



August 17, 2023

Housing Production Advisory Council, Codes & Design Workgroup  
c/o Alana J. Cox, Administrator  
Building Codes Division  
Oregon Department of Consumer & Business Services

Dear HPAC Codes and Design workgroup members:

The City of Portland appreciates the work you are doing to identify a series of recommendations to streamline and facilitate housing production across Oregon. We are also actively engaged in developing short- and long-term strategies to address the housing crisis and increase production.

As Directors of the bureaus that lead the City's urban forestry, planning, and sustainability work, we would like to share feedback specific to the proposal under consideration that would change tree regulations that apply during housing development, both here in Portland and statewide. We feel that it is important to highlight issues to offer additional perspective and engage more meaningfully than time allowed during your most recent meeting.

The City's tree regulations are an important part of meeting multiple policy objectives, cited in Portland's 2035 Comprehensive Plan, the Climate Emergency Work Plan, and Urban Forestry Management Plan. Notably, each of those plans recognizes the importance and need for housing and urban development inside the urban growth boundary. But rather than seeing these as diametrically opposed goals, the regulations aim to strike a balance between enhancing the urban forest while enabling development, through a clear and objective set of regulations.

With this context in mind, **we urge the Committee to table proposals that limit cities' ability to regulate tree preservation.** We have three reasons for making this request:

- 1) **We are in a housing emergency and a climate emergency.** Preserving trees is a critical tool to meet our climate goals. It takes decades for new tree plantings to replace the benefits and services provided – improving air quality, lowering summer temperatures, reducing flooding – from a well-established tree. Communities in East Portland are more exposed to these hazards than other parts of Portland, and as noted by the Environmental Protection Agency, community members with low incomes and communities of color are disproportionately exposed and more vulnerable to heat islands. In particular, East Portland experiences summer temperatures up to 15 degrees hotter than neighborhoods west of the Willamette with significantly greater tree canopy. Trees on privately-owned lands constitute the majority of Portland's tree canopy, contributing to the overall thermal comfort of the city. Now is not the time to postpone or deprioritize climate action in Portland by removing protections for essential trees.
- 2) **The Committee should focus on more effective strategies to increase housing production.** The Committee is exploring other strategies to increase housing production that will result in a greater number of housing units. We applaud and are engaged in those efforts. The majority of Portland's tree canopy on private property is in low density residential areas where we expect to see 20 percent of our housing growth. Conversely, 80 percent of our growth is planned for high density centers and corridors, which account for about 15% of the city's land area and are largely exempt from tree preservation requirements currently. These low canopy areas also afford opportunities to expand the tree canopy through street trees and stormwater retrofits as part of development. In other words, losing a well-established tree to yield 3 units is a different calculation than losing a well-established tree to produce 80 units.
- 3) **A well-coordinated, calibrated and strategic multi-pronged approach is needed.** Stimulating the market to produce more units, and the right types of units requires more than an ad hoc series of deregulatory moves. That is why Oregon is requiring cities to not only analyze their housing needs, but to develop a Housing Production Strategy. Portland is well underway with this effort, and we are confident that it will provide the direction we need.

Before advancing a recommendation for an aggressively permissive statewide urban forestry policy that replaces all locally designed options, we strongly recommend considering other options that better ensure reasonable and equitable outcomes be explored. The proposal suggested at the August 8th meeting seemed to be based on reactions to a single property and anecdotes, with statewide exemptions that would essentially render the City's tree regulations moot. As currently drafted, the proposal

does not appear to consider the increased societal costs of diminished air quality, more frequent urban flooding, greater vulnerability to heat events for vulnerable populations, and higher peak energy demand from increased and unmitigated tree removal. If advanced and implemented as-is, these changes would shift and multiply those costs from a small percentage of development projects onto the broader community.

In any case, any options advanced should receive significantly more vetting and discussion and be informed by data, as we balance our need to provide more housing while preserving the millions of dollars in annual environmental, public health, and economic services Portland's urban canopy provides.

We appreciate the opportunity to be involved and look forward to more discussion and dialogue as we work together to tackle our shared housing crisis.

Sincerely,

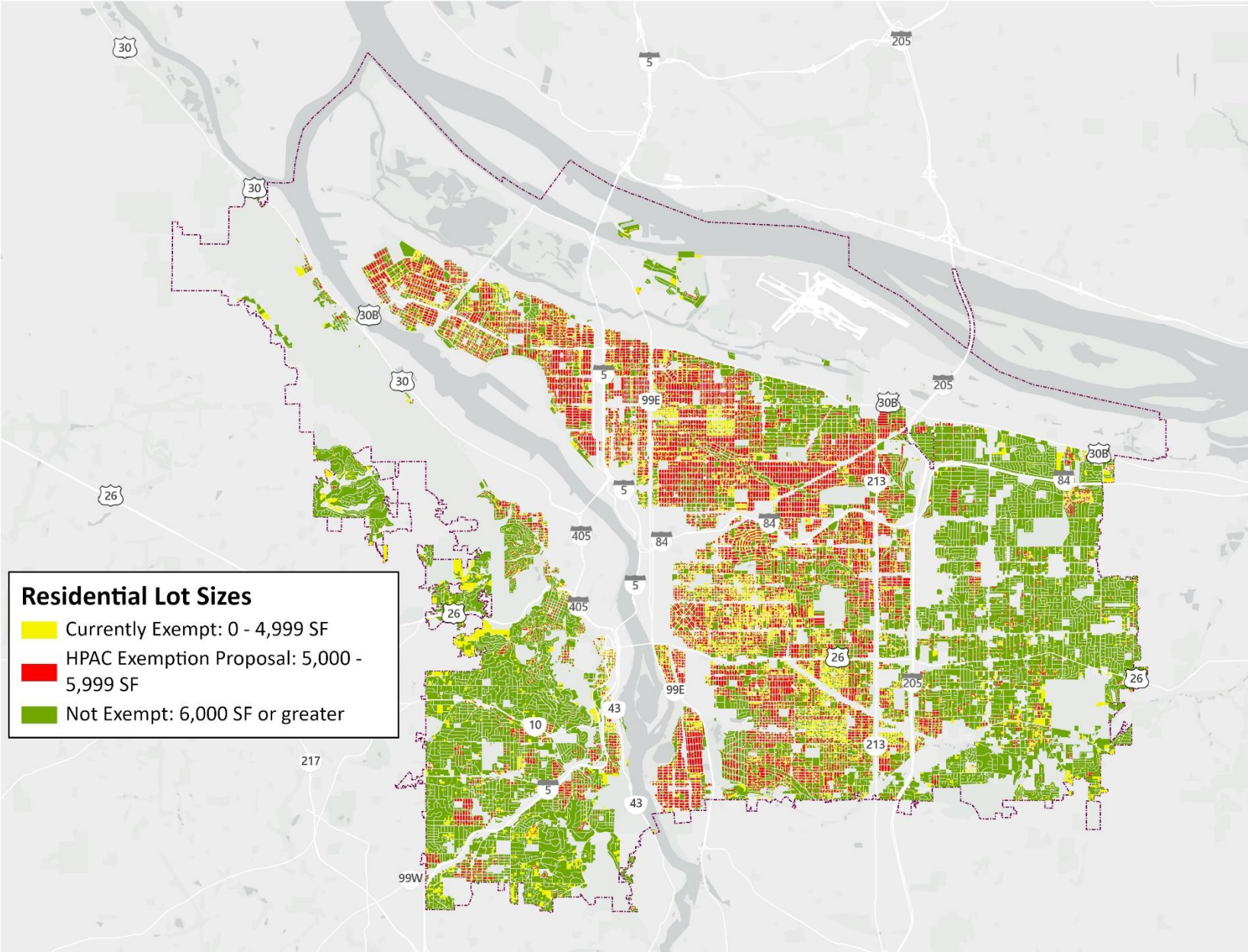
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adena Long". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Adena" being more prominent than the last name "Long".

Adena Long  
Director | Portland Parks & Recreation

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donnie Oliveira". The signature is bold and stylized, with the first name "Donnie" being the most prominent part.

Donnie Oliveira  
Director | Planning and Sustainability

**City of Portland**  
**Size of Certain Residential Lots in Portland**  
**Sept 2023**





**Commissioner Carmen Rubio**  
City of Portland

Friday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Co-Chair JD Tovey Co-Chair Damien Hall  
Housing Production Advisory Council  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HPAC Work Group Recommendations Round #2 – Additional Input

Co-Chairs and Members of the Housing Production Advisory Council,

Thank you again for the work you are doing to eliminate barriers to housing production across the state. As you continue to consider this second package of recommendations, the City of Portland would like to share some additional feedback from staff on specific proposals, to supplement the letter we submitted on September 8<sup>th</sup>. Specifically, we would like to take the opportunity to provide feedback on the two proposals related to wetlands that had their first reading on September 8<sup>th</sup>, and also to provide additional information on the proposal from the Codes & Design work group related to trees in design, which is on the agenda for public comment at today's meeting.

Wetlands

Thank you for your interest in increasing the number and availability of mitigation banks, especially that serve multiple requirements, including state wetland requirements. Due to recent changes in federal requirements, we would caution against relying solely on the private market to create these banks and would suggest local jurisdictions also be eligible for funding to jump start the development of publicly administered mitigation banks. We believe doing so could help achieve housing outcomes faster while also protecting and replacing critical wetland functions. DSL could support this work by creating technical resources that would help jurisdictions establish banks that meet multiple regulations, and funding could potentially be prioritized in jurisdictions that have adopted stronger floodplain protections in response to the Biological Opinion.

We have some concerns about a few of the other components in proposal A and B, and appreciate DSL's September 7, 2023 summary of the benefits of wetlands and clarification of the regulatory structure.

- We have concerns about the approach in Proposal B, which would reduce our ability to comply with other federal and state requirements. Portland relies on and values the stormwater management, cultural resources, and carbon sequestration functions provided by wetlands and streams, and we depend on the regulatory synergy with Waters of the State protections to meet other Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, National Flood Insurance Act, and drainage law obligations – making it easier, not harder, to meet those multiple requirements that are unaffected by Sackett. We also encourage you to consider the input on this issue included in DSL's recent letter.

- While we understand the interest in providing additional funding for stormwater facilities in concept A2, these facilities are intended to focus only on water quality as mitigation and thus would not provide the multiple benefits that come from other strategies.
- We also have some concerns that there may be unintended consequences in the regulatory structure related to concept A5 and would recommend diving into more of those details, should the idea move forward.
- Regarding the Buildable Lands Inventory in concept A6, we appreciate your concern that local jurisdictions may be overestimating lands available for housing development but want to clarify that the City of Portland already takes these areas into consideration under our existing methodology. Our staff apply a development “discount factor” for all sites where wetlands make up at least a third the site, which can result in a significant reduction in the estimated capacity. As a result, a property may still be shown on the BLI but the total buildable land available incorporates expected development constraints resulting from the presence of wetlands. We assume that other jurisdictions use a similar methodology.
- Finally, given the loss of federal Tribal Consultation requirements as a result of Sackett, as you continue to consider these proposals we would encourage you to include Tribal and Indigenous perspectives and voices in the conversation to prevent further impacts to cultural resources from the loss or alteration of wetlands and streams.

### Trees

As we shared in our last letter, the City of Portland has concerns about the proposal and would like to share a few additional data points for you to consider.

First, we would like to emphasize that the City of Portland currently provides broad exemptions from tree removal mitigation requirements to accommodate future housing development. Affordable housing projects, higher-density zones which represent 80% of new housing capacity, and 71,000 residential lots under 5,000 sf are currently exempt. The effectiveness of these allowances was verified by a 2020 analysis by Johnson Economics which found tree mitigation fees have a negligible impact on housing development.

Further, attached to this letter is a map which provides additional context on the residential parcels outside of the already exempt high-density Central City, neighborhood centers, and civic corridors. Lots under 5,000 sf which, as we shared above, are currently exempt from preservation and mitigation requirements are shown in yellow. Lots which would be made exempt if the exemption were expanded to lots under 6,000 sf – as currently proposed – are shown in red. Taken together with the proposal to exempt trees under 48” DBH (approximately 99% of trees on private property), the combined impact would be decreased tree canopy in lower density neighborhoods where just 20% of total residential housing capacity exists. We hope you consider this information – and review additional data from other sources – as you weigh the need to increase housing production with the need to mitigate the impacts of increasing summer temperatures, improve air quality, and other quantifiable public and environmental health benefits provided by Portland’s trees. A letter from two of our bureaus to the HPAC working group dated August 17<sup>th</sup> provides additional information, which we have attached to this letter to ensure that the Council has the opportunity to review.

We hope this information will be helpful to you and demonstrate our commitment to addressing the housing and climate challenges with data-driven and effective policies.

Thank you again for the opportunity to continue to participate in this process and for your creativity and enthusiasm in addressing Oregon's housing crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carmen Rubio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small mark above the "i" in "Rubio".

Carmen Rubio  
Commissioner, City of Portland

Attachments:

- Map of Certain Residential Lots in Portland
- August 17<sup>th</sup> letter from BPS and Parks



## Todd Prager & Associates LLC

September 19, 2023

Housing Production Advisory Council  
Office of Governor Tina Kotek  
900 Court St NE, Suite 254  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**Re: Work Group Recommendations Regarding Modifying Allowable Standards for Local Tree Codes**

This letter includes my comments and recommendations regarding the Housing Production Advisory Council's (HPAC) work group recommendations related to modifying allowable standards for local tree codes.

I am an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist, Registered Consulting Arborist, and Land Use Planner (AICP). I provide private consulting services for builders and developers on housing construction projects throughout Oregon. I also provide consulting services for cities in Oregon that are creating and amending tree code requirements for the preservation and planting of trees with development, including the creation of clear and objective tree codes for needed housing.

My past work included a comprehensive revision to the City of Tigard's tree code which received the Oregon APA and National APA Award for a Best Practice in Planning. The Tigard Code was unanimously approved by its Citizen Advisory Committee which included representatives from the Home Builders Association of Metro Portland and environmental groups including the Tualatin Riverkeepers. Based on my professional background, I am qualified to provide my opinion on the balance of tree preservation and building needed housing in Oregon.

I have reviewed the HPAC recommendations regarding exemptions for preservation of trees under 48-inch trunk diameter on lots under 6,000 square feet along with exemptions for all trees that conflict with streets, utilities, grading, and topography. I want to raise the following concerns regarding this approach to tree preservation:

1. **Trees are Local:** In my experience working with cities throughout Oregon, cities and their citizens demand local control over their urban forest resources and want their codes tailored to local values and conditions.
2. **All Trees are Not Created Equal:** Trees vary in relative size and value based on location and species. For example, trees along the coast are different species and sizes than those in eastern Oregon. Also, the sometimes



problematic black cottonwood are commonly found at over 48-inch trunk diameter while the rare Pacific yew are almost never found at that size. A one size fits all size threshold does not capture the nuances and diversity of tree growth throughout our state.

3. **Trees and Housing are Not at Odds:** The City of Portland commissioned an independent economic analysis in 2020 that demonstrated their regulations for large tree preservation have negligible impacts on housing production and cost citywide over a 20-year timeframe. This is significant finding and basis of comparison since Portland charges the highest mitigation fees in the state when large trees are removed with development.
4. **The Proposed HPAC Regulations are Discretionary:** The current HPAC proposal that exempts tree preservation in areas of needed streets, utilities, grading, and density is not clear and objective. This is problematic since cities are required by state law to have clear and objective standards for needed housing. The proposed preservation exemption is not measurable and so it would be left to plan reviewers and applicants to use their discretion to determine whether the exemptions apply to particular trees. This will ultimately lead to unnecessary costs and delays related to plan review and revisions.
5. **There are Goal 5 Implications:** Many cities at least partially regulate trees as part of their Statewide Planning Goal 5 compliance programs. Trees provide valuable wildlife habitat, stream shading, and water temperature reduction. Statewide exemptions for tree preservation will have major implications for Goal 5 programs across the state.

In my experience as a consultant, tree preservation regulations and fees are not the biggest impediment to timely and successful projects. *The biggest issue is the lack of clear and objective standards that are currently written into most existing tree codes across the state.* My alternative recommendations for the HPAC's consideration are as follows:

- **Audit Tree Codes:** The state of Oregon should conduct audits of tree codes throughout the state to identify codes that lack clear and objective standards for needed housing. For codes that are not clear and objective, the state should mandate that they are revised to remove discretion from the codes.
- **Require Economic Analyses:** When new codes are adopted or significantly updated, the state should require an economic analysis to ensure new regulations will not significantly increase housing costs or decrease housing production (by a set percentage) as the City of Portland did for their recent tree code updates.
- **Provide State Assistance to Developers:** Funding for the Oregon Department of Forestry should be increased to provide more resources and support for developers to fund education and outreach materials for preserving trees with infill development. There are many innovative building technologies that can allow housing to be constructed close to mature trees. The State could serve as a resource for finding solutions for trees and housing to coexist.

