

Mayor
Honorable Tom Ellis

City Manager
Jason A. Tuck, ICMA-CM



February 28, 2025

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for House Bill 3031-1

Dear Honorable Chair Marsh and Members of the Committee:

Public infrastructure is fundamental to meeting the housing needs of Oregonians.

Infrastructure is the number one barrier to housing production in Happy Valley. After years of implementing state housing mandates that did not fully account for the deficit of infrastructure in communities across Oregon, it is refreshing to see a proposal aimed at the core issue. Happy Valley has significant land inside the Metro Urban Growth Boundary that sits idle because the infrastructure costs are too significant for our city to tackle alone. Strategic infrastructure investments in our community could unlock a great deal of housing capacity. Happy Valley and its planned expansion area of Pleasant Valley/North Carver have a planned capacity for over 11,000 housing units within the next 20 years, but the largest obstacles to development are the infrastructure costs to support growth.

We do have some suggestions regarding the criteria and approach outlined in the -1 amendment. First, we believe that instead of inventing new, arbitrary criteria, this important proposed program would be much more successful if it were instead aligned with local Housing Need Analysis (HNAs), Housing Capacity Analysis (HCAs), and Housing Production Strategies (HPSs). Oregon law requires cities to produce these documents, which inventory and forecast local housing needs, available capacity to support forecasted housing growth, and specific strategies needed to meet the housing needs in the community over the next 20 years. Eligibility for infrastructure funding in the -1 amendment in our view should be connected to the housing planning work we are already required to do. Additionally, the criteria in the -1 need to be improved. The density thresholds are too high, as are the affordability requirements. We are confident that as written, these thresholds will severely limit the applicability of the program in Happy Valley and reduce the potential impact of the program to regional housing capacity.

We appreciate your attention to this important issue.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "TOM ELLIS".

Tom Ellis
Mayor

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Preserving and enhancing the safety, livability and character of our community