the development review process and for staff to advise developers of relevant Building, Housing, Zoning, and other City Codes that may impact a proposal.

At the Pre-Development Meeting, the developer must present a concept plan for staff's review. This is simply an informal map, drawing, sketch or plan that indicates the scope and nature of proposed development. If the developer has a more formalized preliminary development plan, they may waive the Pre-Development Meeting and proceed directly to Site Plan Review (Please see the "Standard Project Reviews" section of this guidebook for SPRC Guidelines). Please note that the Pre-Development Meeting is for informational purposes only, in no way implying project approval.

Pre-Development Meetings can be arranged directly through the Department of Planning's [homepage](#). The online request form and step-by-step instructions are both available under the "Resources" section, or by clicking [here](#). Once the request form has been submitted, a member of Planning staff will contact the applicant to set up a meeting. If you have questions about completing the form, please call 410-396-8408 or 410-396-4488.

## BY-RIGHT PROJECTS AND PERMITS

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### Definition of “By-Right”

By-right development refers to a proposed use and/or structure permitted in a zoning district without additional approvals requiring a public hearing or meeting, and which complies with the provisions of the Zoning Code, as well as any other applicable City Code or regulation.

### Overview of the Permit Review Process

Building permit applications can be divided into two basic categories: (1.) those that do not require submission of plan drawings and can be processed over-the-counter in the city’s One-Stop-Shop Permit Center and (2.) those more complex projects which are managed by the Plans Examining office, do require plan drawings, and involve referral to outside agencies.

- *One-Stop Shop Permit Center – 417 E. Fayette St. Rm. 100*  
Baltimore City’s One-Stop Center is located at Room 100, 417 E Fayette Street, overlooking the courtyard by City Hall and the War Memorial Building. The One-Stop Shop Permit Center is designed to create a customer friendly environment and to aid faster permits by eliminating lengthy wait times. In the One-Stop Shop Center, the customer would go through the information desk, Zoning Enforcement, Office Services and the Cashier in approximately 15-30 minutes.
  - *Information Counter – (410) 396-3495*  
The Information Counter does an initial review of all Baltimore City Permit Applications. In addition, they would be assisting customers in filling out permit application to ensure that application, plans and other documentation are provided and they meet the general plans acceptance requirements. Upon completion of application, they would provide a number to the applicant to see zoning person within the One Stop Shop Center.
  - *Zoning – (410) 396-4128*  
Zoning does an initial review of the project for compliance with the Zoning Ordinance of Baltimore City before plans are submitted and will either give an approval at that time or accept the project for "filing only" and reserve approval pending the resolution of certain questions. In the case of a zoning violation, a zoning appeal would be required. A zoning appeal is a formal process heard before the Zoning Board on a specific scheduled date. Upon their completion zoning provides a number to the applicant to see office services within the One Stop Shop Center.
  - *Office Services – (410) 396-3360*  
Office service processes the permit application by recording the information from the permit application to the Tidemark permit tracking system and also verifies the license numbers of the contractors and whether or not special referrals are required is also determined. Special referrals may be made to the Minor Privilege

section, which is interested in any projections into Baltimore City's right-of-way, or may be made if the project lies in certain specific areas of the city. These areas are studied by organizations such as Department of Planning, CHAP (Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation), BDC (Baltimore Development Corporation) and Commercial revitalization.

Upon completion by office services, the applicant pays a \$25 non-refundable filing fee to the cashier within the One-Stop-Shop Center. An additional permit fee may also apply. After paying all the required fees, the applicant gets an Over-the-Counter (OTC) permit or when plans are required, receives an assigned tracking number for plans review from the Information Counter. The Information counter is the final stage in the permit issuing process.

**Parking:** There are reserved parking spaces for customers of the One-Stop Shop on the 2nd floor of the Water Street garage, located at 414 Water Street. Parking vouchers are issued in the One-Stop Shop.

- *Plans Examining – (410) 396-3460 – 417 E. Fayette St. Rm. 101*  
The Plans Examining and Code Enforcement Section of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) serves as the focal point for the plans review process. There, the processed application is assigned a "plans number", which serves as the reference name of the project throughout the review. The plan sets are stamped and routed by way of a designated courier to the relevant city agencies. These departments may include the Department of Public Works, the Health Department, the Planning Department, and the Fire Department, among others. Please see “Agency Referrals & Standard Reviews” for a description of each agency’s scope of responsibility in the permit review process.

Within the Plans Examining Section, the construction plan set is reviewed for architectural, structural, electrical, mechanical, and plumbing code compliance. Each project is assigned an architectural/structural, an electrical, and a mechanical/plumbing plans examiner. The engineers and architects of Plans Examining work directly with the project design engineers and architects. In order to facilitate the review of large projects, preliminary meetings prior to the submittal of plans are available for project design architects and engineers for a fee of \$50 per half hour.

In addition to those assigned reviewers working in the Plans Examining Section, there is a plans review coordinator for each city agency involved in the permitting process. If a referred agency has issues with a plans set, these must be resolved with that individual directly. This sometimes requires the submission of revised plans, which must be brought to Plans Examining and then rerouted to the other departments. There may be a fee associated with revised plans. Ultimately, the various departments will transmit their comments and approvals back to Plans Examining. Once all agencies have signed off, the building permit is ready to be issued. The final site and construction plan set gets assembled, and a building permit fee is assessed.

**Fast Track:** For even quicker review of certain projects, we offer an expedited process called "Fast Track". Fast Track is available for projects such as commercial tenant fit-outs or minor alterations and when plans do not require a referral to any agency other than the Fire Department. Fast Track review is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays. To make an appointment, call 410-396-3460.

## Filing an Application

File your completed application in person at: The One-Stop Shop, 417 E. Fayette St., Room 100. Not sure if your project requires a permit? Call them at 410-396-3360. Permit applications and resources (as well as a listing of project types that do NOT require a permit) can be found online here:

[http://www.baltimorehousing.org/permit\\_resources](http://www.baltimorehousing.org/permit_resources)

## Agency Referrals & Standard Reviews

- *Department of Public Works – (410) 396-4840 – 200 N. Holliday St.*  
Within the Department of Public Works (DPW), there are a total of 10 possible sections which may need to see the project. A plans disseminator at DPW does a preliminary review of the job, puts the DPW stamps on the plan sets, and determines to which sections the plans must circulate. These may include:
  - Property Location 410-396-3634
  - Record Section 410-396-3643
  - Highways & Footways 410-396-6816
  - Traffic & Lighting 410-396-6872
  - Water Engineering 410-396-1483
  - Waste Water Engineering 410-396-3694
  - Storm Water Engineering 410-396-4700
  - Conduits 410-396-6890
  - Environmental Engineering 410-396-4840
  - Pollution Control Section 410-396-9695

Any new construction or additions and some other exterior work will require site (plot) plans. See the official published guidelines of the SPRC for drawing requirements. Any project which involves site disturbance of 5,000 square feet or greater must include sediment and erosion control (SEC) plans, as well as stormwater management (SWM) plans. During the planning stage of such a project, the Environmental Engineering Section should be contacted to discuss its requirements. See “Standard Project Reviews” for more information. After the project has circulated through the pertinent DPW sections, 2 approved site plan sets are returned to Plans Examining.

