



Councilor Jennifer Yeh Testimony on HB 2001 relating to land use before the Oregon House Committee on Human Services and Housing, March 18, 2019.

Chair Keny-Guyer and members of the committee, thank you for holding this public hearing on House Bill 2001. For the record, my name is Jennifer Yeh, I am a Eugene City Councilor and my testimony is on behalf of the City of Eugene.

The City of Eugene opposes both the enrolled version of HB 2001 and the dash 10 amendments and respectfully requests a No Pass recommendation. The City Council held a work session on HB 2001 earlier this month and while we understand there is a housing crisis, we do not believe HB 2001 is the vehicle to address our statewide housing issues.

There are four key elements that I want to share.

First, the City opposes HB 2001 based on Local Control. The City of Eugene and other local governments should have the authority to, within the general land use planning framework created by state law, implement land use planning strategies that are tailored to their specific communities. Different communities experience different challenges and have different needs and each community should have the freedom to plan accordingly.

Second, and relatedly, the City of Eugene has invested thousands of staff hours and the citizens of Eugene have invested thousands of hours of their own time to craft land use plans and regulations specific to Eugene and its various neighborhoods. Our Envision Eugene process is an example of this work, as is the current project work with the River Road/Santa Clara neighborhoods to update their neighborhood refinement plan that includes recommendations for increased density along transit corridors. Statewide mandates like those included in HB 2001 may cause the residents of Eugene and other communities to feel that they have no real voice in the land use planning process because the legislature can simply override all their input and hard work.

Third, HB 2001 is difficult to implement. It includes vague language, undefined terms and is difficult to translate into our local code. Eugene has experience in this regard based on our attempts to implement HB 1051. The City will certainly expend scarce resources defending the regulations required by HB 2001, as the City, housing developers, and other interested parties argue over whether the City is allowed (or required) to enforce the density requirements in our adopted comprehensive plan, or whether a particular development standard is a "reasonable regulation related to siting and design," or discourages development of housing through "unreasonable cost or delay."

Finally, in order to implement the changes required by HB 2001, the City's planning staff and attorney's office will need to shift their attention from other important work the City is already doing to further the goal of increasing housing availability in Eugene. City staff are currently working on land use code audits to identify regulatory and process barriers to construction of

housing. Planning Staff, with input from interested stakeholders, are also working to update the City's land use code to revise the City's clear and objective housing approval criteria to ensure they are working efficiently and effectively. City staff are also working to clarify and streamline certain permitting requirements and processes related to the development of housing. In addition, staff and residents are working together on neighborhood plans, planning for growth in the community, and creating a set of housing tools and strategies to support the development of housing within the City. Although Eugene is larger than many cities in Oregon, our staff can only do so much, and implementation of HB 2001 will pull them away from the other important housing-related projects already happening in our community.

For all these reasons the City opposes HB 2001 and the dash 10 amendments and respectfully asks this committee for a Do Not Pass recommendation.

Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer questions.