- **Utilize Urban Forest Professionals in Crafting Regulations:** Oregon has a wealth of urban forest professionals that are willing and able to help the HPAC and State develop other common sense solutions that will allow housing development and trees to coexist. It is important to get into the details of species attributes, local conditions, and building technologies rather than one size fits all approaches that would apply everywhere in our diverse state.

In summary, there are several technical and political issues with the HPAC's proposed statewide exemptions to tree preservation with housing development. These include wide variation among species and growing conditions across the state, standards that require too much discretion and interpretation, Goal 5 implications, assumptions that trees and housing are inherently at odds, and the importance of local control for cities managing their urban forests.

However, it is critical to ensure that tree regulations do not create unnecessary barriers to needed housing. Alternative strategies for ensuring this include auditing tree codes to remove discretionary standards, requiring economic analyses that demonstrate codes do not significantly impact housing costs or supply, providing state assistance to developers that are designing around trees, and utilizing urban forest professionals when crafting statewide regulations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this critical issue of addressing the Oregon housing crisis while also preserving trees and the many benefits they provide.

Sincerely,



Todd Prager

*ASCA Registered Consulting Arborist  
ISA Board Certified Master Arborist, WE-6723B  
ISA Qualified Tree Risk Assessor  
AICP, American Planning Association*

**From:** [Shayne Case](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Affordable housing and trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:49:48 PM

---

You don't often get email from shayne.case@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My dear friend T Harper sent you this letter. I want to add my name to this in solidarity. As an indigenous person living in Portland, I will can tell you that these policies are out of balance with nature and will only cause more imbalance in the future. There are other ways if you listen.

In kindness,  
Shayne Case  
2104 se tamarack Ave

Governor Kotek,  
Harming Portland's tree canopy is not the answer to our affordable housing issue. The most recent [survey by PP&R](#) showed Portland's tree canopy decreased substantially from 2015 to 2022, losing 823 acres of tree canopy during this time period. This at a time of climate change and heat domes becoming our new normal. Current tree code already allows developers to cut trees and pay a fine. Removing the tree code will not ensure the housing being built is affordable, but it will ensure we have less shade, more heat and effects of climate change, particularly in black and brown communities that [research](#) has shown suffer disproportionate effects of urban heat islands. You run a real risk of destroying what makes Portland a special place to live with this reckless handout to developers. Our tree codes were developed to make sure Oregon remains a livable place for people, wildlife and birds.

I strongly oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections and weaken our Tree Code.

sincerely,  
t harper  
se 22nd ave, portland 97214

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Beverly Tobias](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Clear cutting for development  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:52:37 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [beverly.tobias@greshamoregon.gov](mailto:beverly.tobias@greshamoregon.gov). [Learn why this is important](#)

***At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—*** and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**Where is the equity in clear cutting?** How are you honoring the original peoples who settled this land and cared for it? This policy is proof of how the government will say one thing and do another behind the backs of citizens that care about livability, tradition, and honesty. You can NEVER again open a council meeting, school board meeting or any other public meeting with a statement of honoring the original inhabitants of this land.

**Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.**

I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, **was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.**

**Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Beverly Tobias  
Portland, OR

**From:** [Amiton, Rian](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for Land Development Permit Applications recommendations  
**Date:** Friday, September 8, 2023 12:21:44 PM

---

You don't often get email from rian.amiton@corvallisoregon.gov. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear HPAC,

The Land Development Permit Applications recommendations assert that, individually or cumulatively, certain regulations discourage housing development. This is inarguably true. But the approach taken here – to allow local jurisdictions to adopt their own standards, but then require adjustments to those adopted standards – is an overcomplicated and roundabout way to address the problem.

There is already this squishy language in ORS 197.758(5) re: middle housing:

*Local governments may regulate siting and design of middle housing required to be permitted under this section, provided that the regulations do not, individually or cumulatively, discourage the development of all middle housing types permitted in the area through unreasonable costs or delay. Local governments may regulate middle housing to comply with protective measures adopted pursuant to statewide land use planning goals.*

Consider linking the recommendations to 197.758(5) by defining exactly which regulations individually “discourage the development of middle housing types ... through unreasonable costs or delay” in a way that is not relative to already-adopted standards. For example, if communities are still discouraging housing by requiring vehicle parking, *just prohibit parking requirements* (many communities are already there or nearly there). If minimum lot sizes are a problem, prohibit them or establish an upper limit on how large the minimums can be. This was the general philosophical approach taken by HB 2001 (middle housing). Jurisdictions will then fix their codes accordingly and move on, rather than having to refer to both their local codes *and* supplemental statute in perpetuity.

Furthermore, what is to stop cities and towns from proactively off-setting the adjustments by just increasing their standards by 20 percent? This sets up a scenario where the baseline impediments to housing production may actually be *more* onerous, not less.

If the Committee insists on the adjustment approach, the construction of the rules in Exhibit A could be improved:

- Research shows that perhaps the largest regulatory obstacles to housing production are a) minimum parking requirements and b) minimum lots sizes, yet the recommendation allows only a 20% adjustment to these standards.
- In our experience, the types of design standards listed in subsection 11 (pertaining to building form and materials) are not onerous. Allowing these to be adjusted is unnecessary.
  - Again, even if they were legitimate impediments, allowing a 100% variance to

standards that jurisdictions are empowered to adopt is an extremely roundabout way to get to non-enforcement.

- How does this apply to Historic Resources and Historic Districts?
- Some subsections appear to contain more than one standard. For example, if an applicant wanted to adjust both FAR and density (subsection 8), is that one adjustment or two?

We appreciate the good work that you are doing on this topic. Thank you for your consideration.

Rian Amiton

Senior Planner

City of Corvallis - Planning Division

(541) 766-6573

**Disclaimer:** This e-mail message is a public record of the City of Corvallis. The contents may be subject to public disclosure under Oregon Public Records Law and subject to the State of Oregon Records Retention Schedules. (OAR:166.200.0200-405)

**From:** [Roberta Jortner](#)  
**To:** [GOV:hpac + GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor.Kottek + GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on HPAC Proposals affecting trees, natural resources, and farm/forest lands  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 12:36:27 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from robertajortner@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

TO: Housing Production Advisory Committee (HPAC)

Below are the comments that I sent to the Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) on September 8, 2023 regarding your proposals to essentially nullify or prohibit local tree codes except in very narrow circumstances, and to severely weaken Oregon's wetland protections. Again, I urge you not to proceed with either of these short-sighted and ultimately destructive recommendations.

I am also concerned about HPAC proposals that would allow expedited UGB expansions and encroachment into environmentally sensitive Goal 5 resource areas and the Willamette Greenway, which are currently protected through local land use plans. The impacts of these proposals will degrade our riparian corridors, forests, and sensitive habitats which will make Oregonians and these fragile resource areas less resilient to the increasing impacts of climate change. (See my comments below for additional rationale.)

We need proposals that will weave trees and green infrastructure into affordable healthy housing developments, not proposals that create hot, treeless housing developments and neighborhoods. We also need tools to prevent gentrification and displacement as we provide this healthy housing. Again, I urge you to shift gears and call for an integrated approach that addresses affordable housing and gentrification, human/ecological health, and climate resilience together, rather than pitting them against each other.

Thank you for your consideration,

Roberta Jortner  
Portland Oregon

---

September 8, 2023

Housing Production Advisory Committee (HPAC),

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the current HPAC proposals. I am not able to attend today's webinar so please accept my written comments prior to this afternoon's session.

The following reflects my 30+ years of experience as a professional in the fields of land use, water resources, and environmental policy and planning, primarily in Oregon. I have concerns about several of the HPAC recommendations, however today I will focus on those pertaining to local tree codes, wetlands, and the Urban Growth Boundary. The bottom line: "Housing at all costs" approaches will not serve Oregonians. Housing AND green infrastructure, including trees and wetlands, are both imperative to community health, safety, and well-being. Neither are optional. The HPAC sweeping proposals to all but prohibit local tree codes and significantly reduce current wetland protections in Oregon are short-sighted and will have significant unintended consequences. Please broaden your single focus approach to an integrated that strives to address the housing crisis and the climate crisis together. This will require collaboration with a broader suite of individuals and organizations with expertise in climate adaptation and resilience, environmental quality, and public health.

2023 is on track to be the hottest year on record, and according to the World Meteorological Organization, global temperatures are likely to set more records over the next five years. In August of this year, just two years after a heat dome that killed 69 people in Multnomah County, Portland experienced another heat wave that took the lives of at least 6 residents, and once again broke records with 4 consecutive days of 100+ degree temperatures. The 2021 heat dome demonstrated that areas with few trees and lots of concrete were up to 20 degrees hotter than areas with abundant tree canopy, providing the ingredients for lethal heat. <https://www.wweek.com/news/city/2021/07/14/this-is-the-hottest-place-in-portland/>. Compounding this fact, recent research by Portland State University and Portland Parks & Recreation's Urban Forestry Division show that Portland's tree canopy declined between 2014 and 2020. The impacts of increasing heat and loss of tree canopy is not limited to Portland, but rather is being experienced across Oregon and the nation.

Portland's tree code was developed over a period of years in response to community concern about the loss of tree canopy and the need for a consistent, cohesive set of tree regulation. Title 11, Trees was explicitly designed in collaboration with many stakeholder interests to balance Portland's goals for trees and for development, including housing. The HPAC's proposal to prohibit local tree preservation on lots less than 6000 square feet for all but trees larger than 48" dbh would apply to the vast majority of city lots and trees in city neighborhoods that are outside riparian corridors and environmental protection areas. These areas are where most city residents live and work – areas which are getting hotter as temperatures rise, and as our tree canopy is replaced by buildings and other impervious surfaces. Like affordable housing, we need more tree canopy infrastructure across our cities, not less. City residents need trees to help mitigate and cope with the inevitability of increased heat and associated health impacts. Local tree codes are developed to integrate the management of Trees must be integrated into middle housing and high-density housing design as well as our streets and rights-of-way to provide cooling shade, reduce stormwater run-off, improve air quality, create walkable neighborhoods, and provide healthy habitat for people, bird, and other wildlife that are also struggling with climate change.

At the same time, stream flows, springs, and groundwater levels across Oregon are declining and water is getting warmer. Increasing wildfires have exacerbated risks of flooding and landslides. Wetlands, including large, small and/or degraded wetlands and headwater streams have a key role in regulating our hydrologic systems, helping to cool and clean the water, provide water storage, prevent erosion, and mitigate flooding. The HPAC proposal in Wetland's Recommendations B to redefine the "waters of the state" to be synonymous with the recently re-interpreted "waters of the United States" would result in the continued loss of wetlands, putting Oregonians at greater risk of floods, drought, water pollution, and loss of salmon and other native aquatic species. DSL Director Dan Ryan's August 14, 2023, letter to the HPAC Land Availability Workgroup Chair Deborah Flagan, states, "Before state protections were in place, many wetlands were lost – about 57 percent in the Willamette Valley; 75 percent in the Klamath Basin; and up to 94 percent in coastal estuaries (Historical Loss of Wetlands, Oregon Explorer). There is also ongoing loss or degradation of wetlands associated with activities that are exempt from the Removal-Fill Law." Mr. Ryan further emphasizes that even degraded wetlands "still provide critical functions such as flood protection, winter season salmon habitat, support for other fish and wildlife species, improving water quality, and groundwater recharge. The effects of climate change make these functions even more valuable today than in the past." The HPAC proposal would also shift the responsibility and cost of meeting development-triggered legal wetland requirements from developers to the Oregon Departments of State Lands and the Department of Environmental Quality. public which would be inequitable and place a strain on already strained public resources. To this, Mr. Ryan responds, "This recommendation would put the entire cost of offsetting the effects of wetlands loss on the people of Oregon." I hope that the HPAC will reconsider this undesirable and inequitable proposal.

Again, I urge the HPAC to abandon these recommendations and shift to a collaborative, integrated approach aimed to provide housing AND tree canopy across Oregon cities, and the benefits that they will provide. Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Roberta Jortner  
Portland, Oregon



**Donna Giguere  
Landscape Design**

[giguerelandscapedesign.com](http://giguerelandscapedesign.com)

[giguereid@gmail.com](mailto:giguereid@gmail.com)

phone: 503.777.1177

September 21, 2023

**Re: Opposing HPAC recommendations regarding trees and soil.**

**Dear Governor Kotek:**

**We are facing multiple crises in our state. One is housing, but another is climate change. We cannot sacrifice one for the other. People in our state are dying from the heat due to increased summer temperatures and drought. Trees are the answer, not the problem.**

**As a Landscape Designer, I help homeowners create spaces that are functional, beautiful and welcoming to people, pets, wildlife and the planet. Trees are the primary landscape element to help shape a space. Placed appropriately, trees can help cool a home in the summer or provide an evergreen barrier to protect a home from cold winter winds.**

**Zoning codes allowing larger homes on smaller lots provide less space for trees that grow large enough at maturity to provide many health, climate and environmental benefits. Most housing designs for developed sites leave only enough space for upright, narrow trees that provide much less cooling shade and other health and environmental benefits than large-form trees do. It has been proven that soil actually stores carbon and large construction projects remove and cover soil so that it can't be put to use as a carbon sink.**

**The value of an existing healthy large-form tree along a street or in a yard is irreplaceable. It helps reduce stormwater runoff by absorbing winter rains in its canopy and through its roots; It is a place of shelter for birds and other wildlife; It adds financial value to the property on which it sits. Trees clean the air and can improve health. They reduce the excessive heat island effect of urban streets, sidewalks and rooftops; Studies show that neighborhoods with trees are safer than those without trees. Trees store carbon.**

**Oregon needs housing that is healthy, equitable and climate resilient, that won't be possible without intact trees and other green infrastructure such as wetlands and environmental zones. With smart design that leaves room for both housing and large trees, we can have healthier residents while growing our climate resilience. I urge the council to focus on solutions that advance housing equity and do not destroy our environment in doing so. Once we destroy it, we can't put it back.**

**With Hope for the Future,**

**Donna Giguere  
Donna Giguere Landscape Design  
Portland, Oregon**



**Cc:**

**Housing Production Advisory Council**

**Taylor Smiley Wolfe, Housing and Homelessness Initiative Director, Governor's Office**

**Karin Power, Natural Resource and Climate Policy Advisor, Governor's Office**

**Matt Tschabold, Sr. Housing Policy Advisor, Governor's Office**

**Geoff Huntington, Sr. Natural Resources Advisor, Governor's Office**

**Dan Ryan, Portland City Commissioner**

**2**

**Carmen Rubio, Portland City Commissioner**

**Rep. Rob Nosse**

**Senator Kathleen Taylor**

**Jenn Cairo, Portland City Forester**

**Brian Landoe, Portland Parks & Recreation/Urban Forestry**

**Donald Oliverira, Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability**

**Adena Long, Portland Parks & Recreation**

**Rebecca Esau, Portland Bureau of Development Services**

**From:** [Troy Pickard](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Don't allow decimation of trees for development  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 7:50:48 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from troypickard@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Housing Production Advisory Council,

I am writing to express my hope that you will not move forward with any plan that would allow great numbers of our urban trees to be cut down. I am a Portland native. I grew up in the Far Southwest neighborhood and never appreciated how lucky we were to live among so many trees.

My wife and I have lived in inner NE Portland since 2011. In that time, we have helped to plant many trees around town, but we've been dismayed to see even more trees cut down in our own neighborhood, as new development went in.

Our urban trees are certainly beautiful, but they are more than that. They help clean our city air. They help keep our urban areas cooler in a time of ever-higher temperatures. They are soothing to be around, and provide oases of what little nature there is left in the city for animals to inhabit. Our trees are proven to be beneficial for our mental health.

We need to keep all the urban trees we can, and plant more while we're at it. Please do what you can to ensure that in 20 years, my son and his classmates will have more trees than we do, not fewer.

Sincerely,

Troy Pickard

**From:** [Erin Matthiessen](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Don't override municipal tree codes  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 11:54:48 PM

---

You don't often get email from erin.matt@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

I write to oppose HPAC's proposal to override municipal tree codes like the ones we have in Portland. They took many years and much effort to develop and put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure the city remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in.

Living in the current climate crisis, the idea that there need to be fewer trees is regressive and just plain stupid. Trees cool down city streets in summer, provide shelter in winter, extract carbon dioxide out of the air and give back oxygen for us to breathe. Why, for instance, decry destruction of rainforests if we can't even keep our own tree canopies flourishing.

Trees are necessary for life. They can be worked around when constructing houses and what not. Look at the library on the PSU campus, how a beautiful old tree was kept in place by the architects incorporating it into their plan.

Yes, there needs to be more housing. Does that mean we have to destroy those things which make our towns and cities livable? No.

Erin Matthiessen  
42 SE 53rd Ave  
Portland OR 97215

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW:  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:22:47 AM

---

---

**From:** Jan Thomson <jangardengirl@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:19 AM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <hpac.gov@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:**

You don't often get email from jangardengirl@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I am very dismayed with the news that the governor wants to change the laws that protect our trees to promote development. As we have been reminded this year with the drastic onset of climate change, we need trees more than ever in our urban areas as well as throughout the state. We need to protect our environment rather than "turn it into a parking lot" as Joni Mitchell sang in the 1970's.

