



For Immediate Release

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## **Fire Station #1 to be Retrofitted to Withstand a 2500-Year Earthquake**

PORTLAND, OR (April 17, 2007)-- Degenkolb Engineers, in conjunction with Peck Smiley Ettlin Architects, will upgrade Fire Station #1 in Downtown Portland to withstand a 2500-year earthquake.

When the new design and retrofit are complete, the building will meet immediate occupancy performance objectives as an essential building for a 500-year earthquake. At an estimated \$9.5 million, the project will cost less than half of previous proposals reviewed by Portland Fire and Rescue, City Hall and the Portland Development Commission. Previous plans would relocate the building from its location along the Willamette River, which is identified as a liquefaction zone. The project construction is expected to start in January 2008 and be complete at the beginning of 2009.

“We are very excited to be a part of this project,” said Stacy Bartoletti, Chief Operating Officer and Principal of Degenkolb Engineers. “Retrofitting this historic building will be complicated and challenging, but in the end the City of Portland will have a safe fire station that will protect its citizens in any foreseeable disaster.”

Fire Station #1, at 55 Ash St., is the largest fire station in Portland and is the 12th station that Degenkolb has seismically upgraded. The building is constructed of non-ductile concrete.

“We will start soon on the construction exploration of the existing building,” said Kent Yu, Associate Principal of Degenkolb’s Portland office and manager of the project. “We already know the building will have a strong torsional response due to the large concrete walls on three sides, but we have yet to determine whether the interior gravity framing will sustain a large earthquake or if the foundation is susceptible to lateral spreading and settlement.”

The Fire Station #1 project will require analysis of the ground soil, seismic upgrading and numerous other considerations to make the building meet the immediate occupancy performance objective. Degenkolb is responsible for determining the construction of the building as the construction documents are incomplete.

In 1998, Degenkolb provided the City of Portland a report on the seismic strength of 28 of the city's fire stations. Since that time, Degenkolb has worked on 11 other fire stations, including Station 22 at 7205 N. Alta Avenue, Station 28 at 5540 NE Sandy Boulevard and Station 42 at 13310 SE Foster Road.

“XX,” said Architect Hans Ettlin. “XX.”

[Architectural context here.]

"The project will strengthen existing Fire & Rescue stations to survive an earthquake, according to Oregon's Essential Facility code. For some stations, it is more cost-effective to renovate rather than relocate," said Portland Fire Department Chief David Sprando.

The fire station was built in 1952 and has had no major upgrades since that year. At 54,000 square feet, the fire station houses more than a dozen personnel that respond to at least 6,000 emergency responses a year. The fire station services the Old Town/Chinatown neighborhoods in Portland.

Established in 1940, Degenkolb Engineers is one of the nation's leading structural engineering firms in the design and seismic strengthening of buildings. Degenkolb offers comprehensive design, rehabilitation, and consulting services to architects, building owners, hospitals, educational institutions, corporations and government agencies. The firm has offices in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Oakland, San Diego, Portland and Seattle.

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