



Eugene Intergovernmental Relations

Testimony from Alissa Hansen, City of Eugene Planning Director OPPOSITION to HB 2558 unless Amended Oregon House Committee on Housing 2/25/21

Good morning Chair Fahey, Vice Chairs Campos and Morgan, and members of the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2558.

My name is Alissa Hansen and I am the Planning Director for the City of Eugene.

I'm here to share Eugene's concerns and opposition to this bill. I do want to make it clear that the City of Eugene strongly supports the principles of Transit Oriented Development. This is a critical element of our Envision Eugene land use planning efforts, as well as MovingAhead, our collaborative transit program with Lane Transit District (LTD).

Eugene is already actively committed to finding ways to encourage development that is compatible with our transit investments. We've recently completed a multi-year land use, transit, economic development, environmental protection, and neighborhood livability planning process called Envision Eugene. A primary focus of this plan is to facilitate the transformation of our downtown, our key transit corridors, and our core commercial areas into vibrant mixed-use neighborhoods that foster active, walkable community living.

I'd like to give you a specific example of our on-going local efforts to implement our vision to increase both housing and employment along our corridors - and explain how this bill would have negative impacts on this and future efforts.

The River Road Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan is currently in development and will chart a vision for the future of two of Eugene's largest neighborhoods incorporating significant work and input from neighborhood stakeholders. A key goal of this multi-year community-led planning process is to improve the conditions along the River Road corridor, a major street that runs through the two neighborhoods.

This planning effort, which is well underway, includes robust outreach, and collaboration with partner agencies (LTD and Lane County) and will result in changes to the City's land use regulations to encourage higher density residential and mixed-use development in appropriate and economically viable locations along the River Road corridor. The adoption process for this plan is anticipated to start later this year, meaning the amendments and land use regulation changes would be in place by the middle of next year.

The River Road corridor is also a candidate for enhanced transit service through the MovingAhead project, which is a partnership between LTD and City of Eugene. One of the preferred options is a Bus Rapid Transit line along the corridor.

We believe HB 2558 would have a direct and negative impact on these efforts. The addition of a Bus Rapid Transit line in this corridor would require significant rezoning of properties along the corridor to implement the density and height requirements mandated by the bill, triggering the need to undo the years of work neighborhood residents have invested in the River Road Santa Clara neighborhood planning effort.

As Tiffany mentioned, HB 2558 would also bring into the question our ability to extend BRT along other corridors in Eugene.

Additionally, this bill, as it is currently written, will be very difficult to implement at the local level. It includes vague language and undefined terms, making it difficult to integrate into our existing land use code and community context. For Eugene to fully determine the impacts of the bill, including the extent of its applicability, there are a number of terms and phrases that need clarification.

I'd also like to point out, there are significant overlaps between the requirements of this bill and other statewide mandates that the city is already obligated to complete, including a housing production strategy required by HB 2003 (2019) and the Land Conservation and Development Commission's Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities rulemaking effort which is currently underway. Both of these existing efforts will require Eugene to look at changes to our plans and land use regulations to increase housing density along our transit corridors. A third mandate the same vein is not necessary, and will pull us away from tangible housing, employment and transit-related projects already happening in our community.

Existing conditions – at least 50% of area already allows for 45 du/ac and height. In our experience, The zoning it not always the issues. Low-medium is fully developed – and some of it separated from transit by channel

Thank you again for your thoughtful consideration of Eugene's concerns and I respectfully request that you amend HB 2558 to either not apply within Lane County or to not include bus rapid transit corridors.

While the City of Springfield could not be present this morning, they like us support the concept of transit oriented development but have serious concerns with the bill and its impact on their local planning work. They are submitting a letter with their specific concerns and we would urge you to review that as well.

I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