To remind Ms. Kotek:

trees eat greenhouse gases and clean the air  
they act as air conditioners in our hot summers, especially in urban areas  
trees filter our water and reduce flooding  
provide wildlife habitat

As a native Oregonian, Oregonians have worked for decades to protect our farmland, forests and our environment, as we have resisted what development has done to Southern California. We have seen on the news what price Californians have paid recently with non-stop development.

As Tom McCall vowed in the 70's, keep Oregon green!

Jan Thomson

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Citizens do NOT want tree and wetland codes destroyed or altered!  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:28:50 AM

---

**From:** KBFroming <kbfroming@froming.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 10:01 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Citizens do NOT want tree and wetland codes destroyed or altered!

You don't often get email from kbfroming@froming.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

### **Advisory Council:**

**I moved to this state for the beauty of the older growth forests, outdoors, and beauty. That includes the tree found around my home and my locale. I would move again if the landscape were changed to any degree. This age of climate change is not a joke. We need the trees.**

**Stop building single family homes. It's time to build multi-family and consolidate growth. I understand we'd like to pretend that our habitats are not important but they are. The trees, rivers that rely and are interdependent with them, create havens for nature that is extremely beneficial to us!**

- I strongly object to the recent proposal from the HPAC that would essentially override tree codes that took many people and many years to instigate. The HPAC's recommendations would greatly restrict local governments from maintaining urban forest canopy while increasing housing density, and stands in sharp contrast to work taking place throughout the nation to increase and maintain urban tree cover to meet projected climate realities.
- I oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Developers have wanted to eliminate them for years, even though such changes will definitely impact ecosystems and biodiversity.
- At this time of climate crisis, eliminating or weakening climate, tree-related, and other environmental regulations is a reckless, shortsighted way to speed up housing construction and ensure that the state and its urban areas will be unable to meet their planned climate and canopy goals.
- Many factors affect developers' ability to quickly build more housing, but tree protections are hardly an issue. For example, Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying a fee to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Such fees are just another business expense and allows them to build more profitable units or large single homes whose prices more than cover any tree-removal fees. Eliminating tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.
- Tree codes were created to make sure that Oregon remains a livable place. The

Portland tree code was actually strongly influenced by developers and is not as strong as it ought to be.

– A 2022 study by Portland’s Urban Forestry team found that the city’s urban forest has dwindled since 2015, despite strengthening tree protections that year.

– HPAC’s attempt to overturn local climate and tree policies, strikes many Oregonians as wholly undemocratic.

– I strongly urge you to reject the HPAC proposal and to include an equal number of forest and climate justice representatives on your advisory council who will consider both the housing crisis and the climate crisis and habitat.

Thank you for your attention from a tax-paying voter and resident!

Dr. Karen Froming

Dr. William Froming

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Concerning the rollback of the tree code  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:26:32 AM

---

**From:** Payam Torgoley <torgoley@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 29, 2023 7:39 AM  
**To:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Concerning the rollback of the tree code

Some people who received this message don't often get email from torgoley@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to voice my objection regarding the proposal to roll back the tree code to develop more housing. While I am sincerely interested in building much needed affordable housing, I am concerned that removal of protections for the trees we cherish in this city is not the way forward.

*—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.*

*—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.*

*—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.*

*—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Such changes will certainly impact trees.*

*—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. When selecting HPAC's*

members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

I ask that you reject this proposal. There are viable alternatives to building more housing that do not require the removal of our protections for trees. Thank you.

Regards,  
Payam Torgoley  
[torgoley@gmail.com](mailto:torgoley@gmail.com)



**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: cutting trees not the answer to affordable housing issue  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:42:53 PM

---

**From:** t harper <word.seeds@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:21 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <governor.kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** cutting trees not the answer to affordable housing issue

Some people who received this message don't often get email from word.seeds@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Governor Kotek,  
Harming Portland's tree canopy is not the answer to our affordable housing issue. The most recent [survey by PP&R](#) showed Portland's tree canopy decreased substantially from 2015 to 2022, losing 823 acres of tree canopy during this time period. This at a time of climate change and heat domes becoming our new normal. Current tree code already allows developers to cut trees and pay a fine. Removing the tree code will not ensure the housing being built is affordable, but it will ensure we have less shade, more heat and effects of climate change, particularly in black and brown communities that [research](#) has shown suffer disproportionate effects of urban heat islands. You run a real risk of destroying what makes Portland a special place to live with this reckless handout to developers. Our tree codes were developed to make sure Oregon remains a livable place for people, wildlife and birds.

I strongly oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections and weaken our Tree Code.

sincerely,

t harper

se 22nd ave, portland 97214

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Deleting environmental protections on urban landscapes is not acceptable  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:13:53 PM

---

**From:** Steve Lanigan <lanoman@mac.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 1:17 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Deleting environmental protections on urban landscapes is not acceptable

You don't often get email from lanoman@mac.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

27 September 2023

To members of the Housing Production Advisory Council,

Part of the reason I live in North Portland is because of the wonderful trees in my neighborhood. When my wife and I were deciding where to buy a house and raise a family we also considered the eastside of Portland but realized that we simply couldn't live in an area that was so lacking in trees. Trees provide shade (and cool the local climate), reduce noise pollution, and create wildlife and plant diversity. Having trees makes an area more desirable to live in and increases property value. During the recent hot summers, I've been so grateful to have trees providing shade to help escape the heat. I also support having a diversity of ecosystems within the urban area that supports wildlife and gives people an opportunity to enjoy nature and its calming effects. Building more houses should not be about increasing profits for the builders.

Therefore,

- 
- 
- I
- strongly object to the recent proposal from the HPAC that would essentially override tree codes that took many people and many years to instigate. The HPAC's recommendations would greatly restrict local governments from maintaining urban forest canopy while
- increasing housing density and stand in sharp contrast to work taking place throughout the nation to increase and maintain urban tree cover to meet projected climate realities.
- 
- 
-

I

- oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Developers have wanted to eliminate them for years, even though such changes will definitely impact ecosystems and biodiversity.
- 
- 
- 
- At
- this time of climate crisis, eliminating or weakening climate and tree-related regulations is a reckless, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction and ensure that the state and its urban areas will be unable to meet their planned climate and canopy
- goals.
- 
- 
- 
- Many
- factors affect developers' ability to quickly build more housing, but tree protections are hardly an issue. For example, Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying a fee to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Such fees are just another
- business expense and allows them to build more profitable units or large single homes whose prices more than cover any tree-removal fees. Eliminating tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more
- *affordable*
- housing.
- 
- 
- 
- Tree
- codes were created to make sure that Oregon remains a livable place. The Portland tree code was actually strongly influenced by developers and is not as strong as it ought to be.
- 
- 
- 
- HPAC's
- attempt to overturn local climate and tree policies strikes many Oregonians as wholly undemocratic.
- 
- 
- 
- I
- strongly urge you to reject the HPAC proposal and to include an equal number of forest and climate justice representatives on your advisory council who will consider both the housing crisis and the climate crisis.

•

Thank you for your consideration,  
Steve Lanigan  
4137 N Overlook Blvd  
Portland OR 97217

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Do NOT Override Tree Codes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:14:47 PM

---

**From:** Sarah-Luella Baker <[ilovelilabelle@gmail.com](mailto:ilovelilabelle@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:14 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <[Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov)>  
**Subject:** Do NOT Override Tree Codes

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [ilovelilabelle@gmail.com](mailto:ilovelilabelle@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek,

As a family, we oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

The beautiful trees of Portland contribute to its livability, comfort, and beauty. Please do not disregard and override the tree codes.

Thanks for your consideration.

--

Sarah-Luella Baker

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Don't destroy trees for developer profits!  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:16:02 PM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Seth Just <[sethjust@sethjust.com](mailto:sethjust@sethjust.com)>  
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:23 PM  
To: GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
Cc: Governor Kotek \* GOV <[Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov)>  
Subject: Don't destroy trees for developer profits!

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [sethjust@sethjust.com](mailto:sethjust@sethjust.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

HPAC and Governor Kotek,

I'm horrified to learn that your council supports eliminating the vitally important and seminal Portland tree code in favor of increased development. I understand the need for more housing, but it's critical that we as a state and city think of the long-term consequences of reducing urban tree cover. The aim of increased housing should be to improve people's quality of life overall, and trees are an absolutely critical element of that future. City trees improve air quality, mental health, and on a larger scale are absolutely vital in fighting climate change.

This is also a terrible plan for improving housing equity and better serving historically underprivileged minorities and communities. Poor and minority communities are already being disproportionately affected by climate change, see massively higher temperatures, and live in tree-sparse communities already. Allowing this plan to move forward would only deepen these inequities, show that your stated aims are thin veneers of lies, and ultimately line the pockets of the rich and powerful at massive cost to the most at risk and marginalized among us.

You MUST reassess this recommendation and find other ways to increase density while still not allowing for free reign for developers to clear cut trees, because they not only will chop down every one they are legally allowed to, but in many cases will be OBLIGATED to by their shareholders who have no stake or long term interest in our community. And that makes a worse world for us all.

Sincerely,  
Seth Just

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Don't Do It  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:18:00 PM

---

**From:** Maurine Canarsky <canarskyomo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 22, 2023 2:21 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <hpac.gov@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Don't Do It

You don't often get email from canarskyomo@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

It is time for you to recognize the appalling short-sightedness of your proposed recommendations.

The willingness to ignore our climate crisis, erosion of our tree canopy, destruction of our wetlands, continued devastation caused by increasing wildfires and suffering of our citizens in ever hotter summers speaks to the Council's lack of diverse and multiple perspectives.

Our tree and environmental regulations took us years of effort to assure a healthy and livable future. Now is the time to protect what trees, wetlands and environmental zones that remain. Look for ways to increase the health of our citizens and our environment. You must not sacrifice our future this way.

Don't promote just one side. Consider ALL of our futures. You can help. Again, consider Oregon's future.

Sincerely,  
Maurine Canarsky  
1977 SE 22nd Ave.  
Portland, OR 97214-4851  
503-719-7332  
[canarskyomo@gmail.com](mailto:canarskyomo@gmail.com)

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Elimination of Tree and Wetland Protections  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:32:47 AM

---

**From:** Jill Bogle <jillbogle@frontier.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 7:56 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Elimination of Tree and Wetland Protections

You don't often get email from jillbogle@frontier.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern,

I very strongly object to the recent proposal from the HPAC that basically overrides tree and environmental codes that took so many people and many years to instigate. These recommendations would greatly restrict local governments from maintaining the ever important urban forest canopy and wetlands to the detriment of us all. While increasing housing density is a great need, eliminating tree protections stands in sharp contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to increase and maintain urban tree cover and habitat to meet projected climate realities.

I urge you to reject the HPAC proposal and to include an equal number of forest and climate justice representatives on your advisory council who will consider both the housing crisis and the climate crisis and habitat. We can work together to solve these issues without sacrificing one goal for another.

Thank you.  
Jill Bogle  
Beaverton



**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: For the trees!  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:14:32 PM

---

**From:** Christopher Olson <cmoonson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:04 PM  
**To:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** For the trees!

Some people who received this message don't often get email from cmoonson@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

—*At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.*

—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.

—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Such changes will certainly impact trees.

—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HB 3414 (2023)  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:13:39 PM

---

---

**From:** Adria Sparhawk <[adria@sparhawkgardendesign.com](mailto:adria@sparhawkgardendesign.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 12:25 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
**Subject:** HB 3414 (2023)

You don't often get email from [adria@sparhawkgardendesign.com](mailto:adria@sparhawkgardendesign.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

I am broken hearted that the new legislation HB 3414 (2023) being considered would weaken so many of Oregon's hard won environmental safeguards. As we face the coming climate crisis together we should be minimizing total CO2 emissions, prioritizing the preservation of urban tree canopy cover, continuing to increase protections for surface water and runoff, minimizing toxic contributions to our environment and supporting community connections that foster the cooperation we need to face this catastrophe.

As a landscape professional I come into contact with so many folks heartbroken over our cities' move toward increasing development at any cost. Developers are being given free reign to increase total SF of projects at the cost of existing communities. My clients can no longer keep the gardens they have invested in, worked years to build and tended with sweat and love. People who have had to cut down beloved trees and remove landscaping they fostered for years because they no longer have enough light or water to survive next to supersized construction projects. I encounter people who no longer use their outdoor spaces because they now live literally in the shadow of structures that block the light, rob them of privacy, smell of plastics and reek of privilege and the inequality that exists in our state's newfound obsession with maximizing construction at any cost.

The housing crisis is an issue that needs to be addressed but I am deeply concerned that the Housing production advisory council tasked with reaching solutions is made up primarily of people poised to profit from increasing development. In order to address this issue we need to have interagency cooperation and conversations that include a diversity of perspectives and invested stakeholders. Addressing the housing crisis as a bubble somehow removed from the climate crisis is short sighted and could have devastating consequences for the health of our cities and communities.

---

ADRIA SPARHAWK | 503 318 0049

| |

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Housing Production Advisory Council Hearing Sept. 29, 2023  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:16:54 PM

---

---

**From:** Mary Kinnick <mary.kinnick@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 22, 2023 5:36 AM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** GovernorKotek@oregon.gov  
**Subject:** Housing Production Advisory Council Hearing Sept. 29, 2023

You don't often get email from mary.kinnick@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To: Council Members

From: Mary Kinnick, Resident of Holladay Park Plaza (NE Portland retirement community) and member, HPP Grays Going Green Committee; professor emerita, Portland State University; and former chair of Friends of Mt. Tabor Park and coordinator of its Weed Warriors (volunteers working to improve the ecological health of the park)

Re: Protecting and Extending Our Tree Canopy

Rolling back or throwing out municipal tree codes like those in Portland and other climate-related regulations as a way to build more affordable housing MUST NOT be actions supported by your committee. We should be doing the opposite--**expanding** our tree canopy for so many reasons. I've come to believe that Portland and our county still have plenty of places to build affordable housing (infill and build up). So, I urge you to dig deeper (think "plant a tree" while you're at it!) and find a solution that protects and expands our tree canopy.

Thanks you for listening. Please do the right thing.

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HPAC tree codes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:16:23 PM

---

---

**From:** Ryan Rittenhouse <[ryanrittenhouse@gmail.com](mailto:ryanrittenhouse@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:19 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <[Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov)>  
**Subject:** HPAC tree codes

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [ryanrittenhouse@gmail.com](mailto:ryanrittenhouse@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Don't override our municipal tree codes. Trees are good, thoughtless and stupid development proposals are bad. Stop sucking at your jobs.

--

Ryan Rittenhouse

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: HPAC: DO NOT sacrifice tree codes in favor of development  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:42:29 PM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Kathleen Bauer <kathleen@kathleenbauer.com>  
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:38 PM  
To: GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
Cc: Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
Subject: HPAC: DO NOT sacrifice tree codes in favor of development

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from kathleen@kathleenbauer.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

To Whom It May Concern:

As a Portland city resident and concerned citizen of Oregon I urge you to not bring forward the recommendations that override tree codes for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet, which will explicitly allow clear cutting of trees under 48" diameter, which includes the vast majority of urban trees. They stand in stark contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to increase tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities.

I agree with Friends of Trees that:

— At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

— Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

I agree with FOT opposition to HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.

Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

I oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Such changes will certainly impact trees.

Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Sincerely yours,

Kathleen Bauer

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: I do not sure Tree Code Roll Back  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:16:37 PM

---

---

**From:** Mrs. Lingy <mrslingy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 7:33 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <governor.kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** I do not sure Tree Code Roll Back

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mrslingy@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

We need trees. This is stupid. We have SOOO many empty apartments. Why can't you take away tax incentives for the owners who write off rental revenue loss on their taxes. That would solve alot of issues.

Do NOT roll back tree codes. They were a progressive move.

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose overriding tree codes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:15:55 PM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Teresa Mueller <yet.again.tree@gmail.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:23 PM  
To: GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
Cc: Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
Subject: I oppose overriding tree codes

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from yet.again.tree@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Dear HHPA Council members,

I oppose the overriding of tree codes and find it astounding that the council would consider increasing housing at the expense of the urban environment so dependent on those tree codes. In the terrible heat and smoke of this summer in Oregon, my big trees created an oasis in the neighborhood. They cooled my home, created some air movement and gave solace. Study after study bemoans the inequity of urban tree coverage in cities, and yet here we are considering cutting these carbon-sinking providers of oxygen?!

Let Oregon communities make and keep their own values regarding the larger picture of home and neighborhood. Spend more time fining conscientious developers who really know how to create affordable housing without damaging what makes our cities lovely, healthy and special. Any erosion of wetland and environmental standards will impact trees and the very people we are attempting to house.

Thanks for your consideration and protection of the landscaped and natural environment.

