



March 5, 2025

Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the City of Central Point, I am writing to express our strong opposition to SB 49 with the -1 amendment. While we share the Legislature's commitment to increasing housing supply, we are deeply concerned that this bill will have unintended and harmful consequences for smaller cities like ours. It removes local flexibility, limits our ability to plan for infrastructure, and imposes costly mandates without considering the unique needs of our community.

SB 49 -1 mandates the adoption of model codes from the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), stripping cities of the ability to tailor zoning regulations to meet their specific housing needs. Like many small cities, Central Point has worked diligently to implement thoughtful zoning policies that balance housing production with community character, infrastructure capacity, and economic development goals. A one-size-fits-all approach disregards the nuances of local conditions and undermines our ability to craft innovative solutions that best serve our residents.

Another major concern is the removal of key land use goals when increasing density. Responsible urban growth requires coordinated planning to ensure that higher-density development is supported by adequate roads, utilities, emergency services, and public transportation. Cities like Central Point rely on these planning tools to guide sustainable growth, ensuring that new development does not outpace the infrastructure needed to support it. By eliminating these goals, SB 49-1 forces cities to allow greater density without ensuring the necessary infrastructure is in place, ultimately threatening livability and public safety.

Additionally, removing the ability to establish minimum density requirements undermines a critical tool that cities use to promote diverse housing options and meet state-mandated Housing Production Strategies. Minimum density requirements help ensure a balanced mix of housing types while also allowing cities to align growth with infrastructure capacity. Without this tool, cities may struggle to meet urbanization targets in a way that is both sustainable and responsive to community needs.

Further complicating matters, the bill imposes an unfunded mandate on local governments by requiring cities to subsidize developments if they wish to implement an Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) program. Cities like Central Point already face financial constraints, and additional cost burdens will make it even harder to support affordable housing initiatives. Rather than imposing financial requirements on cities, the state should explore incentive-based approaches that encourage participation in IZ programs without forcing cities to divert limited resources away from other essential services.

SB 49 -1 fundamentally undermines local decision-making and removes critical planning tools needed for responsible and sustainable growth. While we recognize the urgency of addressing housing challenges statewide, this bill disregards the realities faced by smaller cities like Central Point. We urge the Legislature to reconsider these provisions and work collaboratively with cities to develop policies that expand housing opportunities while preserving local governance and ensuring infrastructure keeps pace with growth.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Chris Clayton
City Manager, City of Central Point