

CELEBRATING



**OREGON**  
Department of  
Land Conservation  
& Development

DLCD helps communities of all sizes as they plan for, protect and improve the built and natural systems that provide a high quality of life. In partnership with local governments, the land use planning program fosters sustainable and vibrant communities in every region of Oregon.

The Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD or department) stewards a land use program that meets local governments where they are and provides direct technical and financial assistance to local governments to modify and update their land use plans. Some land use tenets are universal:

- Land use planning must be accomplished with community involvement;
- Oregon's resource lands are limited and represent the second largest industry in the state;
- Homes and other critical facilities should not be placed in areas prone to natural hazards;
- Growth should be supported by transportation and housing choices, informed by ecological values and conditions; and
- We must recognize increased challenges due to a warming climate.

Recognizing local conditions, Oregon's land use planning system supports regional differences, unique local conditions, the increasing diversity of Oregon communities, natural and cultural resources and above all, community values.

## Planning is Local

In Oregon, land use is implemented at the local level. Each city and county has adopted a unique comprehensive plan. These plans respond to, localize, and build upon statewide, shared planning goals. Planners evaluate existing conditions, built and natural conditions, and community values when crafting a local plan. With the legislature's support, DLCD provides staff support to communities in regions throughout the state. DLCD provides technical assistance grants to address specific local planning needs. In 2021-23, DLCD awarded 259 grants totaling \$8.1 million dollars.

Appointed by the Governor, and approved by the Senate, Oregon's land use policy making responsibility rests with the [Land Conservation and Development Commission](#) (LCDC). LCDC has directed staff to develop rules that allow multiple pathways to compliance. In addition, DLCD offers technical assistance and grants to local governments implementing new rules as they are developed over time.

# OREGON'S LAND USE PLANNING PROGRAM

Planning with and for communities since 1974.

Goals

## REGIONAL DIFFERENCES & PROGRAM FLEXIBILITY

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### AGRICULTURAL LANDS

- Minimum parcel size distinction for rangeland and other farm land
- Special protections for Oregon's highest value farmland
- Guest ranches and youth camps permitted on farmland only in Eastern Oregon
- Commercial solar development permitted at greater scale in Eastern Oregon

### FOREST LANDS

- Specific dwelling opportunities for western and eastern Oregon
- Forest productivity based on cubic feet of wood fiber produced per acre each year
- Forest values include the production of merchantable tree species, as well as maintaining soil, air, water, fish and wildlife resources

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### AREAS SUBJECT TO NATURAL HAZARDS

- Oregon's communities face risks from floods, landslides, earthquakes, winter storms, wildfires, and other natural hazards. Coastal erosion and tsunamis pose risks for coastal communities.
- Locally developed Natural Hazards Mitigation Plans (NHMPs) inform comprehensive plans and land use regulations.

### RECREATION

- Destination resorts permitted differently in Eastern and Western Oregon, higher standards are in place for western Oregon.

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### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Goal 9 compliance is commensurate to local government capacity
- Several special economic development programs in place for Eastern Oregon counties
- Local governments may use unique approaches to demonstrating need for employment land

### HOUSING

- Greater allowance for "middle housing" options, scaled for small and large cities
- Fewer requirements for housing planning for smaller communities, higher requirements for larger cities
- Communities impacted by wildfire able to permit temporary housing on resource lands

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### TRANSPORTATION

- Rural Transportation Equity program with grant investments
- Larger metropolitan areas are required to plan regionally
- Small cities can request exemption to some planning rules
- Rules for parking, planning for transit, and transportation demand management are based on population

### URBANIZATION

- Cities expand to address housing, employment, and other land needs over time, minimizing urbanization of resource lands
- Clear expectations help cities plan for efficient growth
- UGBs separate urban and rural lands
- Efficient use of urban land is required, reducing infrastructure needs and travel costs for residents

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For 50 years, DLCD has been helping Oregon grow in a way that meets community needs, with locally developed and supported plans. This is a hallmark of Oregon's land use planning program.

## Tailored Solutions

Larger metropolitan areas in Oregon often benefit from more planning staff, better resources, and increased access to federal funding. The Oregon legislature and DLCD have recognized this in various ways. Some examples of programs or planning efforts designed specifically for larger jurisdictions include:

- Designation of [urban and rural reserves](#)
- Oregon's [Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities Program](#)
- [Regional Scenario Planning](#)
- [Allowing middle housing development in all single-family zones](#)
- Required regular updates to [Housing Capacity Analyses](#)

## Resources and Opportunities for Rural Places

In addition to staff support, DLCD offers an array of planning tools and [grant assistance](#) dedicated to supporting smaller local governments:

- Grant Young Memorial Planning Assistance Grants
- The Eastern Oregon Economic Opportunity Analysis program
- The Central Oregon Regional Large Lot program
- Identification of suitable economic development strategies in Eastern Oregon
- Allowing Oregon's smallest cities to perform a UGB expansion with a less detailed review process
- Upcoming model code development for wildfire impacted communities related to modular housing
- Model zoning code for small cities as well as multiple other publications

## Considering Coastal Needs

DLCD is home to the [Oregon Coastal Management Program](#) (OCMP). OCMP supports coastal communities in identifying and mitigating coastal hazards, stewarding marine and coastal natural resources, fostering sustainable and vibrant coastal economies, and preserving and expanding coastal public access. DLCD OCMP staff have developed programs and tools specific to coastal needs, including:

- [Sea Level Rise](#) (2022), [Coastal Erosion](#) (2021), and [Tsunami Resilience](#) (2015) land use planning guides
- Tsunami evacuation planning (and other coastal hazard-related work)
- Rulemaking to protect Highway 101 from coastal erosion (2022)
- The [Oregon Coastal Atlas](#), a data clearing house for coastal communities
- Investments through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in coastal habitat conservation and restoration projects
- Territorial sea planning for [rocky shore](#) habitats, undersea cables, and marine renewable energy

## Listening to All Perspectives

A hallmark of the Oregon land use planning system is community engagement and transparency. DLCD actively seeks policy development guidance from community members, advisory committees, the Local Officials Advisory Committee, the Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee, representatives of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes, and community-based organizations. Community engagement is also a critical component of the projects we fund through grants. Staff have developed several tools to establish best practices and support cities and counties in their planning and community engagement work:

- [Putting the People in Planning](#), a practitioner's guidebook (2019)
- [The Oregon Climate Equity Blueprint](#) (2021)
- [Public Involvement Checklist](#) (2019)

## DLCD Regional Representatives September 2022



Each region of Oregon is served by one of DLCD's nine Regional Representatives. These front-line staff are part of the state's regional solutions teams, work with cities and counties to advance their priorities, and have been deeply involved in disaster recovery most recently after the 2020 Labor Day fires.