Other permits or approvals, which may be required and are obtained directly from DPW include developer's agreements, right of entry permits, easements, curb cuts, street closure permits, and utility agreements and permits.

- *Fire Department – (410) 545-1883*  
Baltimore City Fire Department personnel is located at Plans Examining office and reviews both building construction plan sets and fire protection system plan sets for compliance with The National Fire Prevention Code and the National Fire Codes. In addition to providing Plans Examining with a written report of comments on particular "plan numbers", the Fire Department also requires specific fire department permits to be purchased. For example, fire Protection, fire alarm and tank permits are required both from DHCD and the Fire Department. In contrast, commercial kitchen hood suppression system permits are issued by the Fire Department exclusively.
- *Health Department – (410) 396-4544 – 210 Guilford Avenue, 2nd Floor*  
The Health Department, Division of Environmental Health Services, is a part of the use and occupancy chain that incorporates federal, state and local laws pertaining to a variety of major development, construction, and utilization specifications.

The types of facilities subject to Health Department pre- and post-permit inspection are listed below. If you are developing such a facility, please contact the Health Department directly to be informed of relevant code requirements aimed at disease prevention and safety.

- Day Care Centers
  - Hospitals and specific rooms
  - All food service and retail facilities
  - Large assisted living homes (17 or more non-related people)
  - Nursing/Convalescence homes
  - Juvenile facilities
  - Incarceration facilities (half-way homes, group homes, etc.)
  - Swimming pools
  - Boutiques
  - Car washes
  - Convenience stores
  - Mobile diners
  - Manufacturers and processing plants
  - Warehouse and distribution centers
  - Vending concessions (movies, stadiums, museums, etc.)
  - Cruise ships
- *Department of Planning – (410) 396-7526 – 417 East Fayette Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor*  
The Department of Planning is referred applications when the subject site is in a Planned Unit Development, an Urban Renewal Plan area (administered by the Department of Planning), a local historic district, the Critical Area, a flood zone, if the project involves a subdivision, or if the project is large enough to trigger Forest Conservation requirements. The Land Use and Urban Design Division of the Department of Planning coordinates project development and permit review. More detailed requirements for project reviews can be found in “Projects Requiring Special Approvals.”

- *Department of Transportation – (410) 396-6802 – 417 East Fayette Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor*  
The Department of Transportation’s Highway Design and Traffic Engineering Sections review plans for new construction for compliance with accepted engineering and design standards.

## **Once a Permit Has Been Issued**

- *Monitoring & Inspections*  
Once an applicant receives a building permit, DHCD becomes the enforcement agency that ensures work being done meets building code standards and is consistent with the permit issued. At various stages of construction, the development must notify DHCD so that work can be inspected before it is covered. Construction will be subject to building and MEP (mechanical, electrical and plumbing) inspections by DHCD. In addition, it will be subject to DPW for the following: sediment and erosion control/stormwater management/water quality; utility connections; footways and driveways; right-of-way permits.
- *Certificate of Completion*  
Once inspections are complete, the Building Inspector certifies that the work is in substantial conformance with the Building code, and the applicant pays a fee for certificate of completion.
- *Use & Occupancy Permits*  
A separate use and occupancy permit must be obtained in the following cases: when there is a change in the use of a structure, when a property is purchased, or when a new building is constructed. These permits may be applied for at DHCD’s One-Stop Shop. At that time, a DHCD building inspector checks the use of the structure and ensures that it is Code compliant. These permit applications may also be referred to other agencies for review.

**Quick Track** is an interactive phone system that allows citizens and contractors to schedule permit-related inspections, obtain inspection results, and hear the status of permits with plans, with the ease of a phone call. Quick Trac can be accessed by calling 443-984-2776. Spoken instructions will guide you step-by-step through the process. All you will need is the permit number to schedule inspections, or plan number to check plans review status. Website: [http://www.baltimorehousing.org/permit\\_quicktrac](http://www.baltimorehousing.org/permit_quicktrac)

## PROJECTS REQUIRING SPECIAL APPROVALS

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### Legislative Approvals

Certain development projects cannot proceed until new code or code changes have been enacted. These special legislative approvals follow the typical City Council bill process, which is described later. What follows are the most typical land use approvals requiring legislation:

- *Rezoning*

The rezoning of a property or properties is regulated by Article 66B of the [State of Maryland Annotated Code](#), as well as Section 16-305 of the [Baltimore City Zoning Code](#). State law dictates that the Mayor and City Council may periodically amend or reclassify the zoning of a particular property after making specific findings of fact; determining that there has either been a change in the character of the neighborhood where the property is located or a mistake in the existing zoning classification; and studying the proposed changes in relation to the plan, the needs of Baltimore City, and the needs of the particular neighborhood in the vicinity of the proposed changes. According to the Baltimore City Zoning Code, the Planning Commission must first find the change to be in the public interest and not solely for the interest of the applicant.
- *Conditional Uses*

A conditional use is generally defined as a use compatible with the already-permitted uses in a particular zoning classification. However, because of some characteristic such as noise, odor, or traffic, it requires additional scrutiny and special permission by the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (see “Non-Legislative Approvals”) or an Ordinance by the Mayor and City Council. Examples of activities that require conditional use approval by Ordinance include parking lots in residential areas, high-density elderly housing, and drive-through restaurants.
- *Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)*

The Planned Unit Development is a development tool used for large or complex projects and intended to encourage the best possible design of building forms and site planning under a unitary development plan. The floor area ratio and density requirements of the underlying zoning category still apply. However they can be aggregated across the entirety of the site, as opposed to applied on a lot-by-lot basis. This allows the transfer of development rights within the PUD area. Density premiums may be granted based on specific criteria. The process is similar to a zoning change and is outlined in detail in Title 9 of the Zoning Code.
- *Landmark & Local Historic District Designations*

Landmark and new local historic district designations are accomplished by ordinance, subject to the basic City Council Bill process described below. However, prior to introduction of the required legislation, the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) and Planning Commission may hear the request and recommend approval. Once the actual bill is introduced, it will be referred to the Planning



Commission for a recommendation. If the request has already been deliberated on and approved, it can be approved by consent.

Please note that any change to a Baltimore City landmark or to a property within a local historic district must be presented to CHAP for review and approval before a building permit can be issued. Please see “Special Project Reviews” for more information.

- *Sale of City Property*

- *Sale of Surplus City Property*

- The process for handling surplus property begins when an agency declares a property as surplus. The Real Estate Department notifies the Space Utilization Committee and the Department of Planning that the operating agency has declared a specific property surplus. Planning notifies and solicits the view of City Council, other city agencies, and community associations and forwards proposals for reuse of surplus properties to the City’s Space Utilization Committee. Inquiries regarding the sale of surplus City property should be addressed to the Department of Real Estate or DHCD Asset Management.

