



April 27, 2023

**Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Policy Position
Relating to Clear and Objective Standards**

Clackamas County supports HB 3197: In 2017, the state legislature expanded the mandate requiring that local governments impose only clear and objective standards for housing developments. This expansion represented an effort to streamline the development process for proposed residential projects. Unfortunately, however, it was done in such a way that it now applies in rural areas outside of established urban growth boundaries (UGBs). As a result, it has left many counties exposed to legal challenges, as seen in Washington County, due to the difficulty in implementing updated standards that conform to the new requirement. Exempting areas outside of UGBs, as proposed by HB 3197, will do little to undermine the purpose of the requirements, which is to facilitate the provision of urban housing.

The implementation of clear and objective development standards for areas outside of UGBs will require significant local resources to adopt into local zoning codes. More importantly, given Oregon's land use goals of directing most new development to urban areas, mandating clear and objective standards in rural areas does not smooth the pathway for provision of substantial housing development.

It is NOT the county's goal to alter how land use decisions occur within the UGB – specifically the Metro UGB – or slow down housing development. Rather, it is the goal of the county to be a good service provider while also being a good steward of state land use goals.

The proposed -3 amendment lessens the efficacy of the original intent of this bill, but it does provide a compromise by removing farm and forest zones from the clear and objective standards requirement and providing additional time for counties to reach compliance in rural residential areas, particularly for those regulations that implement Statewide Planning Goals 5, 6, 7, and 15.

We urge a “yes” vote on HB 3197.

Please contact Chris Lyons at clyons@clackamas.us for more information.