



March 27, 2025

**Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Policy Position
Relating to “Bespoke” Public Improvements**

Clackamas County opposes HB 2688-3: As proposed, the -3 amendment would apply the prevailing wage rate to bespoke, off-site fabrication, preconstruction, assembly or construction work performed for public works projects. Though well-intended, it is unclear what constitutes “bespoke” work, and increasing the cost of labor erodes our ability to provide affordable housing and similar public improvements during a period of historic inflation.

Clackamas County is undertaking several housing initiatives using finite proceeds from regional funding measures. Most recently, construction began on the Clackamas Village, a recovery-oriented transitional shelter community for people experiencing homelessness. The Clackamas Village will provide 13 modular building structures, including a kitchen module, two office modules, two bathroom modules, and eight three-bedroom sleeping modules.

The Clackamas Village is a prevailing wage rate project. Moreover, the modules were built *off-site* and included custom modifications to function as a transitional shelter space. It’s unclear whether the Clackamas Village would have triggered the criteria of HB 2688-3, causing unpredictable cost increases and service delays.

Moving forward, the county has 356 affordable housing units under construction, and another 299 units in pre-construction. Projects are also underway to provide the necessary public infrastructure to support growth, such as wastewater capacity and safe roads. As public agencies partner with the state to address housing affordability, it is imperative that local governments maintain the ability to adapt to novel and cost-effective construction methodologies.

We urge a “no” vote on HB 2688-3.

Please contact Trent Wilson (twilson2@clackamas.us) for more information.