

BUILT ENVIRONMENT SUBCOMMITTEE: MEETING #4

Meeting Date/Time: Tuesday, May 20, 2025, 2:00pm-4:00pm

Meeting Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88610799349?pwd=gxf8hclVTXI3aG7ScoQGo7b512Dilx.1&from=addon>

Attendees

Subcommittee Members

- Sonya Carlson from BRING
- Lauren Zimmermann from the City of Portland
- Amanda Ingmire from Oregon DEQ
- Sean McGuire from Benton County
- Bailey Payne from Benton County

Staff

Facilitator: Elizabeth Start, Start Consulting Group

Subject Matter Expert: Joel Schoening, RRS

Researcher:

Notes

Key Takeaways

- Three key recommendations were discussed and refined: 1) Improve recovery infrastructure, 2) Integrate adaptive reuse into state housing strategy, 3) Adopt policies for circular/healthier building materials
- State-level action and coordination across multiple agencies is needed to implement recommendations
- Funding sources and overcoming regulatory barriers are key challenges, especially around building codes

Topics

Recommendation 1: Improve Recovery Infrastructure

- Focus on recovery infrastructure and partnerships with reuse organizations
- Counties should lead facility development, with state regulations applied after
- Funding could come from tipping fees, disposal fees, and grants for reuse partnerships
- Barriers include coordinating across jurisdictions and distance/transportation costs
- Timeline likely 2+ years to build coalitions and implement changes

Recommendation 2: Integrate Adaptive Reuse into State Housing Strategy

- Aim to reduce demolitions and promote reuse of existing buildings for housing
- Multiple state agencies need to be involved (DLCD, DEQ, OHCS, etc.)
- Funding unclear - may require shift in existing housing production funds
- Major barrier is lack of champion for materials/reuse in current housing policy
- Timeline: ~6 months for initial coalition building and strategy development

Recommendation 3: Adopt Policies for Circular/Healthier Building Materials

- Focus on state-level policies due to building code preemption of local action
- Need for state program/office to support implementation (similar to energy codes)
- Funding could come from permit fees or solid waste fees
- Key barriers: regulatory complexity, material availability/aggregation challenges
- Long-term timeline, but could build on existing embodied carbon study (HB 3409)

Ideas

- Establish regional recovery infrastructure (e.g. mixed solid waste transfer/recycling facilities, partnerships with reuse organizations) funded potentially through disposal/shipping fees. Counties could lead on developing these facilities.
- Integrate materials management/waste prevention strategies into the state's housing policy and production efforts. This would involve getting DEQ and other relevant state agencies at the table to help shape the housing strategy.

- Adopt policies at the state and local level to promote the use of healthier, lower-environmental impact building materials. This could involve working through the state building code process, potentially by advocating for changes at the International Code Council level.
 - Identify funding sources and barriers for these efforts, such as using disposal fees to fund programs, overcoming the state's preemption of local building material policies, and building markets/supply chains for reused/recycled materials.
- Convene a state-level task force or working group to map out the key agencies, regulations, and processes involved, in order to develop a coordinated strategy and advocacy approach.

Considerations

Funding:

- Using disposal/shipping fees to fund recovery infrastructure and programs
- Leveraging existing housing production funding streams
- Potential for state-level funding or incentive programs
- Regulatory/Policy Landscape:
 - Navigating state vs. local authority over building codes and materials
 - Overcoming the state's preemption of local building material policies
 - Integrating materials management into state housing strategy and policies

Engagement:

- Involving a coalition of cities, counties, state agencies (DEQ, DLCD, etc.)
- Engaging the building/construction industry, which has mixed perspectives
- Bringing in expertise from groups like the State Historic Preservation Office
- Implementation Challenges:
 - Coordinating across multiple jurisdictions with different zoning requirements
 - Ensuring sufficient supply and aggregation of reused/recycled materials
 - Overcoming the entrenched systems and economics favoring virgin materials

Timeline and Phasing:

- Building a coalition and mapping out key stakeholders/processes (~6 months)
- Pursuing state-level policy changes and integration into housing strategy
- Allowing time for regulatory changes and permit/code update processes

Questions

- Is it accurate that counties would need to develop the recovery facilities first, before DEQ could regulate them?
- How would the funding path differ between a mixed solid waste facility vs. partnerships with reuse organizations?
- Who are the key state agencies and players that need to be involved in integrating materials management into the housing strategy?
- How would a new building material get approved/added to the state building code?
- Is the county's limited authority over incorporated cities a barrier to getting them involved?
- Is the distance/transportation cost to recovery facilities a potential barrier compared to disposal sites?
- What is the rationale/justification for including materials management strategies in the state's housing efforts?
- Does the recommendation for state-level action require funding, or is it mostly policy work?
- What are the specific barriers or opposition that could be anticipated?

Action: Research and Analysis

- Mapping out the key state agencies, programs, and regulations involved (e.g. DLCD, DCBS, DEQ, SHPO) and their respective roles - potentially as a task for the proposed state-level task force.
- Investigating how new building materials get approved and added to the state building code, and identifying potential pathways to influence this process.
- Analyzing the funding sources and mechanisms, including:
 - Using disposal/shipping fees to fund recovery infrastructure and programs
 - Leveraging existing housing production funding streams
 - Potential for state-level funding or incentive programs

- Researching the full life cycle costs and benefits of adaptive reuse and use of healthier/lower-impact building materials, to build the case and justification.
- Evaluating the barriers and opposition that may arise, such as:
 - Challenges of coordinating across multiple jurisdictions
 - Entrenched systems and economics favoring virgin materials
 - Potential resistance from the building/construction industry
- Exploring models and best practices from other states or jurisdictions that have successfully integrated materials management strategies into housing policy and production.
- Considering how to create and support markets and supply chains for reused/recycled building materials.