- *Sale of Properties through Tax Sale*

- In May of each year, the City holds an auction of properties for which taxes were not paid during the previous tax year. Information concerning the auction and a list of properties offered can be obtained from the Department of Finance. Information on assuming the City’s interest in those tax certificates issued on properties not sold at the auction can be obtained from the Real Estate Department.

- *Sale of City-Owned Residential Properties*

- Current information on purchasing City-owned residential properties can be obtained from DHCD’s Office of Asset Management and Property Disposition, and from Baltimore Housing’s website, [www.baltimorehousing.org](http://www.baltimorehousing.org). Some residential properties can be purchased through Housing’s Vacants to Value program. Larger groupings of homes and vacant land are regularly offered through competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) offerings.

- *Street Closings*

The closing of public streets requires extensive City agency review, particularly into such issues as abandonment or relocation of utility lines and maintaining access to areas of future development. Requests for street closings must be submitted by letter to the Department of General Services (DGS) stating the reasons for the request. Twenty copies of the plat showing the street and the abutting properties must be included. Letters and plats should be sent to: Department of General Services, Right of Ways Section, 200 N. Holliday Street, Baltimore, MD 21202 (410-396-5023).

Copies of the request are circulated through DGS and the departments of Public Works, Planning and Transportation to determine how the street closing will affect the public

interest. If the reviewing agencies consent to the request, the applicant is asked to provide a title search to show the rights both the applicant and other parties have in the street and to determine fee simple ownership of the street bed. If the title search shows that other parties have rights to the bed of the street, the applicant must then negotiate the surrender of those rights.

After agency review, the street closing request will be referred to the Planning Commission. After finding that the street and/or alleys are no longer needed for public purpose, they may be closed and sold. This requires the introduction of separate City Council bills for the opening and closing of the street, and sometimes a third bill for the sale of City property. The bills follow the basic process as described above. However, once referred to the Planning Commission, they can be approved by consent since the request must have already been deliberated on and approved.

Please note that the applicant for a street closing must enter into an agreement with the City for the cost of a title search, payment of the appraised value of the land, the cost of utility abandonment or relocation, advertising and administrative costs and must agree to hold the City harmless from any claims made against the City for the closing of a street. If no problems are anticipated, a right of entry may be granted prior to finalizing the street closing.

After a street closing ordinance is passed, there is an opportunity for appeals to be made to the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals contesting the awards and damages set during the public hearings. If no appeal is made within the 20-day limit, a final notice is issued and the street is officially closed.

- *Franchises*  
Projection of any private use or construction into the area of a public sidewalk or street requires that the City grant a limited right to permit the encroachment. Projections that exceed those listed as a minor privilege (see “Non-Legislative Approvals”) require a franchise ordinance approved by the Mayor and City Council. Bridge ways between two buildings, underground electric conduits, and underground snow melting systems are examples of work that require a franchise ordinance. A franchise ordinance follows the typical City Council bill process described below. Thirty copies of a plan showing the proposed encroachment should be submitted to the Department of General Services, Right of Ways Section, 200 N. Holliday Street, Baltimore, MD 21202 and 410-396-5023.
- *Namings*  
The naming or renaming of a public street, park, or building requires a City Council Bill for Planning Commission approval, and subsequently an Ordinance (see the typical City Council bill process described below).

## Overview of the City Council Bill Process

What follows is a brief outline of the City Council bill process. Those City Council committees with the greatest relevance to development projects include Land Use and Transportation or Urban Affairs and Aging (for Urban Renewal Plans).

- *Introduction*

A bill is submitted by a Council member for introduction to the City Council. The office of Legislative Reference assists in preparing the bill.
- *First Reading*

Each bill is given a number by the Executive Secretary to the Council and assigned to a committee. The bill number and title are read at the Council meeting and the President assigns the bill to the appropriate committee(s) for study. Much of the work of the Council is done in committees and subcommittees. Committees are established at the first Council meeting of each term. The president assigns each bill that is not immediately adopted to an appropriate committee or subcommittee. A copy of the bill is also sent to the appropriate city agencies. Each agency issues a written report on the bill. These reports are forwarded to the Executive Secretary and the committee assigned to study the bill.
- *Committee Consideration*

Generally, a committee will hold a public hearing after all reports are received from agencies. Legislation may be heard more quickly, if requested by the Committee Chair and approved by the Body.
- *Public Hearing Schedule*

The City Council publishes a hearing schedule. A free copy of the hearing schedule may be obtained from the Office of the Executive Secretary or from the City Council website at [www.baltimorecitycouncil.com](http://www.baltimorecitycouncil.com)
- *Second Reading*

The committee chair, with the approval of a majority of committee members, reports the bill at a City Council meeting, with one of the following recommendations:

  - Favorable
  - Favorable with Amendments
  - Unfavorable
  - Without Recommendation
- *Third Reading*

When a bill has passed second reading, the Department of Legislative Reference prepares and prints the bill for third reading. At this point the bill contains appropriate forms for endorsements and signatures. At this final stage, the bill may be:

  - Passed by City Council and sent to the Mayor
  - Voted down by the Council
  - Amended by the Council
  - Returned to committee for further study

Final action on a bill requires a majority vote of all Councilmembers. Amending and taking final action on a bill requires a three-quarters vote of the whole Council.

- *Bill Passage*

The Council President signs the bill and sends it to the mayor. A bill becomes law:

- If the Mayor signs it, or
- If the Mayor fails to sign the bill within three regular Council meetings.

The Mayor may veto the bill. A three-quarters majority of the City Council must vote yes to override the Mayor's veto.

### **Non-Legislative Approvals**

Certain types of land use requests require special approval (from a commission or board, for example), but don't require the enactment of legislation. The most typical include:

- *Variances & Conditional Uses*

The Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) is a quasi-judicial body responsible for hearing requests for variances and conditional uses as defined in the Zoning Code.

Variances are approved exceptions from certain requirements of the Zoning Code. Variances may only be granted from bulk requirements, not use requirements. Examples of variances include: reduction in the required size of front, side or rear yards; increases in the allowable ground coverage of buildings; changes or additions to non-complying structures; and reductions in the number of required parking spaces. In these cases, the BMZA must find that, because of the particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical conditions of the specific structure or land involved, an unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty would result, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, if the strict letter of the applicable requirement were carried out. In other words, the burden of proof lies with the appellant that the variance is necessary, and that simple convenience or purely financial motives are not sufficient for the BMZA to make this finding (see Title 15 of the Zoning Code for more detail).

Conditional uses generally are activities compatible with the permitted uses in a classification but that require special permission by the BMZA or an ordinance of City Council because of a unique characteristic of the use, such as noise, odor, or heavy traffic generation (see also "Legislative Approvals"). Examples of activities that require BMZA conditional use approval include gasoline service stations, day nurseries, and private non-profit clubs in residentially zoned area. The Board may also apply specific conditions, restrictions, or limitations to the conditional use that will reduce or minimize undue impacts or hazards to surrounding properties, as listed in the "Required Finding and Considerations" section of Title 14 of the Zoning Code.

