

March 18, 2018

Chair and members of House Committee on Housing and Human Services

We have reviewed the recently posted amendments to HB 2001. They add townhouses to the mix, reduce requirements for cities between 10,000 and 25,000 to duplexes only, give cities and counties more time to comply and add extension provisions, but with additional hurdles, new CC & Rs cannot be enforced to block middle housing, and add more money for technical assistance.

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None of these amendments deal with the major issues of affordability, demolitions of existing affordable housing, or displacement of the most vulnerable in our cities, overburdened renters and communities of color. Lacking any analysis of the potentially these far reaching impacts of this bill, we look to the predicted impacts of the parallel initiative in Portland, the Residential Infill Plan.

Just like the City of Portland's Residential Infill Plan this bill would to allow over 90% of Portland's houses to be replaced with three story, 4,000 square-foot quadplexes. See John Liu's 2/12/19 letter to the Portland Tribune, Who is RIP for? Not for ordinary Portlanders. In November 2018, the city commissioned an analysis of the RIP. The report, by Johnson Economics, concluded that most redevelopment will be investor-owned rental quadplex apartments: in the report's words, "largely rental product." There will be little room for home buyers: "Ownership residential solutions under the proposed new codes would be expected to be limited."

Johnson's analysis also shows RIP redevelopment will produce rental apartments that are both small and expensive. The same is true for this bill. According to this city-commissioned report, these rental quadplex units will be around 730 square feet at a typical rent of \$1,823 per month. According to the city of Portland Housing Bureau, the average rent for existing one-bedroom apartments in Portland is \$1,379 per month. RIP quadplex apartments will be 35 percent more expensive than current average rents.

None of the housing imposed on Portland single family zones by this bill will be affordable to lower income households in Portland. According to DATAUSA, in 2016, nearly 108,000 households (41 percent) made less than \$50,000/yr. According to [city-data.com](http://city-data.com), median Black household income in Portland in 2016 was about \$30,000 a year. According to the Housing Bureau, the affordable rent level for a one-bedroom apartment in Portland, for a family making 60 percent of the median family income, is \$840 per month. For a family making 80 percent of median family income, affordable rent is \$1,120 per month.

This bill will also worsen the demolition problem in Portland. Johnson concludes that under RIP, in the coming decades, up to 38,000 new units could be built. That's 9,500 new three-story, high-priced, quadplex apartment buildings that planners want to see built in our neighborhoods. Thousands of Portland houses will have to be demolished. When neighborhoods are rezoned and

redeveloped, the less-expensive houses are the first to be bought and demolished. The families who rent these houses are the first to be evicted and "priced out."

City planners admit that the RIP will likely displace renters in neighborhoods with higher share of low income and people of color, without college degrees, Lents, Brentwood-Darlington, Montavilla, and other inner ring neighborhoods such as St. Johns, Portsmouth, Concordia, and Cully. Class, economic differences mark debate over infill plan, Portland Tribune, 2/28/19. This bill will have a similar effect. The same is true for this bill.

The demolition of 1,000s of smaller, older, affordable housing for newly built duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes will unnecessarily increase global warming. Putting aside the loss of mature CO2 absorbing trees on lots cleared, the continued demolition of buildings across Oregon amounts to a staggering amount of [embodied energy](#) that is literally being thrown away. Every time we raze an older house and replace it with a new, even more energy efficient one, it takes an average of 50 years to recover the climate change impacts related to its demolition. See January 28, 2014 article entitled "The Impact of Oregon's Increasing Demolition Trend" by [Brandon Spencer-Hartle](#) on the [restoreoregon.org](#) website.

Professor Lutzenhiser found: "Our demolition and new construction carbon emissions estimate is in the neighborhood of 47,000 pounds of CO2 emitted in the demo-construction process. The estimate for a major energy retrofit of an existing house is about 1,500 pounds (about 1/30<sup>th</sup> as much), and building a new ADU is estimated to produce around 12,000 pounds of CO2."

The legislature should allow Portland and other communities to pursue other policies that preserve our neighborhoods, minimize global warming impacts, and retain and expand use of existing homes, such as, encouraging internal renovations under the residential code that accommodate multiple family use of larger older homes, weatherization of single family and low income housing, expanding the pilot project where the City is paying for ADUs that must be rented to low income families for 10 years, only waiving ADU development fees if units are rented under long term leases to households below median income, providing financial support for land trust home ownership programs, such as proud ground, funding programs that support home ownership and access to existing housing by people of lower income and people of color, vigorous enforcement of Fair Housing laws and lower income housing requirements in projects larger than 20 units, and repatriation of families, including African-Americans, pushed out of the Albina neighborhood by gentrification,

It is hard to understand why the Legislature is suddenly enamored with a random densification agenda that makes a mockery of SB100 and land use planning in Oregon. In Portland's adopted 2035 Comprehensive Plan, the approved map shows the location of the 20-year supply of vacant and underutilized land zoned for residential use. In addition every residential corner lot is zoned for 2 houses, every midblock lot may include an 800SF ADU, density overlays are applied to substantial areas of the city. In excess of 41,000 lots zoned for denser housing in Portland are available excluding ADUs. These entitlements are largely unused.

The legislative rezone of the entire city will result in the demolition of 1,000s of homes to build quadplexes most Portlanders cannot afford, rather than measures such as those suggested

above that provide more affordable housing, avoid unnecessary global warming impacts, and preserve our neighborhoods. Professor Loren Lutzenhiser suggested why in his November 16, 2016 testimony:

“There has long been considerable support for demolition and new construction because of the large profits and resource flows involved for developers, builders, investors, and city agencies. Renovation and retrofit solutions need comparable support from environmental actors, affordability advocates and Portland residents committed to sustainable solutions. Advocacy is needed for a better balance of community versus economic benefits and needs.”

Paul and Nikki Majkut 4130 NE 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue Portland OR