



Testimony by City of Wilsonville Mayor Tim Knapp Opposing HB 4095:

Proposed Legislation to Site Low-Income “Affordable Housing” on UGB Edge Detrimental to Target Population and Community as a Whole

Scheduled for public hearing on February 10, 2020, before
the House Committee on Human Services and Housing

Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chairs Noble and Williams, and Members of the Committee:

As one of Oregon’s fastest growing communities for the past 20 years—doubling in population to over 25,000 during that timeframe—the City of Wilsonville has become very familiar with both UGB expansions and housing developments of all types.

The proposed legislation would site “affordable housing” locations on the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) edge. This kind of policy harms both the intended beneficiaries of such a policy—lower-income residents seeking affordable housing—and the greater community.

The City believe that it is problematic to site affordable housing on the UGB edge due to the general lack of public transit service and no ready-access to key commercial retail and social services that are generally located toward the city core areas. Rather, affordable housing should be located in cities along transit corridors and near commercial retail and social services needed by lower-income residents.

Placing affordable housing on the UGB edge forces lower-income residents to spend limited financial resources on operating a vehicle to travel distance, or make cumbersome alternative transportation arrangements. In essence, congregating affordable housing into low-income housing projects on the UGB edge appears to be a policy unintentionally favoring the creation of “suburban slums” that harm all residents of a community.

Wilsonville has specifically sought to integrate into the fabric of the community affordable, subsidized housing. Wilsonville hosts five low-income and mental-health housing facilities that serve 365 residents. When the community’s largest mobile-home park with 256 low-income and senior residents closed in 2012 and was converted to a denser residential use, the City worked with Oregon Housing and Community Services and other partners to develop and operate the Creekside Woods Apartments, an 84-unit low-income facility located adjacent to the Community Center in the town-center area.

The City respectfully urges the committee to take no action on HB 4095. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Tim Knapp'.

Tim Knapp, Mayor
City of Wilsonville