Following are the steps for a variance or conditional use approval:

– *Step 1: One-Stop Shop/Zoning Enforcement*

The applicant obtains an application for variance or conditional uses and prepares and submits required plans and maps according to the “Rules Relative to Zoning Appeals”, available [here](#).

The application is referred to the BMZA and distributed to other City agencies for review. The applicant is directed to the BMZA office to obtain further an application and instructions for the appeal.

– *Step 2: BMZA & Agency Reviews*

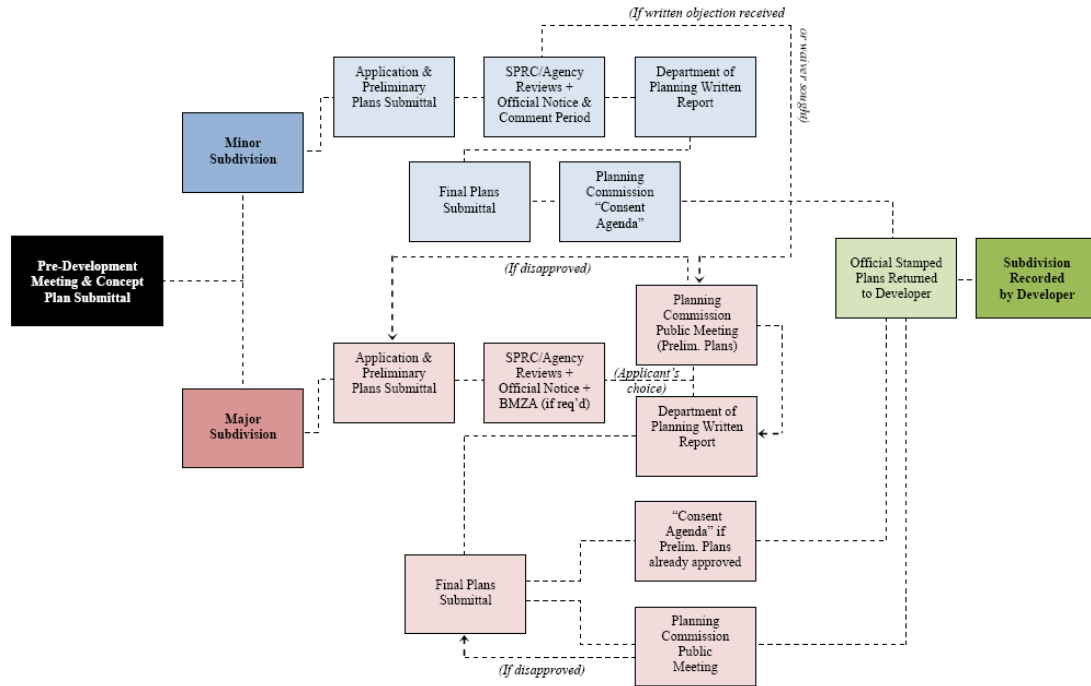
The applicant prepares and files the required application, which the BMZA office distributes to relevant City agencies (usually the Departments of Health, Public Works, Fire, Planning, and Housing and Community Development) and holds until agency reports are received. The applicant must provide the various agencies with information as requested. In particular, any request for a conditional use or an increase in residential density will likely involve discussion with Planning staff, so be advised to contact them directly. Planning may request that plans for any appeal be reviewed by the Site Plan Review Committee. The applicant may also be requested to meet with affected community groups and adjacent property owners. After receiving all agency reports, the applicant will be notified by letter to appear at the BMZA office to arrange for a hearing.

– *Step 4: BMZA Hearing*

The applicant must arrange for posting of the property prior to the hearing, according to the “Rules Relative to Zoning Appeals”. Once the hearing has taken place, the BMZA will send a resolution approving, approving with conditions, or disapproving the appeal. If the appeal is approved or approved with conditions, it is still necessary to obtain a building permit and/or use and occupancy permit. Compliance with any conditions imposed by the BMZA is required.

○ *Subdivisions*

The Planning Commission is required by City Charter and State regulations to approve all plans for the subdivision of property within Baltimore City. A subdivision is required when an owner wants to divide a property into two or more parcels for separate sale or to adjust a property line. Subdivisions in Baltimore City are categorized as either “Major” or “Minor” with five sub-categories of Major Subdivisions and four sub-categories of Minor Subdivisions. There is a separate approval track for the two basic categories of subdivisions. Minor subdivisions are eligible for one public meeting: an administrative meeting before the Planning Commission, i.e. on its “Consent Agenda”, subject to certain conditions. Major subdivisions generally have two public meetings: first on the Planning Commission Regular Agenda (for Preliminary Plans), and then on its Consent Agenda (for Final Plans). On the next page is a flow chart which summarizes the subdivision review process. The full text of Baltimore City’s Subdivision Regulations can be found in the Appendix and online [here](#).



### Subdivision Review Process

- *PUDs – Minor Amendments & Final Design Approvals*

The Planned Unit Development ordinance and accompanying Development Plan are binding, and any modification to or deviation from the Development Plan requires approval through an amendment process. Major amendments are generally required when a developer or property owner wishes to alter the boundaries of a PUD, to amend text in the establishing ordinance, to change any of its permitted uses, or to increase number of residential units, gross floor area, or building height. Major amendments are made through ordinance and follow the typical City Council Bill process as described in “Overview of the City Council Bill Process”.

Minor amendments to an approved Development Plan do not require an ordinance and only require approval from the Planning Commission. The material an applicant must submit for a minor amendment typically includes amended Development Plan sheets, reflecting proposed changes to the plan since the Ordinance was approved. The Planning Commission may authorize minor amendments if they are limited to minor location changes, design features and interior planning, and they do not include any change in the applicable density or bulk regulations. Some minor amendments may also require approval from the BMZA.

Final Design Approvals are needed in order to construct any permanent structure within a Planned Unit Development. The submission material for such a request typically includes site plans, landscape plans, architectural building elevations and signage (if applicable). Review of such plans by SPRC and UDARP is required prior to scheduling a Final

Design Approval request before the Planning Commission (please see “Standard Project Reviews” for more information on the SPRC and UDARP process).

- *Multiple Structures*

Generally, a residentially zoned lot may have no more than one principal detached structure. Lots that are zoned office-residential, business, or industrial and that are adjacent to a residentially zoned lot may not have more than one principal detached structure. However, this rule does not apply to Planned Unit Developments. For all other properties, multiple structures may be approved by the Zoning Administrator if, in a specific case, the development otherwise would conform to the requirements of the Zoning Code and the Planning Commission approves the design of the development. See §3-301 of the Zoning Code for more information.

