



City of Wilsonville Policy Position
Opposing HB 4037 A Related to Housing:
Section 17 reduces transparency and public process in violation of Land Use Goal 1

February 26, 2026

Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development:

On behalf of the City of Wilsonville, I am submitting this testimony in **opposition to HB 4037 A**, in particular **Section 17**, which would curtail transparency and public process.

Wilsonville is a leader in developing needed housing and doing so at a range of sizes, styles, and affordability levels. Our city's housing stock is 49% multifamily—a percentage above most other communities statewide. We are meeting or exceeding the housing goals, targets, and variety the state has demanded in the past 10 years. And we are doing so with thoughtful, forward-thinking planning that creates desirable, complete communities.

Foremost, Wilsonville is confused by the way Section 17 is drafted. Subsections (5)(a) and (c) read as permissive (“may provide”) but subsection (5)(b) does not (“may not require”). This wording lacks clarity, putting local governments in a position to attempt to interpret legislative intent.

Regardless, Section 17 of HB 4037 A flies in the face of the thoughtful planning conducted by Wilsonville and other cities. It is an affront to public process and transparency, something Oregon used to pride itself on as a national leader. And it may violate Land Use Goal 1, public involvement, which is described by the Department of Land Conservation and Development as “a **required** part of land use planning in Oregon” (emphasis added).¹

Including the public in decisions about how and where their community grows, and what housing is needed to support current and future residents, should not be viewed by the state as local government thwarting housing development or refusing to grow. It should instead be viewed as a fundamental part of Oregon's pioneering land use system. Often, input from community members and information gained during a public hearing leads to

¹ Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, Goal 1: Citizen Involvement webpage (<https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/op/pages/goal-1.aspx>), accessed February 26, 2026

better development outcomes. In fact, in our experience as a city, taking time in the planning phase, particularly for larger developments and subdivisions, reduces appeals, delays, and public opposition when housing construction begins. An example of this is in the City's Frog Pond West neighborhood where public comments influenced the developer to slightly alter the street network to preserve a strip of mature Douglas Fir trees, which provided character within the new neighborhood and screened it from an existing property owner.

We respectfully remind the Committee that local governments are your partner in developing housing. It is in our interest as a community, as a service provider, and certainly as a tax-levying entity who must operate within financial constraints, to grow and develop housing.

We urge the Committee to **reject Section 17** of the bill or to amend the legislation to preserve reasonable and longstanding local notice, public hearings, and appeal processes.

Sincerely,



Mayor Shawn O'Neil
City of Wilsonville

CC: Sen. Courtney Neron Misslin
Rep. Sue Rieke Smith