

Summary of Portland Historic Preservation Zoning Incentives

Portland's Zoning Code includes special provisions that encourage new historic listings and increase the potential for historic structures to be renovated and rehabilitated by increasing land use flexibility and redevelopment options. The incentives are not applicable in every situation and some apply only to certain types of resources. Many require a land use review and a covenant with the City. The summaries below include references to specific Zoning Code sections which include more detail. The code is available on the Bureau of Planning's web site: www.portlandonline.com/planning/.

1. **Transfer of density or floor area ratio (FAR).** Allows unused development potential on a site with a Landmark to be transferred or sold to another site. Relieves redevelopment pressure and provides a potential source of income for historic buildings. See 33.445.610, 33.120.205.E, 33.130.205.C and 33.140.205.C.
2. **Additional density in single-dwelling zones.** Allows Landmarks in single-dwelling zones to be used as multi-dwelling structures. No additional parking is required. Provides an opportunity for more economic use of historic buildings. See section 33.445.610.
3. **Additional density in multi-dwelling zones.** Allows additional dwelling units in Landmarks and contributing properties in historic districts beyond what would normally be allowed, with no maximum density. Increases a property's income potential and discourages demolition. See section 33.445.610.
4. **Exemption from minimum housing density requirements.** Eliminates minimum housing density requirements in Landmarks and contributing properties in historic districts. Increases building reconfiguration options by allowing development proposals to establish or reestablish residential densities lower than existing requirements. See section 33.445.610.
5. **Daycare in residential zones.** Waives the requirement for a conditional use review for daycare uses in Landmarks and contributing properties in historic districts in residential zones, eliminating the uncertainty and expense of that process. See section 33.445.610.
6. **Nonresidential uses in the RH, R1 and R2 zones.** Allows nonresidential uses, such as retail, office and others, in up to 100 percent of the floor area in a Landmark or contributing property in a historic district, if the structure has not been in residential use. Requires a land use review to minimize potential impacts on nearby residences. Encourages renovation and reuse of historic building types that do not lend themselves to reuse as dwellings (e.g., churches, meeting halls, and commercial storefront buildings). Promotes preservation by increasing redevelopment options and increasing income potential. See sections 33.445.610 and 33.846.050.
7. **Nonresidential uses in the RX zone.** Allows nonresidential uses, such as retail, office and others, in up to 100 percent of the floor area in a Landmark or contributing property in a historic district. Requires a land use review to minimize potential impacts on nearby residences. Increases development options and income potential. See sections 33.445.610 and 33.846.050.
8. **Conditional uses in residential, commercial and employment zones.** Allows requests for land uses in a Landmark or contributing property in a historic district that are only allowed through a conditional use review (for instance group living facilities or industrial services) to be processed through a Type II procedure, which is less expensive and time-consuming than the otherwise required Type III procedure. See section 33.445.610.

9. **Commercial allowances in Central City industrial zones.** Allows office and retail uses in individual National Register properties and contributing properties in National Register historic districts in zones where non-industrial uses are otherwise more restricted. Encourages preservation and reuse of historic, sometimes functionally obsolete buildings by providing additional development flexibility and higher income potential. See chapter 33.510.
10. **Commercial allowances in employment and industrial zones.** Increases allowances for office and retail uses in historic landmarks in areas where non-industrial use allowances are otherwise more restricted. Encourages reuse of historic, sometimes functionally obsolete industrial buildings by providing more development flexibility and income potential. See chapter 33.140.
11. **Increased maximum parking ratios for historic properties in the Central City.** Increases the maximum parking ratio for individual National Register buildings and contributing buildings in National Register historic districts in the Central City Core Parking Area. Allows “underparked” historic buildings to find new parking options and attract tenants. See section 33.510.263.
12. **Commercial allowances in the Guild’s Lake Industrial Sanctuary District.** Increases allowances for office and retail uses in historic landmarks in an area where non-industrial use allowances are otherwise more restricted. Encourages reuse of historic landmarks and provides additional development flexibility and higher income potential. See chapter 33.531.

For more information on the preservation incentives and to find out how you might benefit, contact the Bureau of Development Services: 503-823-7526. For more information on how to designate a property as a landmark, contact Liza Mickle, Bureau of Planning, 503-823-7666.

**Preservation Incentive Success Story:
1914 Hibernian Hall Becomes the Wonder Ballroom**

After purchasing the 1914 Hibernian Hall on N Russell Street in June 2004, the new owners faced zoning restrictions that would have prohibited the performance space, art gallery and restaurant they had envisioned for the building. Seeing an opportunity, they applied for local historic landmark designation, which would allow them to apply for a recently adopted incentive that allows commercial uses in landmark structures in residential zones. With support from the neighborhood association, the landmark designation and zoning incentive were approved. The newly renovated and renamed Wonder Ballroom, now also listed on the National Register, opened in the summer of 2005, providing a new lease on life for an architectural and historical treasure and adding a new multi-faceted asset to Portland’s cultural landscape.

