



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

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Friends and Colleagues,



At the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Department of Land Conservation and Development, we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the path we took to get here today. It's incumbent upon us to ask, "What is this land that we celebrate?" From time immemorial, this land has sustained the people who care for and coexist with the water, plants, and animals of this place. This land serves as a provider of food, clothing, medicine, and homes. This land is also our source of oxygen, our shield from floods and storm surges, and our buffer against strong winds.

The indigenous people who have lived here, both in the past and in the present, hold an ancient knowledge and deep-rooted connection to this land.

We live in a world where family wealth, and health, is closely tied to our land. Unfortunately, our national, state, and local policies have separated or excluded entire communities from the land they love...

- Breaking treaties, terminating most tribes, suppressing indigenous language and culture;
- Constitutionally excluding Black pioneers from Oregon when the state was first formed;
- Removing Japanese farmers and business owners during WWII;
- Moving, re-moving, and redlining Black neighborhoods in the name of development;
- And failing to recognize or to house those who are experiencing homelessness.

Looking ahead to the next 50 years of Oregon's land-use planning program, we know we can do better. Our commitment today is to avoid inflicting, perpetuating, or allowing harm like this...and to take corrective action whenever and wherever possible.

During my tenure as DLCD Director, doing better will mean working deliberately to be in partnership and communication with each other. It will mean ensuring that our processes are open and inclusive, welcoming all Oregonians. I'm so grateful to be part of a team with our city and county partners, our commissioners, our staff, and Deputy Director Kirstin Greene, who leads us in these efforts.

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And through it all, the land continues and will continue to provide our food and water, our fiber, our healing, our shelter, our oxygen, our protection from flood and storm, and our buffer from wind.

We still have so much to learn from one another and so many more opportunities to care for the land that continues to care for us. Let us begin. Again. Thank you.

Brenda Ortigoza Bateman, Ph.D.

