



TO: House Committee on Rural Communities, Land Use and Water
FROM: City of Medford
DATE: February 8, 2016
RE: Support for HB 4079

As with many cities in Oregon, the City of Medford finds that the amount of buildable land within its urban growth boundary is limited. Finding space for affordable housing projects continues to be difficult for Medford and many other jurisdictions.

The City of Medford has spent approximately the last forty-eight months working on a plan to expand our urban growth boundary. Our business owners, landowners and citizens have been active in this process as we look forward to what we want our community to become. From conversations with those groups, we have learned that they consider providing affordable housing an important priority that the community must address. We concur and want you to know that the City is dedicated to assuring that development includes the various housing projects necessary to meet the needs of all of our citizens.

Because our UGB is about to grow, making more room for all sorts of projects, the pilot projects envisioned in HB 4079 may not be a fit for Medford at this time. Nevertheless, we are empathetic to the needs of other cities and view HB 4079 as providing an invaluable tool. It will help two cities involved in the pilot program explore an option to look for usable land just outside their UGB for affordable and mixed use housing. Additionally, down the road our hope is that it will provide a model for other local governments to do the same.

We applaud this forward thinking and response to the need for land use changes in order to meet the state's growing need for affordable housing.

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