Teresa Mueller  
2059 Friendly ST  
Eugene, OR 97405

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: No to HPAC tree recommendations  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:17:52 PM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Lee Knightly <ljknighly@gmail.com>  
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2023 12:43 PM  
To: Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
Cc: GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>; Rob Nosse <rob@robnosse.com>  
Subject: No to HPAC tree recommendations

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from ljknighly@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Governor Kotek,

Trees are an effective tool for fighting the climate and heat crisis. Please don't roll back current environmental protections.

How about focusing on solutions that advance housing equity and do not destroy the environment in doing so?

Thank you,  
Lee Knightly  
Portland, Oregon



**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Opposed HPAC recommendations regarding trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:17:41 PM

---

**From:** Peter Miller <peteskitoo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 22, 2023 12:11 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Opposed HPAC recommendations regarding trees

You don't often get email from peteskitoo@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 22, 2023

Re: Opposed HPAC recommendations regarding trees

Dear Housing Production Advisory Council,

I agree that housing is a priority, but so is climate and human impacts on the natural world. I am opposed to the Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) recommendations regarding trees.

Preserving large trees is essential for climate resilience. They sequester carbon and help mitigate heat impacts and are essential parts of our legacy.

We should not sacrifice large trees and key natural areas like wetlands for the sake of development. We have done that for much too long.

We need thoughtful processes that lead to more housing with fewer impacts.

Sincerely,

Peter Miller  
Portland OR 97214

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Opposing HPAC recommendations re: trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:19:06 PM

---

**From:** Karen Wolfgang <karen.wolfgang@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 25, 2023 10:35 AM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <hpac.gov@oregon.gov>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; Rep Nguyen H <Rep.HoaNguyen@oregonlegislature.gov>; Sen Jama <Sen.KayseJama@oregonlegislature.gov>; POWER Karin \* GOV <karin.power@oregon.gov>; TSCHABOLD Matthew \* GOV <matthew.tschabold@oregon.gov>; HUNTINGTON Geoff \* GOV <geoff.huntington@oregon.gov>; SMILEYWOLFE Taylor \* GOV <taylor.smileywolfe@oregon.gov>; CommissionerRyanOffice@portlandoregon.gov; Comm.Rubio@portlandoregon.gov; adena.long@portlandoregon.gov; jenn.cairo@portlandoregon.gov; brian.landoe@portlandoregon.gov; donald.oliveira@portlandoregon.gov; director.esau@portlandoregon.gov; BROOKS Kelly S \* GOV <Kelly.S.BROOKS@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Opposing HPAC recommendations re: trees

Dear Governor Kotek et al,

We are facing multiple crises in our state. One is housing, of course, and another is climate equity. **We MUST NOT allow ourselves to view solutions to these crises as mutually exclusive.** People in our state are dying from the heat due to increased summer temperatures and drought, and people who are houseless or living in substandard dwellings are at greater risk. Trees are part of the answer, not the problem.

I was part of the landscaping profession for a decade, during which I helped homeowners create spaces that are functional, beautiful, productive, safe, and welcoming to people, pets, wildlife and the planet. Trees, more than anything else, help shape a space, and the benefits they provide are truly magical: placed appropriately, trees can help cool spaces in the summer and provide evergreen barriers to protect from cold winter winds. And that's just the beginning of the list of their virtues!

- Trees help reduce stormwater runoff by absorbing winter rains in their canopies and through their roots.
- They are places of shelters and respite for birds and other wildlife.
- They add financial value to the property on which they sit.
- Studies have shown that trees reduce blood pressure, stress, depression, anxiety, and can improve concentration levels of children with ADHD.
- Trees filter and purify the air and the water.
- They reduce the excessive heat island effect of urban streets, sidewalks and rooftops.
- Studies show that neighborhoods with trees are safer than those without trees.

Once again, trees are the answer, not the problem.

They are also crucial pieces of urban infrastructure, whose loss we mourn -- especially in East

Portland, where we have recently [lost 570 mature trees](#) to an ODOT project on SE Powell Blvd. and been [denied the promised 200+ trees](#) in the median on a PBOT project on SE Division St. (and even in the neighborhoods surrounding that project, at least thus far), and are facing development pressures that all but ensure that the mature tree canopy in our neighborhoods will be decimated in the near future. This, in one of the areas in the region [at greatest risk of overheating](#) under increasingly extreme weather conditions.

Zoning codes and other infrastructure project guidelines currently discourage development styles that provide space for trees that grow large enough at maturity to provide many health, climate and environmental benefits. Most housing designs for developed sites leave only enough space for upright, narrow trees that provide much less cooling shade and other health and environmental benefits than large-form trees do.

Oregon needs housing that is healthy, equitable and climate resilient, which won't be possible without intact trees and other green infrastructure such as wetlands and environmental zones. **With smart design that leaves room for both housing and large trees, we can have healthier residents while growing our climate resilience.** I urge the council to focus on solutions that advance housing equity and do not destroy the environment in doing so.

Sincerely,  
Karen Wolfgang  
16825 SE Woodward St.  
Portland, OR 97236  
503-704-9427

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Opposing HPAC recommendations regarding trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:16:04 PM

---

**From:** bonnie celilogardens.com <bonnie@celilogardens.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 21, 2023 3:13 PM  
**To:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>; SMILEYWOLFE Taylor \* GOV <taylor.smileywolfe@oregon.gov>; POWER Karin \* GOV <karin.power@oregon.gov>; TSCHABOLD Matthew \* GOV <matthew.tschabold@oregon.gov>; HUNTINGTON Geoff \* GOV <geoff.huntington@oregon.gov>; CommissionerRyanOffice@portlandoregon.gov; Comm.Rubio@portlandoregon.gov; Jenn.Cairo@portlandoregon.gov; Brian.Landoe@portlandoregon.gov; Donald.Oliveira@portlandoregon.gov; adena.long@portlandoregon.gov; Director.Esau@portlandoregon.gov; Sen Dembrow <Sen.MichaelDembrow@oregonlegislature.gov>; Rep Tran <Rep.ThuyTran@oregonlegislature.gov>  
**Subject:** Opposing HPAC recommendations regarding trees

Some people who received this message don't often get email from bonnie@celilogardens.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 21, 2023

Re: Opposing HPAC recommendations regarding trees

Dear Governor Kotek:

We are facing multiple crises in our state. One is housing, but another is climate equity. We cannot sacrifice one for the other. People in our state are dying from the heat due to increased summer temperatures and drought. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

As a Landscape Designer, I help homeowners create spaces that are functional, beautiful and welcoming to people, pets, wildlife and the planet. Trees are the primary landscape element to help shape a space. Placed appropriately, trees can help cool a home in the summer or provide an evergreen barrier to protect a home from cold winter winds. Zoning codes allowing larger homes on smaller lots provide less space for trees that grow large enough at maturity to provide many health, climate and environmental benefits. Most housing designs for developed sites leave only enough space for upright, narrow trees that provide much less cooling shade and other health and environmental benefits than large-form trees do.

The value of an existing healthy large-form tree along a street or in a yard is irreplaceable. It helps reduce stormwater runoff by absorbing winter rains in its canopy and through its roots; It is a place of shelter for birds and other wildlife; It adds financial value to the property on which it sits; Studies have shown that trees reduce blood pressure, stress, depression, anxiety and can improve concentration levels of

children with ADHD; Trees filter and purify the air and the water; They reduce the excessive heat island effect of urban streets, sidewalks and rooftops; Studies show that neighborhoods with trees are safer than those without trees. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

Oregon needs housing that is healthy, equitable and climate resilient, that won't be possible without intact trees and other green infrastructure such as wetlands and environmental zones. With smart design that leaves room for both housing and large trees, we can have healthier residents while growing our climate resilience. I urge the council to focus on solutions that advance housing equity and do not destroy the environment in doing so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bonnie Bruce". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "B".

**Bonnie Bruce**

Professional Mem. Of APLD, LEED AP, FIIDA  
503-929-5502

"In the Spring, at the end of the day you should smell like dirt."  
Margaret Atwood

**celilo gardens**  
*savvy landscape coaching + design*

[www.celilogardens.com](http://www.celilogardens.com)

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Opposing HPAC Tree Removal  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:40:22 PM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Claudia <[sanzoneclaudia@yahoo.com](mailto:sanzoneclaudia@yahoo.com)>  
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2023 7:10 AM  
To: GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
Cc: mary grout <[m McGrout@msn.com](mailto:m McGrout@msn.com)>  
Subject: Opposing HPAC Tree Removal

[You don't often get email from [sanzoneclaudia@yahoo.com](mailto:sanzoneclaudia@yahoo.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

September 26, 2023

Dear Governor Kotek:

Oregon's cities are in a climate crisis, with our most vulnerable residents already dying from scorching heat. Urban tree canopy is a key factor in keeping urban neighborhoods cooler, but its inequitable distribution within cities including Portland is magnifying climate impacts on historically marginalized communities.

Within this broader context, twenty organizations signed a letter - representing many thousands of Oregonians - strongly object to the recent proposal from the Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) to restrict local governments from maintaining their urban forest canopy while increasing housing density. This recommendation stands in stark contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to increase tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities.

For example, through the Inflation Reduction Act, the federal government is investing deeply in urban forestry efforts nationwide to plant more trees, especially in low-income, low-canopy urban areas whose residents are most likely to suffer from the adverse health effects of neighborhoods with fewer trees. Through the Portland Clean Energy Fund (PCEF), Portland is investing millions of dollars over the next five years in planting tens of thousands of trees to help counter the city's well-documented shade inequity. In addition, Portland just began updating its Urban Forest Plan and associated canopy targets, which will inform the subsequent revision of the city's tree code. With great climate challenges ahead, residents look forward to ensuring that these policy updates reflect the importance of maintaining, and increasing, urban forests to better meet projected climate realities.

Instead of creatively engaging the challenge of maintaining tree cover while increasing housing density, HPAC suggests, in effect, that cities should be stripped of their power to implement existing tree codes, and instead: "On platted lots less than 6,000 square feet where an increase in density from the current configuration of the lot is proposed. No city or jurisdiction shall deny a permit for the removal of trees less than 48" in diameter, nor shall they charge a fee-in-lieu for the removal. For trees larger than 48" in diameter, the city or jurisdiction must offer a program that allows for replacement trees to be planted or for a fee in lieu option, with reasonable caps on fees, when the replacement tree option is not feasible." And it proposes that "where multi-family or single-family development" is proposed, "Trees...that are located in areas of needed streets, utilities, topography, grading and density, shall not be required to be preserved regardless of size."

This extreme proposal would have severe and inequitable consequences. More than half of Portland's tree canopy is located on private property. However, trees larger than 48" in diameter at breast height (dbh) are very rare in residential areas, especially on private property. Urban trees of 20" dbh or more are considered "big trees." This proposal would mean, in effect, that all trees could be removed without any restrictions or fees. This is a greenlight for developers to clear-cut lots without even paying for replacements the city could plant elsewhere. Further, the vast majority of residential lots in Portland are less than 6,000 square feet, so this proposal would apply in most neighborhoods and certainly in lower income areas. As a result, the extensive growth that Portland anticipates over the next decades would exacerbate the declines in tree canopy and increase the heat-related illnesses and deaths we're already experiencing.

We firmly support building new, affordable housing. We also believe that affordable housing should be healthy housing. Housing that removes existing trees and provides no space for trees is not healthy. U.S. Forest Service research has found direct links between human health and nearby canopy and, as we've noted, these benefits will become ever more important in our increasingly hot cities. Indeed it is critical to protect all green infrastructure on the urban landscape: trees, wetlands, environmental zones, the Willamette River Greenway, and more.

Housing and green infrastructure are not mutually exclusive and should not be pitted against one another. Both are necessary. It would be far more innovative and equitable for your council to be charged with meeting goals for housing, public health, and climate justice simultaneously. With smarter, upfront, climate-centric designs that integrate housing and space for trees, we can have healthier residents and be better climate-prepared.

The HPAC proposal seems designed with one goal in mind—to facilitate developers' ability to build more, profitable, though not necessarily better or affordable, housing at all costs and at the expense of community health, climate and tree canopy equity, environment, livability, and other stated Oregon goals.

Finally, it appears that no one representing these other crucial state interests and goals sits on HPAC. This stymies truly integrative planning that would result in better, healthier outcomes for Oregon residents. Not only do we urge you to reject this HPAC proposal, we also urge you to include at least one or more urban forest and climate justice representatives on your advisory council. We look forward to talking with you about this important issue as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Happy Trails  
Claudia Sanzone

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Opposition to HPAC recommendations  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:20:55 PM

---

**From:** Eileen <ems45@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:01 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Sen Dembrow <Sen.MichaelDembrow@oregonlegislature.gov>; Rep Tran <Rep.ThuyTran@oregonlegislature.gov>  
**Subject:** Opposition to HPAC recommendations

You don't often get email from ems45@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek and HPAC:

As a biologist and someone who knows the value of preserving, supporting, and maintaining trees and their ecosystems, wetlands, and other priceless environmental areas, I am appalled at the extremely shortsighted, reckless, selfish, and ignorant recommendations of the HPAC.

Clearly, the HPAC provides no benefit but to assist developers who make large amounts of money from construction—including gigantic single-family houses with yards so small that they cannot possibly support large, beneficial trees. Eliminating tree and other environmental protections will *not* guarantee that builders will create *affordable* housing.

Moreover, I am shocked that some broad-minded representatives who are knowledgeable about climate chaos and how ecosystems work were not appointed to this council. In fact, the whole thing reeks of autocracy. While other states and countries are working to halt climate chaos, Oregon is lagging farther and farther behind. HPAC's attempt to overturn local climate and tree policies is atrocious and it should immediately be restaffed with people who will consider both the housing crisis and the climate crisis, as well as habitat.

A 2022 study by Portland's Urban Forestry team found that the city's urban forest has dwindled since 2015, despite strengthening tree protections that year (although developers prevented stronger protections). How can you possibly ignore this disturbing fact?

During this time of human-caused climate chaos, eliminating or weakening climate, tree, and



other environmental regulations is a careless, narrow-minded way to speed up construction and ensure that the state and its urban areas will be unable to meet their planned climate and canopy goals.

Eileen Stark

[Eco-landscape designer/Author](#)

Portland, OR

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Opposition to HPAC's Tree Code Override  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:42:42 PM

---

---

**From:** Riley DG <rdgill89@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:22 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <governor.kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Opposition to HPAC's Tree Code Override

Some people who received this message don't often get email from rdgill89@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Portland is a wonderful place to live for hundreds of thousands largely due to its beautiful trees and nature. They cannot be minimized, for all of their benefits, for a short-sighted attempt to create housing not explicitly named as affordable. The developers pushing this motion are interested in creating immediate-term revenue at the expense of the long-term health and beauty of our region. This should not be allowed and would never be considered under the great Governor Tom McCall. I hope HPAC will reconsider.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Please do not override Portlands TreeCodes  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:27:11 AM

---

**From:** jv <jyvolkoff@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 29, 2023 12:30 AM  
**To:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Please do not override Portlands TreeCodes

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jyvolkoff@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek and committee.

Please do not over ride Portlands urban tree codes for development.

Trees provide cooling to an ever rising temperature climate in the city, clean air, valuable shade and habits for birds and creatures, healthy play for children, and valuable green space for all. These are among just a few benefits they add to our city. We as Portlanders and Oregonians, we value our clean and healthy environment, and have worked hard for decades to create and sustain a healthy living space for all. It is one of the building blocks that has made this city and state great and beautiful for all. It is why so many people have come to live here.

Do not sell out to developers. Our city needs and deserves to be saved!

Allowing developers to cut down trees and build in wetlands does not guarantee affordable housing, it simply ruins our healthy drinking water, clean air and health for all people of all economic backgrounds and gives more money to developers and high government officials. This is not forward movement for the city of Portland or our state.

Please consider the following points:

*—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.*

*—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.*

*—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like*

Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Such changes will certainly impact trees.

Please do not do this to our home, Oregon.

Sincerely,  
J Volkoff

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Please do not roll back the tree codes!  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:37:14 AM

---

---

**From:** TERENCE DAVIS <tdavisjb@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 7:51 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Please do not roll back the tree codes!

You don't often get email from tdavisjb@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

In the middle of a climate crisis is not the time to reduce the tree canopy!  
Low income housing is important but can be addressed without reducing the canopy even further!  
Portland's tree code isn't perfect but giving in to developers is not the answer!

Thank you for listening!

Terence E Davis  
2120 SE 38th Ave  
Portland OR 97214

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Please do not roll back tree codes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:22:10 PM

---

**From:** Marianne Tanner <mariannetanner@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:47 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Please do not roll back tree codes

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mariannetanner@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I'm writing as a concerned Portlander. We have planted three trees on our property since moving in 3 years ago to help create more shade and combat climate change effects on our community. We support the work of Friends of Trees, other local climate and social justice organizations, and our own federal government in their push to plant more street trees, especially in lower income areas. This is vitally important to our climate future!

I also realize that the housing crisis in Portland and Oregon is very real, and I support efforts to build more affordable housing. This doesn't mean we need to allow developers to cut down our urban tree canopy, especially now! When we are working hard to build it up and plant more trees. This just doesn't make any sense.