- *Minor Privileges*

Projection of any private use or construction into the area of a public sidewalk or street requires that the City grant a limited right to permit the encroachment. These rights are typically given through a minor privilege, which may be approved by a resolution of the Board of Estimates. Balconies, entrance canopies, awnings, and outdoor seating are among the approximately 100 projections into the public right-of-way or publicly held property that may be approved as a minor privilege, for which there are annual fees. Construction permitted by a minor privilege will also require a building permit, and the building permit will not be issued until the minor privilege is issued. The owner must sign the application and notify adjoining property owners by certified mail that permission is being sought to construct a projection into the area of the sidewalk or street. Review of minor privilege applications begins at the Department of General Services – Minor Privileges Office (410-396-3346 and online [here](#)).

Projects must undergo a number of standard reviews in order to verify safety and efficiency of design, as well as regulatory and code compliance. What follows are the most typical reviews that will take place, often concurrently:

### **Site Plan Review**

#### *Introduction*

Pursuant to Article VII of the City Charter, the Planning Commission is required to review and deny, approve or amend proposed development plans. The Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC), which is chaired and organized by the Department of Planning, reviews and makes recommendations to the Planning Commission for development plans accompanying building permit applications, subdivision and development plans, residential developments (other than single family and semi-detached dwellings), commercial and institutional developments, renovations, and parking lots. Member agencies of the Site Plan Review Committee include: the Department of Planning, Office of Sustainability, Fire Department, Department of Housing and Community Development, Parking Authority, Department of Public Works, Department of Transportation, and the Mayor's Office of Disabilities.

#### *Purpose*

The Site Plan Review Committee provides joint recommendations in a coordinated inter-agency review to ensure that, at a minimum, proposed development complies with the Comprehensive Plan, Baltimore City Zoning Code, Subdivision Rules and Regulations, Building Codes, Environmental codes and regulations, and other commonly accepted planning, transportation and institutional guidelines and requirements. These jointly coordinated recommendations will also help ensure safe, functional, environmentally sound, aesthetically responsive, efficient and orderly development with high standards of design. These designs will protect properties and the general public in the immediate vicinity, minimize adverse effects upon pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular traffic, create a more attractive and sustainable environment, and provide a consistent and uniform method of review.

#### *Applicability*

Any new developments or buildings, site changes, and subdivisions must be reviewed by the Site Plan Review Committee and receive approval recommendations. Residential subdivisions of less than three resultant lots may not be required to receive full Committee review. Site plan review is not required for the construction or alteration of an individual single-family or two-dwelling unit home. Site plan review is required for the following types of development applications:

- New Construction that involves any of the following:
  - Any proposed development over 15,000 square feet of gross floor area.
  - Projects with multiple principal structures on a single lot.
  - All multi-tenant commercial development, including mixed-use development.



- Subdivision of land.
- Additions and/or major structural alterations to an existing structure that result in a 50% increase in the gross floor area of the existing structure prior to addition or alteration. This does not apply to single-family detached and semi-detached dwellings.
- Planned Unit Developments (PUDs).
- Conditional Uses – including both appeals before the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) and legislation before the Mayor and City Council.
- Parking lots, including accessory parking, containing five or more spaces.
- Any use including drive-up/drive-thru facilities or a walk-up component.
- Any development within an environmentally sensitive area, including projects within the 100-Year Flood Plain and projects within the 1,000’ buffer of the Critical Area.

### *Guidelines*

A copy of the [SPRC Guidelines](#) are available online, and outline the detailed review process, the submittal requirements, timelines for review, and approval time limits.

## **Architectural Review**

- *Urban Design and Architectural Review Panel (UDARP)*  
All proposed development projects in Baltimore City that require Department of Planning Site Plan Review also require design review. At a pre-development meeting, Department staff shall determine the extent of review that will be required. All projects will require at the minimum staff review. Significant development projects will additionally require UDARP review. There are two official stages of Panel review – Schematic and Final. These reviews coincide with the typical stages of development that design professionals follow through project design. Each stage requires the Panel’s approval before the next stage of design development should be undertaken. Minutes are sent to the development team after each presentation and response to Panel comments is a requirement for the following presentation. Agendas for upcoming meetings are e-mailed a week in advance to interested parties and posted on the Department of Planning’s web page.

While attendance is open to the public and members of the press, their attendance is to observe. If a stakeholder group would like to advise the Panel of their concerns, it is encouraged to submit a written statement in advance of the meeting date for its timely distribution to Panel members. At the Panel’s discretion, attending observers may be recognized to make a brief statement related to design issues only.

The following format for the Panel presentations is recommended to ensure a complete and concise review within the typically allotted 60 minute review period. Special presentations of City owned properties or projects of significant size and scale may be allotted additional time:

- Introduction of development team and project by the developer or team leader.
- Project context presented by team leader. (5 minutes)
- Project proposal presentation by team architect(s) and landscape architect(s). (20 minutes)

- Questions and comments from the Panel (20 minutes)
- Panel discussion and final recommendations. (15 minutes)

A detailed outline of the Schematic and Final Presentation process is available online [here](#).

- *Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation (CHAP)*  
For local landmarks, or properties located in designated local historic districts, the CHAP must review and approve development proposals and permit applications. For details on these processes, see the Commission’s publication [“Baltimore City Historic Preservation Procedures and Design Guidelines”](#) available online. For more information, please see “Historic Districts and Landmarks” (within the “Special Districts” section of this Guidebook), visit [CHAP’s website](#), or call 410-396-4866.

### **Traffic Impact Studies**

A complete Traffic Impact Study (TIS) is required (Ordinance #06-345) for new and redevelopment projects in each of the following situations:

- Residential Development – 100 or more dwelling units; or
- An impact area determined by the Department of Transportation that includes a building 15,000 sq.ft. or greater and an intersection performing at level of service D; or
- A gross floor area that equals or exceeds:
  - For a warehouse use, 150,000 sq.ft.; or
  - For any other use, 50,000 sq.ft.

A Traffic Impact Study must be completed and sent to the Department of Transportation, Transportation Engineering Division and Planning for review. Traffic consultants should discuss the project with the Department of Transportation, Traffic Engineering Division staff at an early stage of the project. For more detailed information, contact Mr. Scott Adams in the Department of Transportation Planning Division at 443-984-4094, or by e-mail at [Scott.Adams@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:Scott.Adams@baltimorecity.gov).

### **Environmental**

We define sustainability as “Meeting the environmental, social, and economic needs of Baltimore without compromising the ability of future generations to meet these needs.” A number of regulatory and code requirements are in place to ensure broader sustainability goals are met. However, developers are always encouraged to explore additional options for efficient site design and sustainable building practices (both during and after construction).

- *Forest Conservation*  
The Maryland Forest Conservation Act was passed by the General Assembly in 1991 and is intended to conserve the State’s forest resources. Each jurisdiction was required to adopt regulations to enforce the Act. Baltimore City’s local regulations are contained in Article 7, Section 41-1 of the City Code.

