

Submitter: Tina Ricks

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Housing and Homelessness

Measure: HB2984

In Beaverton and Washington County, I am surrounded by vast half-empty suburban office parks. I'm sure those huge office park parking lots weren't created as a great place to ride a skateboard or a bike, or to teach my kid to drive, but they're excellent for that because even in the middle of the workday, the parking lots are largely empty. Folks are trickling back in, sure, but not much. I'm sure the insides of those buildings are just as empty as the parking lots. I'm sure the companies that rented the space are shedding their leases as fast as they are allowed out.

They're located in great places--near bus and MAX lines, near shopping, in the middle of Beaverton and Hillsboro. Allowing these to be converted to housing cheaply and easily by waiving city and county fees makes all kinds of sense. The buildings already exist. The infrastructure is already there. There's plumbing, sewer, electricity, gas, already there. The parking lots, bus lines, and MAX lines are already there. No one is paving over valuable farmland. If office parks became mixed-use developments, with offices, apartments and retail mixed in together--what a great use of space! This makes all kinds of sense. Reuse and repurpose existing commercial buildings, and take advantage of all that potential that is currently mostly empty.