Please don't pit climate action against housing action. They are both important and can be mutually supportive. In particular, folks in need of affordable housing already bear more of the burden of climate change. Taking down our urban canopy of street trees will just make this worse.

We can do both, and we can do better. Please take any wording about overriding the tree codes out of your recommendations!

Thank you,  
Marianne Tanner  
NE Portland

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: please protect urban trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:15:25 PM

---

**From:** Krista Swan <Krista.Swan@oregonzoo.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:18 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** please protect urban trees

Some people who received this message don't often get email from krista.swan@oregonzoo.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

As an avowed tree-hugging dirt-worshipper, I implore you to reconsider the proposal to override municipal tree codes.

I've been a volunteer tree planter, crew leader and board member for organizations like Friends of Trees and SOLV; this issue is very important to me and to many others like me.

Urban canopies improve the quality of life for all residents.

I know that it took a lot of work to put the urban tree protections that we have in place, and it would be a major step BACKWARD to do away with what environmental protections we have.

We have an affordable housing crisis, yes. But that doesn't mean we should destroy the planet and removing these tree protections **won't guarantee that more affordable housing gets built**. There are other, smarter ways to achieve our shared goals.

Thank you for your consideration!

Krista Swan  
10200 SE Waverly Ct. Apt. 27  
Milwaukie, OR 97222

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: PLEASE respect our trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:16:15 PM

---

**From:** Jennifer Moran <jennifer.hatch.moran@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:30 PM  
**To:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** PLEASE respect our trees

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jennifer.hatch.moran@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear committee and Governor Kotek,  
Now is not the time to make our city uglier and worse off than it already is. Cutting down trees isn't the answer to our homeless issue. Stop making the majority of your constituents pay for a small group of people that already decimate our cities and everyday lives. Let's find a better way to address the homeless crisis and drug spiral we find ourselves in. Vote no.

*—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.*

*—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.*

*—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.*

*—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Such changes will certainly impact trees.*

*—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. When selecting HPAC's*



members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Jennifer Moran, Portland resident

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW, Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Please vote no on the proposal to override tree codes  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:49:15 AM

---

---

**From:** Tamara Olcott <annetam2@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 6:37 PM  
**To:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Please vote no on the proposal to override tree codes

Some people who received this message don't often get email from annetam2@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good evening,

Please **vote no** on the proposal to override tree codes for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet, which would allow clear cutting of trees under 48" diameter. This change would apply to the vast majority of urban trees.

This recommendation stands in stark contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to increase tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities.

I recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, but housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive.

There have been ongoing efforts to increase the tree canopy in Portland, which improves quality of living, provides shade in these times of climate change and increases tree diversity for sustainability.

Portland is a city known for caring about and for our environment. Allowing clear cutting of urban trees is a step towards a concrete jungle, instead of a being in step with Portland values of stewardship of our trees and livability of our neighborhoods..

Thank you,  
Tamara Olcott  
2126 NE 26th Ave.  
Portland 97212  
[ ]

lease vote no on the proposal to override tree codes for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet, which would allow clear cutting of trees under 48" diameter. This change would apply to the vast majority of urban trees.

This recommendation stands in stark contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to increase tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities.

I recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, but housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive.

There have ongoing to increase the tree canopy in Portland, which to improves quality of living, provide shade in these times of climate change and increase tree diversity for sustainability.

Portland is a city known for caring about and for our environment. Allowing clear cutting off urban trees is a step towards a concrete jungle, instead of a being in step with Portland values of stewardship of our trees and livability of our neighborhoods

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: proposed housing code environmental changes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:13:46 PM

---

**From:** Barbara Bryson <bbryson150@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 1:02 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** proposed housing code environmental changes

Some people who received this message don't often get email from bbryson150@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

I oppose HPAC's recommendations to weaken state and local environmental and wetland zone protections. The proposals to override current environmental protections for trees and wetlands in order to solve our housing crisis are wrong headed.

We need our large trees for shade to protect people from excessive heat. We need them for the carbon they store. We need them for wildlife, for birds and pollinators. Tree codes were created to keep Oregon livable. Please don't turn our urban areas into a wasteland. Keep our tree protections in place!

Wetlands provide habitat for endangered wildlife and help produce clean water. They have been systematically removed for the last century, to the detriment of many species. Most places are fighting to protect wetlands. Your proposal is backward thinking and will do more harm than good.

Biodiversity is declining, to our peril. The United Nations has declared this an emergency. The HPAC proposals would further this decline. And it is unnecessary. Please, go up, not out, with housing. We need our trees, wetlands, and environmental protections.

Sincerely,  
Barbara Bryson  
474 Horizon Road  
Eugene, OR. 97405

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: PROTECT OUR RIVERS, ENVIRONMENT, HISTORIC RESOURCES!!  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:40:56 PM

---

**From:** kelly lanspa <kellylanspa@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 25, 2023 12:07 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <governor.kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** PROTECT OUR RIVERS, ENVIRONMENT, HISTORIC RESOURCES!!

You don't often get email from kellylanspa@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

*I urge you to not throw our important environmental and historical protections away in the name of housing! We can responsibly add affordable housing without destroying what makes Oregon unique and beautiful. DO NOT LET OREGON BE DESTROYED LIKE CALIFORNIA- All for developers and farmers to get rich.*

**1. At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction**—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**2. Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.

**3. We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**4. We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**5. Governor Kotek's skewed-to-developers HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** It is appalling that when selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way with multiple perspectives in dialogue around the same table.

6. The opaqueness of the whole HPAC process, on top of HPAC's attempt to overturn local climate and tree policies, strikes many Oregonians as undemocratic.

7. There is so much room for affordable housing in commercial/downtown areas that are gutted by Covid. There is so much old industrial warehousing that can be repurposed without building in UGB and environmentally sensitive areas!!

I am a loyal Democratic voter but am seriously reconsidering my loyalty if we have a governor and leadership that don't respect our urban growth boundaries, environment and historical resources.

Kelly Lanspa

7710 se 35th ave

Portland Ore 97202

4086056846

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: PROTECT OUR RIVERS, ENVIRONMENT, HISTORIC RESOURCES!  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:41:15 PM

---

**From:** hugh scollan <hughscollan598@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 25, 2023 12:08 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <governor.kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** PROTECT OUR RIVERS, ENVIRONMENT, HISTORIC RESOURCES!

Some people who received this message don't often get email from hughscollan598@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

*I urge you to not throw our important environmental and historical protections away in the name of housing! We can responsibly add affordable housing without destroying what makes Oregon unique and beautiful. DO NOT LET OREGON BE DESTROYED LIKE CALIFORNIA- All for developers and farmers to get rich.*

**1. At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction**—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**2. Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.

**3. We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**4. We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**5. Governor Kotek's skewed-to-developers HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** It is appalling that when selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way with multiple perspectives in dialogue around the same table.

6. The opaqueness of the whole HPAC process, on top of HPAC's attempt to overturn local climate and tree policies, strikes many Oregonians as undemocratic.

7. There is so much room for affordable housing in commercial/downtown areas that are gutted by Covid. There is so much old industrial warehousing that can be repurposed without building in UGB and environmentally sensitive areas!!

I am a loyal Democratic voter but am seriously reconsidering my loyalty if we have a governor and leadership that don't respect our urban growth boundaries, environment and historical resources.

Hugh Scollan

Portland Oregon 97202

4089818274

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Protect our Tree Codes  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:27:25 AM

---

**From:** jené despain <jenedespain@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 11:06 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Protect our Tree Codes

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jenedespain@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Gov Kotek,  
as a third generation Portlander and as a local realtor, I am asking you to not remove any of our tree codes. The tree canopy of our local residences is extremely valuable and integral to the sustainability of Portland. Most of our inner city lots are 50 x 1000. If we let homeowners remove trees on lots less than 6000 s feet at a diameter of 48", we stand the chance to lose a high percentage of our trees. This would catastrophically collapse our local bird and insect populations and force homeowners to use more fossil fuels to cool their homes in the hotter months. Not only will Portland be radically devastated by this loss of temperature regulation, but visually the impact will reduce Portland to the likes of a city like Phoenix or Dayton.  
Please do not alter our tree code.  
Thank you,  
Jené



**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Regarding Proposed Revision of Municipal Tree Codes  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:48:05 AM

---

---

**From:** Elizabeth Venturi <pesceca.e.usa79@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 6:19 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Regarding Proposed Revision of Municipal Tree Codes

Some people who received this message don't often get email from pesceca.e.usa79@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

It's startling that the Governor would approach this crisis with such a one dimensional approach. We must, as a community, utilize the wisdom and perspective from a wide variety of "shareholders," not just developers. And most importantly, we absolutely cannot do away with our municipal tree codes. These codes, while they could use improvement, are nonetheless an essential component in helping to keep our urban forests intact. Looking at the science, trees are critical infrastructure for helping to cool our cities in the face of climate change and the resulting heat islands. The audacity that this group has to propose such an idea after so many people perished during the heat dome - I am appalled. Portland's developments continue to remove mature trees to make room for more profits - even when they sit half empty. I believe this is a pattern that will continue, and our communities, especially the most vulnerable ones, cannot afford it.

I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes.

Sincerely,  
Litzzy Venturi  
North Portland

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Save Oregons Trees!  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:37:33 AM

---

---

**From:** Christina Provencio <c.provencio17@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 7:12 PM  
**To:** Kotek@oregon.gov; GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Save Oregons Trees!

You don't often get email from c.provencio17@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

SAVE FRIENDS OF TREES PLEASE AS THEY BRING MUCH JOY, OXYGEN, FRUITS, SHADE, and HOMES FROM CRITTERS!

Governor Kotek's Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) is currently planning to bring forward recommendations that include the overriding of tree codes in favor of development. This recommendation stands in stark contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to increase tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities. We recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, but housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive. Friends of Trees, the Shade Equity Coalition, (we're a member!), and many other environmental organizations around the state believe the proposal is unnecessarily pitting the housing and climate emergencies against one another.

Thank you,  
Christina

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Save Oregon's Urban Trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:42:18 PM

---

**From:** Rachel Zanetti <rachelm.zanetti@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:41 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Save Oregon's Urban Trees

Some people who received this message don't often get email from rachelm.zanetti@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.

--

Rachel Zanetti

Project Architect  
Portland, OR

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Save our urban trees!!  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:30:34 AM

---

---

**From:** Sarah Brown <sarahjane41569@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 9:40 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Save our urban trees!!

You don't often get email from sarahjane41569@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello -

**At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction**—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

Please reconsider this - we love our urban trees! It's part of what makes Portland - and all of Oregon - special.

Please listen to the people who call this state out home -

Sarah Brown  
Tree & Oregon lover

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Save the trees I, reject HPAC's Proposal  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:14:40 PM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Stephanie Hoke <stephanie.hoke@comcast.net>  
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:09 PM  
To: GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
Subject: Save the trees I, reject HPAC's Proposal

[You don't often get email from stephanie.hoke@comcast.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Good afternoon,

I am writing to urge you not to roll back the tree code in order to develop more affordable housing. There is no reasonable explanation that affordable housing and an abundance of trees cannot go hand-in-hand. We are in a climate crisis and it has also been demonstrated that lower income and affordable housing areas often exist in urban deserts, making the living conditions untenable for those that are stuck there.

I know with the right thought and care there is a solution that can be found that promotes our urban trees as well as affordable housing, and I appreciate your efforts to find that solution. Please do not roll back the tree code.

Thank you for your time,  
Stephanie Hoke  
Tigard, Oregon

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Save the trees!  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:15:49 PM

---

---

**From:** jeanine bassett <jeabas@centurylink.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:22 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** govenor.kotek@oregon.gov  
**Subject:** Save the trees!

You don't often get email from jeabas@centurylink.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Affordable housing and saving our tree canopy should NOT be mutually exclusive. Our planet is in dire trouble and cutting down trees, even small ones, is not the answer. And don't those in affordable housing deserve the shade and protection offered by neighborhood trees too?

thank you for your consideration.

Jeanine Bassett  
Multnomah County resident (Portland)  
jeabas@centurylink.net

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Saving urban trees  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:49:23 AM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Lauren <[averyprettymoose@gmail.com](mailto:averyprettymoose@gmail.com)>  
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2023 6:39 PM  
To: GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <[Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov)>  
Subject: Saving urban trees

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [averyprettymoose@gmail.com](mailto:averyprettymoose@gmail.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Good evening,

I am writing tonight over my concerns with overriding Oregon's tree codes in order to make room for more housing for the HPAC plan.

I believe that Oregon's urban trees not only make our state a more beautiful place to live, but also create space within our cities for important ecological diversity that allows Oregon to stay green. Our urban trees also help to filter our air and shade our neighborhoods during the heat of summer. I believe that overriding tree codes is short sighted, and would create a roadblock to reaching our climate goals. There are better ways to incorporate both our need for housing and our need for sustainable climate solutions.

I urge you not to cut back on tree codes, and to seek out an environmental advisor for the HPAC committee who can help find solutions that satisfy both issues.

Thank you,  
Lauren Herman  
Milwaukie, Or 97222

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: September 29 hearing  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:17:03 PM

---

---

**From:** Carlotta Richard <carlotta.richard@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 22, 2023 7:14 AM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** September 29 hearing

You don't often get email from carlotta.richard@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To all concerned—

Please keep the environmental safeguards for our forests and waterways in place! We need trees to keep our communities healthy. A study has shown that the loss of trees in Oregon is affecting the supply of drinking water in many small towns.

***At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction***—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

Thank you for your consideration

Carlotta Richard  
7733 se Milwaukie Ave

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Solutions for Oregon's Housing Crisis  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:18:10 PM

---

**From:** Garlynn Woodsong <garlynn@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 22, 2023 3:36 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Solutions for Oregon's Housing Crisis

Some people who received this message don't often get email from garlynn@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek and members of the Housing Production Advisory Council,

There are many potential solutions to Oregon's housing crisis. As the work of others (including A.C. Nelson, TNC-CA, etc) has shown, we do not need to erode our environmental goals to solve the housing crisis. If we use an Integrated Planning Approach, we can accommodate all of our housing needs through infill growth, in particular by converting existing surface parking lots to housing. We don't need to expand urban growth boundaries, remove protections for trees, or intrude into greenway zones near riparian or wetland areas.

Further, at a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction, and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and tree canopy goals, including those necessary to combat the urban heat island and reverse inequitable trends of heat exposure in vulnerable communities.

Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

HPAC's proposal is therefore deeply irresponsible, to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is, as it doesn't even apply to residential parcels of 5,000 sf or smaller (the average lot size in Portland).

HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections are also irresponsible and unnecessary. Such changes will certainly impact trees, without making any

meaningful impact on the production of affordable housing.

It certainly appears that the HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years out of some sort of anti-environmental ideological convictions, rather than any pro forma-based calculus of what is truly needed to solve Oregon's housing crisis. It is appalling that when selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way with multiple perspectives in dialogue around the same table.

The opaqueness of the whole HPAC process, on top of HPAC's attempt to overturn local climate and tree policies, strikes many Oregonians, including myself, as undemocratic.

I'd be happy to share policy guidance that comes from an Integrated Planning Approach that could both boost housing production, protect natural and working lands, encourage the expansion of the urban tree canopy, reduce GHG emissions, and boost the economy. Please, don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely yours,  
~Garlynn

:::::::::::  
Garlynn Woodsong  
5267 NE 29th Ave  
Portland, OR 97211  
Cell: 503.936.9873

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Strongly oppose Tree Code Rollback  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:32:34 AM

---

---

**From:** Melissa Gattuso <mlgattuso@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 7:57 PM  
**To:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Strongly oppose Tree Code Rollback

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [mlgattuso@gmail.com](mailto:mlgattuso@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello! I am an Oregon resident residing in Beaverton. Writing to strongly oppose the proposed Tree Code Rollback. At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

I also oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.

I believe immediate action should be taken on the housing crisis however this proposal will cause harm to the local environment and residents. There are surely plenty of other ways to create more affordable housing. What makes Portland and the entire state of Oregon so unique is it's natural environment. Please reconsider this proposal and seek alternate solutions.

Thank you for your time.  
Melissa Gattuso

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for Trees  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:37:21 AM

---

---

**From:** JANET RADICK <janetradick@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 7:40 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Support for Trees

You don't often get email from janetradick@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi Tina,

I think you should rethink your position on support for city trees. For so many reasons, trees are crucial to the health and well being of our city. Money can be spent so quickly, trees make a difference in the long run.

Thanks,  
Janet Radick

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support for urban trees; Opposition to HPAC proposal  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:26:40 AM

---

---

**From:** Lincoln Thomas <lincoln.thomas1@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 29, 2023 7:28 AM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Support for urban trees; Opposition to HPAC proposal

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lincoln.thomas1@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I join Friends of Trees, Portland Fruit Tree Project, and many others in opposing the role back of protections for urban trees.