Information on the Forest Conservation Act in Baltimore City can be obtained through Planning. Only certain projects meeting specific thresholds are regulated by the Act. Generally, if a project disturbs more than 20,000 square feet of land, or proposes to subdivide a lot 20,000 square feet or greater, the project will be subject to the requirements of the Act.

If a project is regulated and a forest exists on site, the applicant is required to submit a full Forest Stand Delineation (FSD) for the site and the applicant may not come before the Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) until the FSD has been received and reviewed by Planning staff. If no forests exist on the site, provisions are made for a streamlined application process. It is illegal to clear a site of trees before entering into the review process.

In addition to the FSD, regulated projects will be required to submit a Forest Conservation Plan (FCP), which may include preservation of existing trees and on-site or off-site tree planting. Where no forest exists on site, the FCP can be completed in the form of a landscape plan.

No Building Permits can be issued until the FSD and FCP are reviewed and approved by the appropriate agencies. Sites located within the boundaries of the Critical Area Regulations are exempt from the Forest Conservation Act.

Requirements:

- Development proposals that disturb 20,000 square feet of land or more, or subdivide a lot 20,000 square feet or more are regulated by the Forest Conservation Act. For these developments, the applicant must submit a Forest Stand Delineation (FSD) and Forest Conservation Plan (FCP) or Landscape Plan for the site. When a site is forested, the applicant may not come to the SPRC until Planning receives and approves the FSD.
- Forested Sites: The applicant is required to submit a full FSD for the site that contains a detailed environmental assessment according to the guidelines found in the State of Maryland, Department of Natural Resources Forest Conservation Manual. The applicant will also be required to submit a FCP, which may include preservation of existing trees and on-site or off-site planting.
- Non-Forested Sites: If no forests exist on the site, the applicant may provide a simplified FSD and Landscape Plan to meet the Forest Conservation requirements. Specimen trees located on these sites may also be required to be preserved.
- No permits for construction will be issued until the FSD and FCP are reviewed and approved. The approved Forest Conservation Plan/Landscape Plan must be included in the permit set.
- For more information regarding the Forest Conservation Program contact Gary Letteron at 410-396-4369. For assistance with Landscape Plans, contact Amy Gilder-Busatti at 410 396-8360

A complete description of requirements is available [online](#).

○ *Critical Area Zoning Overlay District*

The State of Maryland Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Law establishes the “Critical Area,” a protection zone around and including the waters of the Chesapeake Bay. The City’s Critical Area Management Program (CAMP)/Zoning Overlay District establishes guidelines for development of properties within the waters and lands under the Chesapeake Bay and within a 1,000-foot strip of land beyond the mean high tide line or the bulkhead. The first 100 feet landward of the water is called the Buffer (see map).

The goals of the Critical Area law are to:

- To conserve and protect wildlife habitat along the shoreline of the Bay; and
- Improve the water quality of the Bay by controlling pollution from stormwater runoff.

A map of the Critical area is available [online](#).

Process/Steps Required: Applicants should first ascertain if their development site is within the Critical Area. Please contact the Department of Planning if you are unsure if the site is within the Critical Area or not. If the site is within the Critical Area, any of the following actions will trigger Critical Area review:

- Building/Grading Permit
- Rezoning
- Subdivision
- Conditional Use/ Special Exception
- Zoning Variance

Contact Planning staff if you have a project within the Critical Area and staff will inform you of whether any of the above actions will prompt what is termed "significant" review based on the following criteria (“disturbance” is defined as breaking the soil):

- If there is any disturbance in the Buffer;
- If there is a disturbance of 10,000 square feet outside the Buffer; or
- If improvements are being made to an existing structure that are 50% or more of the base full cash value of the property.

If the project is deemed “significant”, contact Planning staff to understand the requirements for treating the Stormwater on-site using proven and innovative Best Management Practices (BMP – includes swales, wetland ponds, green roofs, etc.) and meeting the CAMP landscaping and/or mitigation requirements (different than Forest Conservation standards).

For a quick review of the materials required for compliance, please review the Critical Area Executive Summary [online](#).

This Summary shows the basic requirements and materials required by the Department of Planning as part of their Critical Area development review for the State Critical Area Commission approval. Approved CAMP designs for stormwater management, landscaping and any other CAMP mitigation must be included in the permit set.

Additional Reference/Relevant Documents/Resources:

- Critical Area Zoning Overlay District (Zoning Code of Baltimore City – Title 8) <http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/CityCharterCodes.aspx>
- 2002 City of Baltimore Critical Area Management Program Manual (includes landscaping and mitigation standards) <http://www.baltimorecity.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=69wTgh6IHKs%3d&tabid=275&mid=648>
- Critical Area 10% Rule Guidance Manual (December 2003) – This updated State Manual should be used to select a BMP and shows how the Critical Area regulations and the State Stormwater regulations must both be met in the Critical Area. [http://www.dnr.state.md.us/criticalarea/guidancepubs/10percent\\_rule.html](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/criticalarea/guidancepubs/10percent_rule.html)

○ *Floodplain Management*

The City is a participating member of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Participation in the NFIP allows City property owners to buy reasonably priced flood insurance. To maintain good standing in the program that City needs to minimize the incidence of flood damage. To that end the City has enacted special provisions of the Building Code, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Regulations applying to all properties that lie within flood plain areas.

A detailed study for flood plain areas within Baltimore City are found on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), and Flood Insurance Study available for reference at the Department of Planning.

These maps, however, are only approximations. If the property is in or near a flood plain area, the precise elevation of the proposed development must be submitted on plans to Planning. Staff will evaluate the proposed development to determine whether the proposal is inside a flood-hazard area. If so, the development must conform to special regulations.

If the property lies within a flood plain area, all of the special requirements of the Building Code, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Regulations must be met.

Included among the flood plain regulations (Article 7, Subtitle 2, Flood Plain Districts, in the Baltimore City Code) are:

- Private development, including residential, commercial, and industrial development, may not take place within the floodway.
- Selection, placement, and stabilization of fill materials must be done in accordance with the specifications of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Water Resources Administration.
- The lowest floor elevation of new or substantially improved residential structures must be at a minimum of one foot above the 100-year flood level. An elevation certificate must be provided to verify elevations.
- Any flood plain development approved shall be in conformance with the requirements of the permit programs of the Maryland Department of the

Environment, Water Resources Administration and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

- Buildings constructed within the flood plain area must meet requirements for resistance to flotation and ability to resist hydrostatic and hydrodynamic forces as detailed in the United States Army Corp of Engineers Flood-proofing Regulations #EP 1165-3-314.
- Development in flood plains along rivers and streams (not along the Harbor) requires a State flood plain permit. The Department of Planning will not sign off on a permit for a non-tidal location before the State issues its permit.

