



February 15, 2017

Representative Paul Holvey, Chair  
House Committee on Business and Labor  
Oregon Legislature

Chair Holvey and Committee Members:

In 2013, the Legislature passed SB 582, which added to ORS 455 the direction to make construction related development activities more accessible, efficient, and support economic development. The City of Eugene took this direction and began development of an internet-based plan review and permitting system. The system, *eBuild*, was developed internally by city staff, keeping costs down and enabling the development of a system tailored to meet the specific needs of the local community.

The cost of developing and implementing *eBuild* to date is \$1.2M, this includes software development, equipment purchases, training, and outreach/education with customers. We are also involved in a new \$500K renovation of Permit Center that will better integrate our permit services with our *eBuild* program.

#### **Investment in locally-developed system pays off**

*eBuild* went live in early 2015, and has been an overwhelming success. *eBuild* provides an intuitive interface that allows permit applicants to manage their own projects easily, access information quickly, and know immediately what is needed to move their project forward. Use of the system is currently optional, but has increased of its own merit to the point where over 80% of projects are now submitted for permit via *eBuild*. 100% of projects will be processed through *eBuild* by mid- to late-2017.

Our customers enjoy 24/7 access via internet, with no waiting for office hours. This includes: permit application, plan submittals, payment of fees, selecting contractors, scheduling inspections. Additionally, our system eliminates trips to the Permit Center, reducing travel time and costs, reduced printing costs for applicants, and improves communication and collaboration with plan reviewers.

#### **Fiscal and service impact of HB2164**

If HB2164 is passed, Eugene estimates a financial loss of the \$1.2 million already invested in our system. We estimate at least a \$700,000 expense in converting our *eBuild* system to the state's Accella system. It does not address the lack of reliability with Accella, given that outages and processing challenges are common with that platform.

HB2164 would eliminate the ability to develop local systems designed to meet specific or unique local needs. And we would lose control over system development and maintenance. Our Permitting system would be less flexible, responsive and efficient. Eugene is does not support HB2164 as currently written.

Ethan Nelson  
Intergovernmental Relations Manager