*At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.*

Thanks for hearing us, and for continuing to work for a more sustainable and liveable future.

Sincerely,  
Lincoln Thomas  
Cedar Hills, OR 97225

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony for the Housing Production Advisory Council Meeting Sept 29th  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:27:34 AM

---

---

**From:** Guy Benn <guybenn@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 11:04 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.Gov@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Testimony for the Housing Production Advisory Council Meeting Sept 29th

You don't often get email from guybenn@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Via email to [HPAC.Gov@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.Gov@oregon.gov)

Dear Co-Chairs Hovey and Hall and Members of the Council,

I manage TriMet's Transit-Oriented Development program but I am testifying here in a personal capacity. Unfortunately, I cannot join tomorrow's meeting so I wanted to share my written comments and perspective as a real estate professional, parent, and Oregon resident. I am deeply concerned by the Committee's recommendations to remove environmental protections that are considered a barrier to new housing delivery. The recommendations on removing tree protections and the unregulated expansion of urban growth boundaries are of greatest concern. These provisions will exacerbate the existential threat of the climate crisis by (i) removing essential tree cover and destroying liveability within existing neighborhoods and (ii) promoting urban sprawl and the further destruction of essential natural resources needed to combat climate change.

Infrastructure costs (including the cost of delivering parking) are typically the biggest costs (and thus impediments) to new development. This macro-trend is evident across America and Oregon in the millions of acres of surface parking lots that plague our urban environments. I urge the Committee to consider bold solutions that unlock this unproductive land for housing and other supportive uses. It is naïve to think that parking can be eliminated, but policies that support development on or above surface parking lots will have the dual impact of addressing the housing and the climate crises. District and shared parking models should be aggressively promoted, as should incentives for structured and below-grade parking. American motorists do not pay their fair share of infrastructure costs, fueling inequity and inflating house prices. We need to get smarter and bolder to redress this balance if we truly want an economically and environmentally sustainable model that delivers sufficient housing. We need to prioritize land for housing people and not cars. Policies that exacerbate urban heat islands and remove UGBs will increase our reliance on cars, so they are not a viable long-term solution. Policies that transfer the cost of infrastructure to the motorists who use and can pay for it, are.

Thank you for your consideration and hard work on addressing this important challenge,

Sincerely,  
- Guy Benn

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:15:01 PM

---

---

**From:** Kristen Gulick <kristen.gulick@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:16 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Testimony

You don't often get email from kristen.gulick@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Kristen Gulick  
Senior Associate Environmental Scientist/Planner, Tetra Tech

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Tree canopy  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:17:18 PM

---

**From:** Suzie Kabeiseman <suzkab4@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 22, 2023 11:49 AM  
**To:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>; Sen Taylor <Sen.KathleenTaylor@oregonlegislature.gov>; Rep Nosse <Rep.RobNosse@oregonlegislature.gov>  
**Subject:** Tree canopy

Some people who received this message don't often get email from suzkab4@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 22, 2023  
Re: Opposing HPAC recommendations regarding trees

Dear Governor Kotek:

We are facing multiple crises in our state. One is housing, but another is climate equity. We cannot sacrifice one for the other. People in our state are dying from the heat due to increased summer temperatures and drought. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

As a resident, homeowner and citizen, I want spaces that are functional, beautiful and welcoming to people, pets, wildlife and the planet. Trees are the primary landscape element to help shape a space. Placed appropriately, trees can help cool a home in the summer or provide an evergreen barrier to protect a home from cold winter winds. Zoning codes allowing larger homes on smaller lots provide less space for trees that grow large enough at maturity to provide many health, climate and environmental benefits. Most housing designs for developed sites leave only enough space for upright, narrow trees that provide much less cooling shade and other health and environmental benefits than large-form trees do.

The value of an existing healthy large-form tree along a street or in a yard is irreplaceable. It helps reduce stormwater runoff by absorbing winter rains in its canopy and through its roots; It is a place of shelter for birds and other wildlife; It adds financial value to the property on which it sits; Studies have shown that trees reduce blood pressure, stress, depression, anxiety and can improve concentration levels of children with ADHD; Trees filter and purify the air and the water; They reduce the excessive heat island affect of urban streets, sidewalks and rooftops; Studies show that neighborhoods with trees are safer than those without trees. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

Oregon needs housing that is healthy, equitable and climate resilient, that won't be possible without intact trees and other green infrastructure such as wetlands and environmental zones. With smart design that leaves room for both housing and large trees, we can have healthier residents while growing our climate resilience. I urge the council to focus on solutions that advance housing equity and do not destroy the environment in doing so.

Sincerely,  
Suzanne P Kabeiseman



**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Tree Code Overriding  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:20:30 PM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Amica Grimberg <[amica@bardicgrove.org](mailto:amica@bardicgrove.org)>  
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:20 PM  
To: Governor Kotek \* GOV <[Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov)>; GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
Subject: Tree Code Overriding

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [amica@bardicgrove.org](mailto:amica@bardicgrove.org). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

To those in action at the decision of the proposed code changes,

Once upon a time, there was a land where people were safe, and could feel peace. Most likely when that image flashes through your mind, there is a tree in there.

That image has the current battle in our hearts - affordable housing vs trees, wetlands.

Affordable housing has already been put up, a lot of it. More is needed, but it does not have to involve the codes protecting wetlands and trees. There is no fast track for what honestly takes generations. Those codes are there for solid reasons, put into law after much effort.

This past spring, on my suburban street, a herd of six deer ran past a startled neighbor. One zone after another went from their home to the affordable housing home, and they were lost.

I beg you to understand it is not the tree, or the deer, or any isolated single element of nature I hope you will decide to protect. It is the whole in other areas, and demolishing it - this whole that took over half a century to create - that YOU are voting on approving, or blocking.

Developers make and control so much money, there is no hope for my community. It was done before we knew the real consequences, or the after effects. I hope to bring to light some of those real, hidden, costs that happen when removing the trees and wetlands to prioritize further housing.

Real theft, real vandalism, real loss of community, real loss of security, real loss of peace: these are things that have been brought to my neighborhood with the removal of prior lands and the mere process of building affordable housing. I can give ample testimony concerning the significant negative impact has been established by the hasty buildings.

Altering the land is not just about the trees or the new housing. It is also about what is impacted by the transition.

Laws to protect the natural environment should be fortified, for numerous reasons. Nature is not always fast, but it does need us to hold its value fast and dear. This land is populated by voiceless lives, but their strength is our security. Those who live here know that.

The trees and wetlands unequivocally matter. Profoundly. It is the trees that emit peace and under their branches is the best place to think. Stop what you are doing and go outside. Think about the value of nature under leaves that protect you from the rain, or that pleasantly glow in the sunlight while protecting you from UV rays.

Think for a real moment, focus on all the trees and wetland give us. If you need to, do some research. There are a

multitude of examples and studies showing the significant importance these aspects of nature have. Think of the peace, security, and the intricate web of ecosystem  
- and how long it takes for a tree/wetlands to grow and the spread of support they fuse into it's community - they have brought over the centuries, and continue only if we enable them to.

Protect the trees and wetlands as you would your own future, and the future of those 100 years from now, because that is what the trees and wetlands do.

Find housing for those in need: it will take creativity and care, as all important things do, but find it in your control to enable the current codes to stand for what they were intended to: protect the trees and wetlands - they are the ambassadors for more than can ever fit in the courtroom you decide their fate in.

For your regard, and in hope for you to support the current coding protecting trees and wetlands,

Thank you,

Amica Grimberg

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Tree code suggested change issue  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:14:54 PM

---

**From:** Kaylee Hames <kayleehames@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:15 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <hpac.gov@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Tree code suggested change issue

Some people who received this message don't often get email from kayleehames@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

HPAC and Governor Kotek,

I was incredibly disappointed to learn that your council supports overriding Portland tree code in favor of increased development. While I understand the need for more housing, I urge you to think of the long-term consequences of reducing urban tree cover. I feel the aim of increased housing should be to improve people's quality of life overall, and I feel it is indisputable that trees must play a vital role in that future. City trees improve air quality, mental health, and on a larger scale are absolutely vital in fighting climate change.

Please reassess this recommendation and find other ways to increase density while still not allowing for free reign for developers to clear cut trees, because we all know they will chop down every one they are legally allowed to. And that makes a worse world for us all.

Sincerely,  
Kaylee Just

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Tree removal  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:15:33 PM

---

---

**From:** Gregg Russell <simplygrateful07@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:21 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Tree removal

You don't often get email from simplygrateful07@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Yes, affordable housing is important, but it must be compatible with trees whether native or non-native.

This is why we are fighting King cities proposed Fischer road through the Columbia Land trust conservancy.

Not only is it along the Tualatin River but it is also a wildlife corridor.

This roadway would be both a financial and environmental disaster, particularly when there are alternative roadways closer to Beef Bend road.

This proposed legislation is moving in the wrong direction.

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Trees are not a luxury!  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:18:29 PM

---

**From:** LaJune Thorson <lajune.thorson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 23, 2023 10:47 AM  
**To:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Trees are not a luxury!

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lajune.thorson@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please do not change tree codes to sacrifice trees in the building of new housing. New development must include trees, both established trees and newly planted trees. As our climate becomes warmer, neighborhoods need trees more than ever. Trees contribute to the quality of life for families who need affordable housing. And trees contribute to pride in one's community. For the sake of our children, please maintain the tree code.

LaJune Thorson  
long time Portland resident

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: trees for our future  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:16:38 PM

---

**From:** Karen Conlon <kconlon543@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 21, 2023 9:37 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** trees for our future

You don't often get email from kconlon543@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—**and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals. ...Please reconsider your plans for tree and wetland preservation. thank you. Karen Conlon

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Trees in cities  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:15:41 PM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Doris Wimber <dorisrw77@gmail.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:21 PM  
To: GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
Subject: Trees in cities

[You don't often get email from dorisrw77@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

It is hard to imagine that there is a proposal to cut down trees to include more dense housing with climate change demanding that we plant and conserve trees and all the dense housing done without trees shows the worst sort of slum conditions developing and adding trees to these areas improves liveability. Please consult the Arbor Day Foundation before you try to pass such negative legislation.

Doris Wimber

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Trees please  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:26:56 AM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Kim Boldrini-Senn <[kboldrini@gmail.com](mailto:kboldrini@gmail.com)>  
Sent: Friday, September 29, 2023 3:09 AM  
To: GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
Cc: Governor Kotek \* GOV <[Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov)>  
Subject: Trees please

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [kboldrini@gmail.com](mailto:kboldrini@gmail.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Hi,

Trying to save the trees. How can you help?

Portland is one of the greenest cities in America. It has beautiful old growth forests and nearly every street has trees. It's wonderful. The zoning laws are part of what made me move there instead of living in a concrete jungle.

Trees give us oxygen, shade, and comfort. We provide trees with life-affirming carbon dioxide and appreciation.

Trees also provide life for so many other animals and small organisms. It's our duty being higher on the food chain to think of all things below us, and of the generations after us. What good can we do for them?

We won't know what harm we have done until the last tree, flower, and blade of grass is gone. Money and financial gain should not be our first concern. Maybe watch the film "The Lorax" to remember what we teach our kids and why.

Many thanks,  
Kim



**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: TREES  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:48:11 AM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: Molly McDade Hood <mollzombiekill@gmail.com>  
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2023 6:15 PM  
To: GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
Cc: Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
Subject: TREES

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from mollzombiekill@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Hello,

I'm a North Portland Resident and a fifth generation Oregonian.

I'm currently in Europe traveling for work and pleasure and one of the many things I miss about being in the PNW is our trees. Especially our urban trees.

Although Rome has many interesting historical sites it lacks urban trees as most of Italy does and this lack of trees creates an overwhelmingly hot and smelly city!

Ease of building when it comes to our urban tree coverage should not be an option. Builders can work around current codes and allowing them to ignore codes or pay a fee/fine in removing trees to build more densely populated dwellings will impact our community negatively in short and long term. Allowing builders to disregard current municipal codes and cut down established trees, planting and maintaining street and yard trees will create an impact on our city negatively impacting future generations not just the current.

I'm not a member of any organization in regards to environmental impacts however I love trees and that is why we are unique in the PNW we value what we have and what our past generations have preserved and maintained. Don't be shortsighted and allow builders a shortcut to slap quick housing up.

Molly McDade  
503-349-7400  
Sent from my iPhone.

Molly McDade  
503-349-7400  
Sent from my iPhone.

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Trees  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:31:49 AM

---

**From:** Ann Littlewood <annlittlewood3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 8:38 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Trees

Some people who received this message don't often get email from annlittlewood3@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Re. the proposal to exempt smaller trees from environmental fees

Surely the Housing Production Advisory Council can come up with better ideas than this! Cutting down trees for free is not going to give us more inexpensive housing. It's just going to make building houses more profitable and degrade our urban environment. Developers are rarely keen on any sort of environmental protection, yet they benefit as much as the rest of us do--no one wants to live in an ugly city or in a heat island.

Why is the HPAC so keen on ditching programs and regulations that took citizens years and years to put in place? It's infuriating to see this work disrespected and it does nothing to help make Portland a better city for everyone. Developers already had their voice heard--tree protections are already weaker than many of us feel are needed.

And what's up with weakening wetland and environmental zone protections? We've been having this battle for literally decades and now it's reactivated to no one's benefit except developers. Where are the voices on HPAC who understand that we do not have a choice between more housing and a better environment? We've got what it takes to have both.

To add more low cost housing, leave the trees and wetlands alone. Work with developers to use the vacant land inside the UGB and to re-purpose the many empty buildings we see every day.

Ann Littlewood  
Portland, OR

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Urban Tree Code - Honor  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:48:17 AM

---

**From:** Kelly Ogden <kelly@elkcollective.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 6:29 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <hpac.gov@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** [governorkotek@oregon.gov](mailto:governorkotek@oregon.gov)  
**Subject:** Urban Tree Code - Honor

You don't often get email from [kelly@elkcollective.com](mailto:kelly@elkcollective.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Reading that removing our urban tree protections is being considered is of grave concern. In a time of climate change and potential crisis, Oregon should be stepping up as a leader in green initiatives, not opening the door for the money to mow down our urban green spaces. Each tree is a green space. Part of what makes our city so special is our large inner city trees and the canopied streets.

Take any visitor into Ladd Circle or East Moreland or the PSU campus and they will all be in awe of our trees.

If you have not read it, please consider reading [THE HIDDEN LIFE OF TREES](#)

Just this summer new sidewalks came into our neighborhood, without these protections the 150 year old magnolia tree in our front yard would have potentially been on the chopping block. That would have been an absolute tragedy.

My daughter just turned 2, and I hope when she is 25 she can still come home and see the trees she's loved since she was so small.

Please do the right thing and protect our urban tree boundaries.

There are many other ways to support urban development that are far less sinister.

Thank you,

Kelly Ogden  
Mobile: 503.839.3662

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Urban Tree Code Rollback  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:49:09 AM

---

---

**From:** Ashley Barnes <ashleykatlinbarnes@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 6:35 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <hpac.gov@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Urban Tree Code Rollback

Some people who received this message don't often get email from ashleykatlinbarnes@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello HPAC and Governor Kotek,

I read that there is a proposed rollback of the urban tree code so that developers would be allowed to cut down trees in plots smaller than 6,000 ft. I think this is absolutely preposterous. If you cannot come up with a better solution to allow development to happen while still keeping the trees, then you are not being creative enough and certainly **not thinking about climate change, the values, or the culture of our city of Portland. I will not vote for you again, Kotek, if this passes.** I grew up in Vancouver and continue to watch as tree after tree is felled in order to build housing. It breaks my heart and does not have to be that way. I always looked to Portland as a leader in that regard. We should be combating climate change, not going backward! I encourage you to please look to the Bioneers website for inspiration for better ways to plan for the future of our city. Trees make neighborhoods so much healthier, happier, and better on multiple levels. Please, I beg of you, do not let this recommendation, or any of its kind, pass through!

**Ashley Barnes**

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

360-356-6110

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Urban Tree Code Testimony  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:31:31 AM

---

**From:** Peace Panda <peacepanda143@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 9:03 PM  
**To:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; GOV Hpac \* GOV <hpac.gov@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Urban Tree Code Testimony

Some people who received this message don't often get email from peacepanda143@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***I vehemently oppose changes to the municipal tree codes.***

***We are in a climate crisis, with drought and pests putting trees at risk, without adding voluntary cutting down of more trees. Tree canopy is extremely important to the health of the urban environment and its inhabitants. Trees are important for environmental justice because fewer trees create heat and air quality problems for residents. With tree inequity, you should be planting more trees, not chopping them down. It has also been proven that wetlands are vital for environmental health.***

**It takes decades for a tree to grow enough to provide cover and reach maturity, but a few moments to destroy it.**

**CONSIDER YOUR LEGACY!**

**Rhonda Leo  
Beaverton OR 97008**

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Urban Tree Code  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:26:24 AM

---

**From:** Isadora Roth <isadroth@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 29, 2023 7:49 AM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Urban Tree Code

Some people who received this message don't often get email from isadroth@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear HPAC and Governor Kotek

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to HPAC's proposed urban tree code rollback.