Maryland Department of Environment  
State Department  
410-537-3775

Baltimore City, Department of Planning  
Ken Hranicky, Flood Plain Manager  
410-396-9508

- *Green Building Requirements*

In August 2007, City Council Bill [#07-0602](#) mandated the City establish Green Building Standards for commercial and multi-family residential buildings over 10,000 square feet being either newly constructed or extensively modified. Those projects that trigger this requirement have the option of pursuing two “tracks”: the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating system, or the Baltimore City Green Building Standards (which have been specifically tailored to address the unique challenges and opportunities of the city). For more detailed information, visit Baltimore Housing’s “Going Green in Baltimore” webpage: [http://www.baltimorehousing.org/permit\\_bcgbs](http://www.baltimorehousing.org/permit_bcgbs)

- *Stormwater Management*

In May of 2010, a new set of stormwater management (SWM) regulations was approved that has had a significant effect on how urban development is reviewed in Baltimore. As soon as it is determined that a project will trigger SWM review (normally by disturbing more than 5,000 sqft of area), applicant should immediately contact the Department of Public Works’ Water and Wastewater Division (Surface Water Management group) at 410-396-3500 to schedule a review. DPW staff will make the determination of program applicability, requirements, and design goals. Please note that generally speaking, the most environmentally sensitive design features should be used to the maximum extent practical before other techniques can be justified.

- *Grading/Sediment & Erosion Control*

Within the Department of Public Works (DPW), there are a total of 10 possible sections, which may need to see the project. A plans disseminator at DPW does a preliminary review of the job, puts the DPW stamps on the plan sets, and determines to which sections the plans must circulate. Any new construction or additions and some other

exterior work will require site (plot) plans. See the checklist of the Property Location Section site plan requirements.

Any project which involves site disturbance of 5,000 square feet or greater must include sediment and erosion control plans. During the planning stage of such a project, the Environmental Engineering Section (410-396-4840) should be contacted to discuss its requirements. After the project has circulated through the pertinent DPW sections, two approved site plan sets are returned to Plans Examining.

[http://www.baltimorehousing.org/permit\\_procedure](http://www.baltimorehousing.org/permit_procedure)

### **Public Works Developer's Agreements**

A Public Works Developer's Agreement is required for all work in the Public right of way or which will be maintained by the City including 4-inch or larger water services, water mains, developments which require 10 or more water supply services of any size, sanitary or storm drain extensions, conduit or road construction for private concerns.

The Public Works Developer's Agreement will describe the type of work and location where it will be done. The Developer will have all work to be constructed in the right of way designed to City standards. An approved estimate of the construction costs will be used to base a 100% performance bond or irrevocable letter of credit to remain as surety for one year after completion. An inspection fee equal to 9% of the surety will be assessed for costs incurred by the City. The Developer will also be responsible for acquiring all other necessary or required permits.

The City of Baltimore will not be liable for incorrectly sized services and meters, and will not assess adequate water supply. The City of Baltimore will make no representation as to the size of meter required for any application. Note that multistory buildings may require on site pumping.

Please note that the Developer, his engineer, or representative will be responsible for selecting the location desired for the fire flow test. The Developer shall be required to arrange for a new fire flow test in order to determine if there is an adequate water supply for their project. Previous fire flow tests shall be rejected, a new test is required. The engineer shall prepare a sketch of system configuration, hydrant location, and hydraulic zone and mail it along with the request for the fire flow test to Mr. Alex Rabinovich, Ashburton Filtration Plant, 3001 Druid Park Drive, Baltimore, Maryland, 21215, Telephone No. 410-396-0239. If any electrical changes are part of the project, design of the duct run must be included as part of the Developer's Agreement.

The Developer must prepare plans and submit them to the Right of Way Section whereby they will be circulated for review and comments from all necessary agencies. Upon Approval of the plans by all agencies, the Developer's execution of the agreement, and the posting of the bond or letter of credit, the agreement will be submitted to the Board of Estimates for final execution. The estimated time for execution of the agreement is a minimum of one month. For the most part, the approval time for plans will be determined by the amount of time corrections or comments are addressed by the Developer's engineer. However, a minimum of six months

should be anticipated for the entire process.

To begin the process, you should make a request in writing to Mr. Paul D. Barnes, Supervisor, Right of Way Section, for any 4-inch or larger meter services, 10 or more water supply services of any size, water main extensions, fire hydrants and/or related water appurtenances, sewer line, storm drain, conduit or roads. For additional information, please contact Mr. David Framm at 410-396-3667.



### **Urban Renewal Plan Areas (URPs)**

Urban Renewal ordinances perform two vital functions for the City. They identify properties that the City may wish to acquire for redevelopment efforts. They also function as design and land use overlays that provide design and land use guidelines specific to an individual neighborhood. It is important to note that Urban Renewal Areas can be *more restrictive but not less restrictive*, than other applicable ordinances such as the Zoning Code, Housing Code, etc.

All permits in an Urban Renewal Area are routed through the Comprehensive Planner for that area. The proper Comprehensive Planner can be identified through the [Planning Districts map](#) on the Department's web page. It is advisable to consult with the appropriate Comprehensive Planner for your area prior to making any decisions on a change in use or exterior renovations to a property in a URP area.

### **Historic Districts & Landmarks**

Historic districts or landmarks are identified by the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) as having particular historical or architectural significance. They are designated through an ordinance of the Mayor and City Council as worthy of protection. Once an historic district or landmark has been designated by the City, any exterior painting or refinishing, alteration, construction, or demolition must be approved by CHAP.

Included among the work and materials reviewed by the Commission are paint color, restoration of cornices and other decorative architectural features, window and door replacement, erection of fences and walls, reconstruction of porches and staircases, and similar types of exterior work. New construction is also subject to CHAP review to insure that the architectural design does not detract from or conflict with the overall environment and scale of the historic district.

The Commission does not deal with interior renovations of buildings in historic districts or of historic landmarks unless they affect the exterior character of the structure or unless the owner is applying for a Baltimore City Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit.

The Historical and Architectural Preservation Division of the Department of Planning Commission and administers the Baltimore City Rehabilitation Tax Credit to foster preservation of both locally and nationally designated districts and landmarks.

Before a building permit may be issued for any exterior or interior work that may affect the exterior character, the Commission must issue a "notice to proceed." Application forms are available from the Department of Planning. The Commission requires plans and samples of paint or other materials proposed for exterior work. Maps of the Historic Districts and information about specific buildings are provided by the Department of Planning.

In addition, there are National Register Historic Districts and individual landmark buildings in Baltimore City. Work in these areas or on these buildings may need to be reviewed by the Maryland Historic Trust if any State or federal funds are involved in the projects.

Contact the Department of Planning’s Historical and Architectural Preservation Division for additional information on historic properties, or refer to their [webpage](#).

### **Maritime Industrial Zoning Overlay District (MIZOD)**

The Maritime Industrial Zoning Overlay District (MIZOD) is designed to ensure the preservation of limited deepwater frontage of the Port of Baltimore for maritime use. The intent is to delineate an area where maritime shipping can be conducted without the intrusion of non-industrial uses and where investment in maritime infrastructure is encouraged.

