



DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

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February 17, 2016

To the Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Rules

Testimony in support of House Bill 4126

ORS 197A.320 creates a new process for how cities determine their Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) effective January 1, 2016. The law does not include any provision to grandfather cities that have already initiated their UGB adoption work, as is often the practice of the Legislature when adopting new land use statutes. The City of Springfield, DLCD and the other communities supporting this bill believe this omission was unintended. We are asking the Legislature to adopt HB 4126 as a housekeeping bill to create the grandfather provision to allow cities that had initiated their UGB work prior to January 1, 2016 to continue that process under the statutes and administrative rules in effect on June 30, 2013.

Where we are in the Urban Growth Boundary Adoption process

The City of Springfield is near completion of a multi-year project to determine our employment land need and we are ready to schedule our public hearings for a proposed employment land UGB expansion. Our land inventory and the economic opportunity analysis has been prepared under the ORS 197.298 process and involved years of citizen engagement, dedicated staff time, consultant and legal resources, public hearings, coordination with DLCD and various community stakeholders. Our analysis has been adjusted along the way as necessary to keep pace with court rulings on UGB appeals. This is also connected to the regional planning work with our partners at the City of Eugene and Lane County to establish separate urban growth boundaries, the County's rural comprehensive plan and separate city specific comprehensive plans. The proposed UGB expansion that is ready to take forward for adoption is the fruition of all of those efforts. To start over with a new process now would be a tremendous setback.

Impact of Applying New Statute and Rules to the City of Springfield

The new method under 197A.320 provides a different way for analyzing and prioritizing land, in effect requiring the City of Springfield to start its UGB expansion work over. This is especially concerning in light of the fact our analysis is complete and the City of Springfield is now in the process of compiling the data, information and analysis for the public adoption process. Switching analysis methods this late in the process would mean the City would not be able to use the work it has already completed and would have to start over. We are not a wealthy City and have limited general fund resources to pay for this work. If we are unable to bring our process to a timely conclusion we will continue to impact our City's ability to invest general fund resources into other critical public safety and social service needs of our citizens.

Cooperation with DLCD, the League of Oregon Cities and Other Cities

The City of Springfield would like to express our appreciation to our legislative representatives and applaud the collaborative efforts of the Department of Land Conservation and Development, the League of Oregon Cities and the other cities who worked to create this housekeeping bill.

In summary, the City of Springfield thanks you for your consideration and respectfully requests that the committee support HB 4126 with a "do pass" recommendation.

Sincerely,

/s/

Anette Spickard
Development and Public Works Director