At a time of climate crisis, this is a misguided and short sighted attempt to speed up housing construction and will have an adverse effect on those living n our communities.

Trees are essential in cities to help avoid heat islands, which as our climate warms will become a bigger threat to our health. This is not a time to be reducing our cities' tree canopies.

Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code still allows developers to pay a fee to remove trees. Simply doing away with tree protections does not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing. Tree codes took many years and much effort to build and ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in.

I also oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections, which will impact trees.

Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environmental regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.

As a voter I see climate change as one of the most important challenges now and for our future generations. Please consider the potential adverse

environmental effects in a time of climate crisis when making policy recommendations.

Thank you,  
Isadora Roth

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Urban Trees  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:37:43 AM

---

---

**From:** Michelle Bruncks <m.n.bruncks@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 7:05 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Urban Trees

Some people who received this message don't often get email from m.n.bruncks@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern -

At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

Please take this and the testimonies of fellow Portlanders into account at your hearing tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Michelle Bruncks



**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Urging a NO vote on proposal to override tree codes  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:32:23 AM

---

---

**From:** Anne Muller <awmuller2@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 8:10 PM  
**To:** Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>; GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Urging a NO vote on proposal to override tree codes

Some people who received this message don't often get email from awmuller2@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good evening,

I am writing to urge you to **vote no** on the proposal to override tree codes for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet, allowing the clear cutting of trees under 48" diameter. This change would apply to the vast majority of mature urban trees.

As a social worker who has worked with individuals facing houselessness, I feel strongly about the need for affordable housing. Addressing our housing crisis and protecting our trees do not need to be mutually exclusive, however.

There have been ongoing efforts to increase the tree canopy in Portland, which improves quality of living, provides shade in these times of climate change, increases tree diversity for sustainability, and provides a refuge for the birds and other creatures which share our city.

Portland is a city known for caring about and for our environment. Allowing clear cutting of urban trees is a step towards a concrete jungle and the further degradation of our environment. This puts all of us at risk. Again, I strongly urge you to vote no on this proposal.

Thank you,  
Anne Muller  
2126 NE 26th Ave.  
Portland 97212



Virus-free. [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Written testimony on keeping or Urban Trees.  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:43:05 PM

---

**From:** Jeffrey Chihiro Aldrich <studiosomething@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:42 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <hpac.gov@oregon.gov>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Written testimony on keeping or Urban Trees.

Some people who received this message don't often get email from studiosomething@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

*At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.*

—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.

—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Such changes will certainly impact trees.

—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

--

| Chihiro(千尋) & Jeffrey Aldrich

| [www.giraffasusfoundation.com](http://www.giraffasusfoundation.com)

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Written testimony for Housing Production Advisory Council Meeting  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:18:37 PM

---

**From:** Emily Stebbins <stebbins.emily@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 23, 2023 4:11 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Written testimony for Housing Production Advisory Council Meeting

Some people who received this message don't often get email from stebbins.emily@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek and HPAC,

My name is Emily Stebbins, and I'm a parent and educator in Portland. I've lived in Oregon most of my life. I feel lucky to have grown up in a liveable enough place that my family, my closest friends, and I have either stayed or chosen to return and raise our own children here.

But I am concerned that liveability is in question. I am troubled that in the midst of a climate emergency, leaders would believe that affordable housing is at odds with the protection of urban trees. Not only is it possible to make space for, plant, and maintain healthy trees while providing housing; but it's essential for the health and well-being of the people who live here.

Destroying climate- and tree-related regulations at this time is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that Oregon and our cities will be unable to meet planned climate and canopy goals.

Tree protections are only one of many factors that affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Roads and parking spaces, for example, take up much more space in our urban landscape than oaks or pines. Moreover, affordable housing must take the health of future occupants into account if it is to truly help Oregonians in need of stability and shelter. Our physical and mental health depend on trees.

I also oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Wetlands have a critical role to play in cleaning our water and protecting us from flooding. Housing cannot come at the cost of other, equally critical, needs.

In the future, broader voices must be included to reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way with multiple perspectives in dialogue around the same table.

Thank you,  
Emily

**From:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**To:** [RICE-WHITLOW Kristina \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Written Testimony from Friends of Trees Executive Director  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:14:16 PM

---

I'm using Adobe Acrobat.

You can view and comment on "Friends of Trees HPAC Testimony.pdf" at:

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:fb6dbe41-0e95-43b3-b8bf-3e0bd644c3f8>

---

**From:** Colin May <colinm@friendsoftrees.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 1:52 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov>  
**Cc:** Yashar Vasef <yasharv@friendsoftrees.org>; Governor Kotek \* GOV <Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov>  
**Subject:** Written Testimony from Friends of Trees Executive Director

You don't often get email from colinm@friendsoftrees.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

Please consider the written testimony of Friends of Trees Executive Director Yashar Vasef, below and attached, in advance of Friday's Housing Production Advisory Council hearing.

-----  
September 27, 2023

Dear Housing Production Advisory Council and Governor Kotek:

Friends of Trees is an Oregon community forestry nonprofit founded in 1989 that empowers thousands of annual volunteers in Oregon to address inequities in our urban forests (spanning five Oregon counties in the Willamette Valley) through community tree planting. We do this work because of the incredible benefits that trees provide to our communities. We write to express deep concern regarding the proposed overriding of municipal tree codes within the recommendations of the Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC).

In particular, we are addressing the following recommendation within HPAC's suggestions:

*"On platted lots less than 6,000 square feet where an increase in density from the current configuration of the lot is proposed. No city or jurisdiction shall deny a permit for the removal of trees less than 48" in diameter, nor shall they charge a fee-in-lieu for the removal. For trees larger than 48" in diameter, the city or jurisdiction must offer a program that allows for replacement trees to be planted or for a fee in lieu option, with reasonable caps on fees, when the replacement tree option is not feasible."*

Based on new science, this is an incredibly shortsighted proposal that could severely impact public health. Recently published peer-reviewed research from Geoffrey Donovan at the United States Forest Service, using Friends of Trees planting data in Portland, found that each tree we planted was associated with significant reductions in non-accidental and cardiovascular mortality. On average, the trees we planted saved 15 lives annually in Portland alone. Notably, trees planted within the past 11-15 years had twice the impact of trees planted within the last five. The protection of our mature trees is more important than ever.

Additionally, vital shade cast by mature trees help cool neighborhoods during our increasingly hot Oregon summers. Dr. Vivek Shandas of Portland State University, a leading expert in urban heat islands, has found an association between low canopy neighborhoods and tragic deaths during the 2021 heat dome event. In the face of an intensifying climate crisis, these vulnerable neighborhoods cannot afford to lose more trees.

We implore you to propose creative solutions to allow for the co-existence of mature trees and new developments to dually address a housing and urban heat island crisis. Trees and housing should not be considered mutually exclusive, and these issues should not be pitted against each other. Affordable housing should be healthy housing, and that includes trees.

The vital need to increase housing density should not come at the cost of clearing our urban forest one plot of land at a time. Tree codes are the products of years of expert input and public outreach. No one body or special interest group should be granted the power to dramatically upend those efforts overnight.

Sincerely,

Yashar Vasef  
Executive Director,  
Friends of Trees

---

**Colin May**  
Communications Manager  
(he/him/his)  
(503) 467-2515  
[Friends of Trees](#)

[ ]

**From:** [Roberta Jortner](mailto:Roberta.Jortner@oregon.gov)  
**To:** [GOV.Hpac@oregon.gov](mailto:GOV.Hpac@oregon.gov)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Comments on HPAC Proposals affecting trees, natural resources, and farm/forest lands  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:06:40 PM

You don't often get email from [robertajortner@gmail.com](mailto:robertajortner@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Greetings. I'm not sure if this email from earlier today went through, so sending it once more. Apologies if this came through twice.

Best,  
Roberta Jortner

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Roberta Jortner** <[robertajortner@gmail.com](mailto:robertajortner@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Thu, Sep 28, 2023 at 12:36 PM  
**Subject:** Comments on HPAC Proposals affecting trees, natural resources, and farm/forest lands  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
**Cc:** <[Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov)>

**TO:** Housing Production Advisory Committee (HPAC)

Below are the comments that I sent to the Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) on September 8, 2023 regarding your proposals to essentially nullify or prohibit local tree codes except in very narrow circumstances, and to severely weaken Oregon's wetland protections. Again, I urge you not to proceed with either of these short-sighted and ultimately destructive recommendations.

I am also concerned about HPAC proposals that would allow expedited UGB expansions and encroachment into environmentally sensitive Goal 5 resource areas and the Willamette Greenway, which are currently protected through local land use plans. The impacts of these proposals will degrade our riparian corridors, forests, and sensitive habitats which will make Oregonians and these fragile resource areas less resilient to the increasing impacts of climate change. (See my comments below for additional rationale.)

We need proposals that will weave trees and green infrastructure into affordable healthy housing developments, not proposals that create hot, treeless housing developments and neighborhoods. We also need tools to prevent gentrification and displacement as we provide this healthy housing. Again, I urge you to shift gears and call for an integrated approach that addresses affordable housing and gentrification, human/ecological health, and climate resilience together, rather than pitting them against each other.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Roberta Jortner  
Portland Oregon

---

September 8, 2023

Housing Production Advisory Committee (HPAC),

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the current HPAC proposals. I am not able to attend today's webinar so please accept my written comments prior to this afternoon's session.

The following reflects my 30+ years of experience as a professional in the fields of land use, water resources, and environmental policy and planning, primarily in Oregon. I have concerns about several of the HPAC recommendations, however today I will focus on those pertaining to local tree codes, wetlands, and the Urban Growth Boundary. The bottom line: "Housing at all costs" approaches will not serve Oregonians. Housing AND green infrastructure, including trees and wetlands, are both imperative to community health, safety, and well-being. Neither are optional. The HPAC sweeping proposals to all but prohibit local tree codes and significantly reduce current wetland protections in Oregon are short-sighted and will have significant unintended consequences. Please broaden your single focus approach to an integrated that strives to address the housing crisis and the climate crisis together. This will require collaboration with a broader suite of individuals and organizations with expertise in climate adaptation and resilience, environmental quality, and public health.

2023 is on track to be the hottest year on record, and according to the World Meteorological Organization, global temperatures are likely to set more records over the next five years. In August of this year, just two years after a heat dome that killed 69 people in Multnomah County, Portland experienced another heat wave that took the lives of at least 6 residents, and once again broke records with 4 consecutive days of 100+ degree temperatures. The 2021 heat dome demonstrated that areas with few trees and lots of concrete were up to 20 degrees hotter than areas with abundant tree canopy, providing the ingredients for lethal heat. <https://www.wweek.com/news/city/2021/07/14/this-is-the-hottest-place-in-portland/>. Compounding this fact, recent research by Portland State University and Portland Parks & Recreation's Urban Forestry Division show that Portland's tree canopy declined between 2014 and 2020. The impacts of increasing heat and loss of tree canopy is not limited to Portland, but rather is being experienced across Oregon and the nation.

Portland's tree code was developed over a period of years in response to community concern about the loss of tree canopy and the need for a consistent, cohesive set of tree regulation. Title 11, Trees was explicitly designed in collaboration with many stakeholder interests to balance Portland's goals for trees and for development, including housing. The HPAC's proposal to prohibit local tree preservation on lots less than 6000 square feet for all but trees larger than 48" dbh would apply to the vast majority of city lots and trees in city neighborhoods that are outside riparian corridors and environmental protection areas. These areas are where most city residents live and work – areas which are getting hotter as temperatures rise, and as our tree canopy is replaced by buildings and other impervious surfaces. Like affordable housing, we need more tree canopy infrastructure across our cities, not less. City residents need trees to help mitigate and cope with the inevitability of increased heat and associated health impacts. Local tree codes are developed to integrate the management of Trees must be integrated into middle housing and high-density housing design as well as our streets and rights-of-way to provide cooling shade, reduce stormwater run-off, improve air quality, create walkable neighborhoods, and provide healthy habitat for people, bird, and other wildlife that are also struggling with climate change.

At the same time, stream flows, springs, and groundwater levels across Oregon are declining and water is getting warmer. Increasing wildfires have exacerbated risks of flooding and landslides. Wetlands, including large, small and/or degraded wetlands and headwater streams have a key role in regulating our hydrologic systems, helping to cool and clean the water, provide water storage, prevent erosion, and mitigate flooding. The HPAC proposal in Wetland's Recommendations B to redefine the "waters of the state" to be synonymous with the recently re-interpreted "waters of the United States" would result in the continued loss of wetlands, putting Oregonians at greater risk of floods, drought, water pollution, and loss of salmon and other native aquatic species. DSL Director Dan Ryan's August 14, 2023, letter to the HPAC Land Availability Workgroup Chair Deborah Flagan, states, "Before state protections were in place, many wetlands were lost – about 57 percent in the Willamette Valley; 75 percent in the Klamath Basin; and up to 94 percent in coastal estuaries (Historical Loss of Wetlands, Oregon Explorer). There is also ongoing loss or degradation of wetlands associated with activities that are exempt from the Removal-Fill Law." Mr. Ryan further emphasizes that even degraded wetlands "still provide critical functions such as flood protection, winter season salmon habitat, support for other fish and wildlife species, improving water quality, and groundwater recharge. The effects of climate change make these functions even more valuable today than in the past." The HPAC proposal would also shift the responsibility and cost of meeting development-triggered legal wetland requirements from developers to the Oregon Departments of State Lands and the Department of Environmental Quality. public which would be inequitable and place a strain on already strained public resources. To this, Mr. Ryan responds, "This recommendation would put the entire cost of offsetting the effects of wetlands loss on the people of Oregon." I hope that the HPAC will reconsider this undesirable and inequitable proposal.

Again, I urge the HPAC to abandon these recommendations and shift to a collaborative, integrated approach aimed to provide housing AND tree canopy across Oregon cities, and the benefits that they will provide. Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,  
Roberta Jortner  
Portland, Oregon

**From:** [Thaddeus Groszkiewicz](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Governor Kotek's HPAC Hearing on Urban tree regulation rollback - my Testimony  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:56:04 PM

---

You don't often get email from tedgroszkiewicz@icloud.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I strongly oppose any Urban Tree regulation rollback efforts. Enough is enough!!

Portland's tree code already gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid.

Rolling back the current urban tree regulations on lots less than 6,000 sq ft. is a short sighted idea that does not benefit the residents of our state. It only removes a requirement currently in place to improve the livability of our neighborhoods.

!Do Not Do This!

Both my former house in Bend and my current one in Eugene are on lots smaller than 6000 sq. ft. Trees make the neighborhoods livable.

Besides which, unless developers and builders drop the lot sizes to under 3000 sq ft and build houses of 1500 sq ft, there's no way to provide 'affordable' housing. Affordable is a relative term, and there are extant programs for such construction.

I venture a guess that single family homes are not the solution to the current homeless encampments in our cities and towns.

Ted Groszkiewicz  
2033 Bungalow Crossing Lane  
Eugene, OR 97408



**From:** [Melanie Kemper](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 8:11:53 AM

---

[You don't often get email from melanie.kemper@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Urban trees

Of all times to consider cutting urban shade-providing trees, this is simply not a good idea. The wealth and health that shade trees provide in the climate-charged world we live in - it's one of the few good reputations the city of Portland has. Please reconsider.

Melanie Kemper



September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**TO: Governor Tina Kotek + Housing Production Advisory Council**

**RE: Support for HPAC Recommendations to boost housing production and affordability in Oregon**

Dear Governor Kotek, HPAC Co-Chairs Tovey, Hall and Council Members,

My name is Preston Korst and I'm the Director of Government Affairs at the Home Building Association of Greater Portland. HBA is dedicated to maximizing housing choice for all who reside in our region by shaping an environment in which industry professionals can meet the diverse needs of our communities.

**We're writing to express our industry's strong support for the work of HPAC and the 70+ proposed draft recommendations. These could have a significant and positive impact on our industry's ability to meet the Governor's housing production target of 36,000 units annually.**

There is no limit to the number of barriers that can delay or prohibit housing starts, however we're excited to see and review many impressive and thoughtful recommendations flowing from the HPAC membership and work groups. We all know that Oregon is staring down a current housing deficit of 140,000+ units, and will need 443,000 new homes over the next 20 years. This means we must not only prioritize the development of new housing now, but also plan to encourage and manage growth for the future as well.

This is why we're supportive of the tools being outlined by the council and urge its members to approve the recommendations that will increase our constrained land supply, mitigate and reduce costly impacts of tree removal fees, speed up permitting and the approval of housing applications, and help address rising costs to build and install residential infrastructure.

HBA, on behalf of the more than 1,200 members, believes that this council's exhaustive and impressive work will provide the homebuilding industry (both affordable and market rate) with the tools needed to meet the Governor's ambitious production goals. The results of which will translate to more homes being built for families who've been locked out of the benefit of stable housing for too long. To generate affordability and overall supply of housing, these recommendations are an undeniably smart path that merits the community's support and your vote.