The boundaries of the District can be found in the Maritime Master Plan document located on the web [here](#). The underlying Industrial zoning of the land remains intact, with the following uses further prohibited within the District:

1. Hotels and motels
2. Offices (other than accessory to the maritime use)
3. Restaurants and lunch rooms, other than accessory (and without live entertainment and dancing)
4. Restaurants and lunch rooms, other than accessory (without live entertainment or dancing).
5. Taverns
6. Any other use that is not expressly allowed by the article for an Industrial District.

For more information regarding the Industrial Overlay District restrictions, contact the Jill Lemke at the Baltimore City Department of Planning (410-396-1440 and [Jill.Lemke@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:Jill.Lemke@baltimorecity.gov))

### **Parking Lot District**

The Parking Lot District covers downtown Baltimore, several adjacent neighborhoods, and Charles Village. Within this district, an ordinance of the Mayor and City Council is required before a permit may be issued for demolition of buildings for parking. The ordinance process is very similar to a rezoning or conditional use ordinance (see page 9). Exceptions can be made for temporary (no longer than 18 months) parking lots in Urban Renewal Areas.

Before the City Council considers authorizing an ordinance, the Site Plan Review Committee checks all parking lot plans for adherence to access, landscaping, drainage, and layout requirements.



All lots in the parking lot district must be screened with masonry walls or metal grill fences and landscaping. Use of the universal “P” parking lot sign is encouraged. After passage of an ordinance to demolish a building in the parking lot district, it is still necessary to obtain a Demolition Permit and a Building Permit.

**Common Abbreviations**

<b>BDC</b>	Baltimore Development Corporation
<b>BCGBS</b>	Baltimore City Green Building Standards
<b>BMP</b>	Best Management Practices
<b>BMZA</b>	Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals
<b>CAMP</b>	Critical Area Management Plan
<b>CDFC</b>	Community Development Financing Corporation
<b>CHAP</b>	Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation
<b>DGS</b>	Department of General Services
<b>DHCD</b>	Department of Housing and Community Development (Baltimore Housing)
<b>DPW</b>	Department of Public Works
<b>FCP</b>	Forest Conservation Plan
<b>FSD</b>	Forest Stand Delineation
<b>FIG</b>	Façade Improvement Grant (through BDC)
<b>FIRM</b>	Flood Insurance Rate Maps
<b>FSD</b>	Forest Stand Delineation
<b>HABC</b>	Housing Authority of Baltimore City (Baltimore Housing)
<b>LEED</b>	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
<b>MBE</b>	Minority Business Enterprises
<b>MDE</b>	Maryland Department of the Environment
<b>MIZOD</b>	Maritime Industrial Zoning Overlay District
<b>PUD</b>	Planned Unit Development
<b>RBDL</b>	Retail Business District License
<b>SPRC</b>	Site Plan Review Committee
<b>TIF</b>	Tax Increment Financing
<b>TDM</b>	Traffic Demand Management
<b>TIS</b>	Traffic Impact Study
<b>TOD</b>	Transit-Oriented Development
<b>UDARP</b>	Urban Design and Architecture Review Panel
<b>URP</b>	Urban Renewal Plan
<b>WBE</b>	Women’s Business Enterprises

**Links & Contacts**

Baltimore City Council  
<http://www.baltimorecitycouncil.com/>

Planning Commission  
<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/Planning/PlanningCommission.aspx>

Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation (CHAP)

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/BoardsandCommissions/HistoricalArchitecturalPreservation.aspx>

Commission on Sustainability

<http://www.baltimoresustainability.org/about/commission.aspx>

Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA)

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/BoardsandCommissions/ZoningandAppealsBoard.aspx>

417 E. Fayette Street, #1432

Baltimore, MD 21202

(410) 396-4126

Department of Planning

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/Planning.aspx>

Thomas J. Stosur, Director

417 E. Fayette Street, 8th Floor

Baltimore, MD 21202

(410) 396-7526 (PLAN)

Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC)

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/Planning/SitePlanReviewCommitteeSPRC.aspx>

Eric Tiso, Chair

417 E. Fayette Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor

Baltimore, MD 21202

(410) 396-8358

Urban Design and Architectural Review Panel (UDARP)

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/Planning/UrbanDesignArchitectureReviewPanel.aspx>

Office of Sustainability

<http://www.baltimoresustainability.org/contact/index.aspx>

Beth Strommen, Director

417 E. Fayette Street, 8th Floor

Baltimore, MD 21202

(410) 396-8360

beth.strommen@baltimorecity.gov

Baltimore Housing – Zoning Administrator

<http://www.baltimorehousing.org/zoning>

417 E. Fayette Street, Room 147

Baltimore, MD 21201

(410) 396-3360

Baltimore Housing – Permits Office  
<http://www.baltimorehousing.org/permits>  
417 E. Fayette Street, Room 100  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
(410) 396-3360

Baltimore Development Corporation  
<http://baltimoredevelopment.com/>  
36 S. Charles Street  
Suite 1600  
Baltimore, MD 21201-3015

Department of Transportation  
<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/Transportation.aspx>  
Khalil A. Zaiid, Director  
417 E. Fayette Street, 5th Floor  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
(410) 396-6802

Department of Public Works (DPW)  
<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/PublicWorks.aspx>  
Alfred H. Foxx, Director  
600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
Water: (410) 396-3500  
Solid Waste: (410) 396-5134

Department of General Services (DGS)  
<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/GeneralServices.aspx>  
Ted Atwood, Director  
800 Abel Wolman Municipal Building  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
(410) 396-3704

DGS – Minor Privilege Program  
<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/GeneralServices/MinorPrivilege.aspx>

Baltimore Development Corporation  
<http://www.baltimoredevelopment.com/>  
Jay Brodie, Director  
36 South Charles Street, Suite 1600  
410-837-9305

City Charter & Codes (including existing Baltimore City Zoning Code)  
<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/CityCharterCodes.aspx>

TransForm Baltimore: Zoning Code Rewrite (draft)

<http://www.rewritebaltimore.org/> and <http://www.transformbaltimore.net/portal>

Online Pre-Development Meeting Requests

<http://cityservices.baltimorecity.gov/PPT/Default.aspx>

SPRC Guidelines

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Nies-b7QYas%3d&tabid=275&mid=643>

UDARP Guidelines

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/Planning/UrbanDesignArchitectureReviewPanel.aspx>

Subdivision Regulations

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Portals/0/agencies/planning/public%20downloads/2010/Final%20Subdivision%20Regs.pdf>

Planning Commission Posting Requirements

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/Planning/PlanningCommission/PostingRequirements.aspx>

Guidelines for Rowhouse Additions

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Portals/0/agencies/planning/public%20downloads/2010/Rowhouse%20Addition%20Guidelines.pdf>

Curb Cut Policy

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/Portals/0/agencies/planning/public%20downloads/CURB%20CUT%20POLICY.pdf>

Planning Commission Posting Requirements

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)

(<http://www.nrdc.org/buildinggreen/leed.asp>)

