

# **PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

## **ANNUAL REPORT – 2009**

### **PERMITS**

Type II and Type III planning permits under the Baker City Development Code generally relate to more substantive land use and development actions such as the review and processing of major new subdivisions or commercial projects. The activity in these permit classes for 2009 reflected the general slow down in larger scale development activity that you would expect in an economic recession. For instance, in 2009 the Department did not receive for review a single application for a major subdivision defined as a development that creates 5 or more new lots.

In 2009 the Department processed a total of 23 Type II and Type III applications. In contrast the Department processed 32 such applications in 2008.

The breakdown of Type II and Type III applications for 2009 is as follows:

Major Subdivisions – 0  
Land Partitions ( 4 or less lots) – 5  
Replats – 6  
Variances – 3  
Conditional Use Permits – 2  
Major Site Development Review – 3  
Temporary Use Permit – 4

Type I reviews and permit issuance relate to administrative actions by the Department that do not require public notifications or review by the City Planning Commission. Activities by the Department in this category included the following:

Development Reviews - 43  
Fence Permits – 45  
Home Occupations - 5  
Sign Permits – 3

## **ADVANCED PLANNING**

The Department continued to take advantage of the slowdown in permit activity to focus on advanced planning projects in the City during 2009. The year proved to be highly productive in that capacity with a significant number of projects undertaken and completed. A summary of those efforts is as follows:

### **Development Code Revision:**

A comprehensive revision of the Baker City Development Code was completed including public review, City Commission adoption, and certification by the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission. The City now has in place a cutting edge code that has been completely modernized and customized to the circumstances of Baker City. The new Code should be sufficient for the City for many years before a complete revision will once again be necessary.

### **Sign Code:**

The Department completed the development of the first comprehensive sign code for the City. The draft code went through a substantial review process with the City Planning Commission, City Council, and general public including the business community. It was formally adopted and is now being administered in the day-to-day activities of the both the Planning Department and Building Department.

### **Nuisance and Property Maintenance Code:**

The Planning Department was tasked with the responsibility of coordinating among the various City departments and outside legal council the development of a revised and combined nuisance, dangerous buildings, and property maintenance code for the City. After substantial public input and involvement and review and revisions by the City Council, the new combined revised Code was adopted.

### **City Visioning Project:**

During the year the Department partnered with the Ford Family Foundation to design and conduct a City Visioning effort to provide a basis for future long range planning efforts. The City Visioning Project has two main components. The first component or phase was the conductance of 14 focus groups in the community involving 133 citizens and 332 hours of neighbor-to-neighbor conversations. A summary report was prepared for Phase I describing the input received.

Phase II of the project involves the translation of Phase I input into a more detailed vision statement for the City. That effort has resulted in the preparation of a "Draft Vision" that will undergo substantial public review, comment, and revision during 2010.

### **Court Plaza:**

During the year an intensive urban design process was undertaken and completed regarding the creation of Court Plaza - an urban pedestrian and events space designed to complement the completion of civic improvements associated with downtown. Some 640 hours of professional design activity and public involvement resulted in the completion and adoption of the concept plan.