



American Planning Association
Oregon Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

Co-Chair Helm, Co-Chair Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald, and members of the committee,

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association is proud to testify in support of **House Bill 2950** to modernize Statewide Land Use Planning Goal 1.

Our organization represents more than 800 planning professionals across the state, who have firsthand experience with every facet of our state's land use planning program. Our members have seen the great successes of our planning processes, as well as the areas where our processes could be improved – public participation is one of those areas.

When the state adopted its land use goals 50 years ago, it made “citizen involvement” the very first goal for a reason. Our state has committed to excellence in land use planning. As such, we know that it is essential to ensure that our land use decisions involve input from the people who are most impacted by those decisions – and that those people know when, how and where to be involved.

With 50 years of experience in implementing these goals, planning professionals now have a much clearer picture of how they play out in the real world.

While the stated goal of Goal 1 is to “insure the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process,” it has never been updated following its adoption in 1974. Nor have any Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) ever been adopted to provide direction on its implementation to local governments, special districts and those State agencies involved in land uses.

Unfortunately, we have seen how Goal 1 has played out in the real world – we know that still today, people with means and privilege are often the only voices elevated in our public participation processes. We have seen how land use decisions

disproportionately impact underserved populations, while simultaneously disproportionately excluding them. People of color, low and moderate income residents, people with disabilities, people in rural areas, youth, seniors and renters are among the voices so rarely represented at the table, often because they do not know that the table exists, or how to find it and access it, or overcome the barriers that present challenges to participation in “all phases of planning.”

Since Goal 1 was adopted, the way that we think about equity has evolved; our housing; transportation; economic development; urban, forest and agricultural lands; natural resources; public facilities; waterways and natural hazardous land needs have evolved, as well as our technologies and our understanding of the barriers to public participation. It’s time that Goal 1 was amended to reflect 50 years of lessons learned, progress and technological advancements.

With vital conversations happening around transportation, housing and environmental policies this session, it’s more important now than ever before to ensure that our state has an equitable, accountable public engagement process for its land use decisions – one that is meaningful, without being prohibitive.

HB 2950 would help us move towards modernizing Goal 1, by establishing a goals advisory committee responsible for auditing Goal 1 including its lack of implementation standards. And, as well, the advisory committee will study and make recommendations on the statutory public participation process used by LCDC when making goal amendments – which still rely on outdated methods like newspaper publications and in-person only hearings. These might have made sense in the 1970s, but don’t make sense today.

HB 2950 requires LCDC to amend Goal 1. Through the advisory committee process and the robust public participation process it will be required to hold, LCDC will have clear direction on exactly how to amend and modernize Goal 1, so that it makes the most sense for the needs and goals of our state today.

It is important that we give DLCD the resources and direction it needs to make this goal amendment happen, with so many critical land use decisions on the horizon in the coming years – HB 2950 will do just that.

On behalf of the Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association, we urge your yes vote on this very important and timely piece of legislation.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Harker, AICP

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