Thank you for your consideration,

**Preston Korst**

Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs  
Home Building Association of Greater Portland

**From:** [Lynn Herring](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor.Kotek@orgon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@orgon.gov)  
**Subject:** Hearing on Governor Kotek's Housing Production advisory Council (HPAC)  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 5:18:58 PM

---

You don't often get email from lynnhe@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To the Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) and Governor Kotek,

In your quest with proposal to speed up affordable housing, you must not put our urban forest canopy with long fought for tree codes, our state and local wetlands, our protected natural areas and environmental zones in jeopardy. This is totally unacceptable in this obvious time of climate crisis. Furthermore, examine opportunities for creative green infrastructure in your proposal. Include environmental and climate justice advocates on your advisory council.

Back to the drawing board to protect our natural resources and make our cities ecologically sustainable and liveable for all!

Lynn Herring

**From:** [K.LOSK](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HOSC's recommendations  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 6:18:15 PM

---

You don't often get email from klosk3@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

We strongly object to the recent proposal from the HPAC that would essentially override tree codes that took many people and many years to instigate. The HPAC's recommendations would greatly restrict local governments from maintaining urban forest canopy while increasing housing density, and stands in sharp contrast to work taking place throughout the nation to increase and maintain urban tree cover to meet projected climate realities.

— I oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Developers have wanted to eliminate them for years, even though such changes will definitely impact ecosystems and biodiversity.

— At this time of climate crisis, eliminating or weakening climate and tree-related regulations is a reckless, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction and ensure that the state and its urban areas will be unable to meet their planned climate and canopy goals.

— Many factors affect developers' ability to quickly build more housing, but tree protections are hardly an issue. For example, Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying a fee to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Such fees are just another business expense and allows them to build more profitable units or large single homes whose prices more than cover any tree-removal fees. Eliminating tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.

— Tree codes were created to make sure that Oregon remains a livable place. The Portland tree code was actually strongly influenced by developers and is not as strong as it ought to be.

— HPAC's attempt to overturn local climate and tree policies, strikes many Oregonians as wholly undemocratic.

— I strongly urge you to reject the HPAC proposal and to include an equal number of forest and climate justice representatives on your advisory council who will consider both the housing crisis and the climate crisis.

Thank you,

Stephen & Kenlynn Hamilton  
3940 SW 86th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97225

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Sam Swartley](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Housing and Trees (are needed!)  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:25:11 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sam.swartley@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

I am writing to voice my complete disagreement over the idea to remove/alter tree codes as you modify building/development codes to take on the housing crisis. Do not remove this code. In fact, I would suggest that you urgently need to modify the code to increase trees in development projects. Studies have clearly shown how temperatures in city neighborhoods are directly affected by the amount of trees.

Here's an example from the EPA with a heading called "[Using Trees and Vegetation to Reduce Heat Islands](#)".

Do not use the housing crisis to increase the climate crisis. Make decisions that help houseless people and help the climate. This is not an opportunity to help developers.

Sam Swartley

**From:** [Peter Reppe](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** housing construction, trees and livability  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 9:33:26 AM

---

You don't often get email from peter\_reppe@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Advisory Council Members; Dear Governor Kotek,

When considering Oregon Cities' tree codes in the context of wanting to accelerate more housing developments, please keep in mind how mature trees significantly increase the desirability and hence profitability of a neighborhood for the developers themselves.... not to mention the dire need to retain the basic ecological benefits these tree offer.

In fact, I'd suggest that this opportunity to modify legislation to catalyze more needed housing would be used to actually strengthen and support existing "tree codes" (e.g., limit removal of mature trees to only those circumstances where roots interfere with below-ground utility infrastructure; and/or require at least 10 young trees be planted to replace 1 mature tree).

thank you so much!

Peter Reppe

Eugene, OR

**From:** [David Precechtil](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC and present tree codes  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 7:59:46 PM

---

You don't often get email from d.precechtil@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To committee and Governor,

At a time when all we hear about in climate change and what crisis the world is facing, now is not the time to be reducing shade trees in our cities. We need more trees, not less, so please do not override the existing codes designed to protect trees in the cities.

Respectfully,  
David Precechtil

**From:** [Jessica Graeber](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC comments  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 8:07:43 AM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from graeber.ja@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

I'd like to add a comment in opposition of the tree code changes for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet.

Tree cover is an extremely effective cooling mechanism especially in areas of low socioeconomic health and existing racial equity issues. We know more development (subdivided lots and apartments) is happening in Portland where tree cover is lower than the average of other neighborhoods and where average income is lower. I live in one of these neighborhoods and the lack of tree cover both in lots and on the street (because of the lack of sidewalks) does impact the health and livability of the area. People who live here talk about the lack of tree cover frequently but cannot afford to choose to live in an area of portland with more trees. Our homes and yards are warmer and our streets are much less inviting, shaded, and safe.

The city will not be able to meet climate and sustainability goals in line with environmental justice requirements by letting developers lobby to get around existing tree code.

I am opposed to this tree code change and urge the governor to serve portland residents rather than developer interests.



**From:** [Madeleine Venturi](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov)  
**Subject:** HPAC draft proposal  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 1:43:51 PM

---

[You don't often get email from [khboldventure@yahoo.com](mailto:khboldventure@yahoo.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

To all Advisory Council Members:

As a voter in Portland, I would like to protest any proposal which would override tree codes in a city like Portland. Developers already remove too many trees in the city and then pay a fee or replant but neglect care of the trees they plant. It seems very short sighted in this day and age where we are trying to meet climate and canopy goals.

The tree codes were developed to ensure that Portland remains a livable city. Tree canopy is very important to ensuring cooler temperatures especially in lower income areas of the city. These codes have already been weakened to please developers. The state should be striving to plant more trees to protect its cities and citizens, not fewer.

There is a need for more housing, but rather than eliminating trees, I wonder whether all the empty apartments and the empty store fronts could be rezoned or repurposed to provide much needed housing. There are so many streets full of empty store fronts which also contribute to a feeling of emptiness and failure. Why not try to put these to use.

Finally, in this age of climate change, any attempt to erode state and local wetland protections would seem, to me, a folly. These areas are so valuable to the environment and wildlife that we declare we want to protect. Let us be true to our word and not cede again to financial gain over what is right for the citizens.

Thank you.  
Madeleine Venturi  
2215 N.Emerson Street  
Portland, OR 97217

**From:** [kyenne williams](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC hearing testimony  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 12:13:37 PM

---

You don't often get email from [kyenne@yahoo.com](mailto:kyenne@yahoo.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Council and Governor Kotek,

As a person who worked closely for 6+ years housing chronic houseless individuals and families, I recognize the urgent need for affordable housing. However I equally strongly know that housing doesn't need to come at the cost of the environment - these are not mutually exclusive goals. Specifically,

- eliminating environmental regulations pits climate change against unhoused folks in an unnecessary and unproductive battle. Concerns need to be addressed in an integrated manner - keep the city livable with increased tree (shade) canopy.
- the current COP tree code gives developers options - paying to remove trees when necessary is part of a developers budget, and leaving trees increases the value of the end product. Doing away with tree protections will not guarantee *affordable* housing (that's reductive insanity)
- current tree policy took years to develop and is the result of hundreds of peoples input, hard work, and commitment to a livable city - why aren't any of these folks on HPAC?
- a big part of Portland's livability, and desirableness as a destination, has to do with state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. In the face of climate and environmental destruction, throwing these regulations away is tantamount to the proverbial 'putting out a fire with gasoline'.

Please don't make things worse. Rethink and come up with a more inclusive approach.

Kyenne Williams

*"Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the wise; seek what they sought." --Matsuo Basho*

**From:** [Steve Smith](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC Hearing Testimony  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 5:56:28 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [steve.the.smith@gmail.com](mailto:steve.the.smith@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

To HPAC and Gov. Kotek,

Hundreds of us have spent decades working to preserve and grow our communities' tree canopies to improve livability, public health, wildlife habitat, and the climate. Please don't override our essential tree codes for the sake of developers' interests. I understand the urgent need for affordable housing, but cannot believe it requires the undoing of so much work for the public good. There must be other options.

Thank you for your time.

Steve Smith in the Ardenwald neighborhood (on the Portland/Milwaukie border)

**From:** [Lisa Eirene](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC hearing  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 8:02:30 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [lisa.eirene@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.eirene@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

I would like to have my voice heard at the hearing tomorrow.

I am deeply concerned about Governor Kotek's decision around removing the trees in order to build. We are faced with a climate crisis turning point and removing trees is misguided.

Yes, we need more housing, especially for low income people in Portland, but there are better ways to do this. There are also a lot of empty buildings in downtown Portland that could be converted for this purpose--without removing crucial trees that help our environment. Please reconsider.

--

**It isn't what we say or think that defines us, but what we do. ~Jane Austen**

**From:** [David Betts](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov)  
**Subject:** HPAC is flawed  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 10:08:10 AM

---

You don't often get email from pinnerb@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

**At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction**—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

David  
(He, him, his)

"Be water." - Bruce Lee

**From:** [TERESA MCGRATH](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** hpac overriding tree codes  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:40:56 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from bone1953@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

hello,

we value our environment, trees, and affordable housing, as climate changes is worsening daily....

i learned about green gases way back in the early 1970's going to junior college, transferring to a 4 yr college, and obtained my b.a. in liberal studies...

our tree code needs shoring up more than ever, as we see trees removed for development repeatedly, after demolishing a perfectly fine vintage home..

pls protect and strengthen our tree code....

thx

teresa mcgrath and nat kim

ne portland

-----

we support friends of trees

**—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction**—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

**—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

**From:** [Thomas Thacker](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#); [Thomas Thacker](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC proposal to override tree codes  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:16:14 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from potlatch23@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi HPAC,

I am a resident of Multnomah county and the city of Portland. We have worked for years to reforest the urban trees in Portland. I personally have worked for 23 years with friends of trees as a neighborhood coordinator planting trees in our city parking strips and yards.

I strongly oppose the HPAC proposal to override the tree codes of the city of portland. I am so frustrated that you would even entertain such a proposal at a time when our climate is warming and we need as many trees as possible in our urban areas.

Thomas Thacker  
6336 N Burrage Ave, Portland, OR 97217  
503-847-1539



**From:** [Dick Winn](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC Proposal  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:49:30 PM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from rjwinn3@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Governor Kotek,

We strongly object to the recent proposal from HPAC. We oppose their recommendations to override state and local wetlands\environmental zone protections. Please support the citizens of Oregon and not developers. We do not need to compound the climate crisis in the state of Oregon as a result of developer greed.

Richard and Kristen Winn  
17949 Kelok  
Lake Oswego, Oregon

**From:** [Amy Gmail](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC proposed tree law rollback  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 7:46:33 PM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from amymsawatzky@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Please reconsider rolling back the current tree codes for Oregon. I understand we need to provide more housing in the state however this should not be at odds with preserving and planting local trees. The trees in neighborhoods are essential for reducing temperatures, preventing erosion and flooding and cleaning air - this is especially critical in lower income neighborhoods which statistically show higher temperatures and more "hot zones" as well as higher pollution levels than other neighborhoods - both of which can be mitigated with mature trees. This is critical in an immediate fashion as deaths from high temperatures are increasing each year as are asthma related health issues - again particularly among low-income households and neighborhoods.

There are obvious impacts longer term to climate as well but I think the immediate benefits are reason enough - and it is not something reversible after the fact.

I currently live in an expensive neighborhood that was clear cut for development by Arbor Homes. 10 years after establishment, the landscape planted trees started destroying lawns and sidewalks because they are too water hungry and not intended for the narrow strips of sidewalk grass where they were planted. This is a scenario I know this developer repeated in many of their neighborhoods including the new ones across the wetlands from us 5 years ago - our trees are now getting cut down en masse and will be replaced in the spring by saplings due to cost. The same will happen in another 5 years in the neighborhood across the way. The noise and air pollution as well as the lack of shade I'm anticipating for the next decade is devastating - something our even wealthier neighbors to the west don't need to worry about because their developers preserved the local mature trees.

Developers are not to be trusted to plant for longevity or appropriate local resources (space/water requirements/soil requirements) as they need to make the most margins possible. The only way to ensure attractive neighborhoods (which EVERYONE deserves) are to protect existing trees which require fewer resources to thrive and provide so much for their populace. It's good for citizens but it's good for Oregon as well as it's part of making the state attractive to visitors and future residents.

Please consider protecting the trees from developers and development projects - it will pay off in many ways including monetarily.

-Amy Sawatzky

**From:** [Judy Steinberger](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC recommendations  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 9:01:56 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [jlsteinberger@gmail.com](mailto:jlsteinberger@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

To All Concerned,

I am writing to express my concern and dismay regarding the recommendations to override existing tree codes as a means of facilitating increased housing. This recommendation is counter to what we know mitigates the effects of climate change. Many cities around the world are actively increasing their tree canopy to provide respite from increasing temperatures. I walk a lot in Portland and have observed areas of new housing which are treeless. I have long been puzzled why our city would intentionally create heat deserts by having large expanses of concrete with no shading trees. Research has shown that neighborhoods lacking a tree canopy will experience an increase in summer temperatures by several degrees, creating a health risk for the inhabitants of that neighborhood. It would appear that the recommendations from HPAC serve the interests of builders at the expense of Oregon citizens. I ask that the tree codes remain in place, and that a comprehensive approach to increasing housing stock include both housing and environmental perspectives and requirements.

Than you

Judy Steinberger



September 19, 2023

## Re: Opposing HPAC recommendations regarding trees

Dear Governor Kotek:

We are facing multiple crises in our state. One is housing, but another is climate equity. We cannot sacrifice one for the other. People in our state are dying from the heat due to increased summer temperatures and drought. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

As a Landscape Designer, I help homeowners create spaces that are functional, beautiful and welcoming to people, pets, wildlife and the planet. Trees are the primary landscape element to help shape a space. Placed appropriately, trees can help cool a home in the summer or provide an evergreen barrier to protect a home from cold winter winds. Zoning codes allowing larger homes on smaller lots provide less space for trees that grow large enough at maturity to provide many health, climate and environmental benefits. Most housing designs for developed sites leave only enough space for upright, narrow trees that provide much less cooling shade and other health and environmental benefits than large-form trees do.

The value of an existing healthy large-form tree along a street or in a yard is irreplaceable. It helps reduce stormwater runoff by absorbing winter rains in its canopy and through its roots; It is a place of shelter for birds and other wildlife; It adds financial value to the property on which it sits; Studies have shown that trees reduce blood pressure, stress, depression, anxiety and can improve concentration levels of children with ADHD; Trees filter and purify the air and the water; They reduce the excessive heat island affect of urban streets, sidewalks and rooftops; Studies show that neighborhoods with trees are safer than those without trees. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

Oregon needs housing that is healthy, equitable and climate resilient, that won't be possible without intact trees and other green infrastructure such as wetlands and environmental zones. With smart design that leaves room for both housing and large trees, we can have healthier residents while growing our climate resilience. I urge the council to focus on solutions that advance housing equity and do not destroy the environment in doing so.

Sincerely,

*Adriana F Berry*

Adriana Berry, CPLD, FAPLD  
Plant Passion Design  
Portland, Oregon, 97229

To Governor Kotek and to the Housing Production Advisory Committee:  
19 September 2023  
From Fran Warren

This testimony is intended to provide new information to consider in your decision-making.

We have other states and localities who have attempted similar sweeping recommendations to alleviate housing shortages. If we're trying to address houselessness, the resulting homes must truly be for low income. We ought to ensure there are policies and specific targets in place to ensure we achieve the intended outcomes. We need to focus on what's in the public's best interest and what's advisable for economic prosperity. Some guidelines may be easier and cheaper for developers in the short term but the community pays in the long term. Everyone, especially mentally ill and low income families need access to greenspace. We must also take into consideration conflicting resources. The federal Inflation Reduction Act, through the US Forest Service, has just awarded \$58 million dollars to the state of Oregon for improving Environmental Equity and increasing Urban Tree Canopy. How would these funds and projects fare if Oregon removed all protections for trees and wetlands?

We have an incredibly complex problem to deal with and no one has delivered the perfect solution. Thank you to all who have worked to find solutions. I urge you to reconsider proposals that eliminate community involvement. The Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development's Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee has put together an excellent document, "Putting the People in Planning." One section, Giving Back and Paying Forward states, "Public participation strengthens the democratic process, helping people to realize their responsibilities to each other in creating a shared vision for the future." I urge the Committee to reconsider removing the local tree and wetlands protection policies as well as very limited community engagement. The removal of nature from built areas is counterproductive to reducing human suffering for individuals, families, and communities. It also contributes to climate impacts.

Looking at Executive Order No. 23-04:

*"Establishing a statewide housing production goal and housing production advisory council ...*

*WHEREAS, Oregon is experiencing a severe housing shortage, which increases housing costs and reduces housing affordability, is the primary cause of the homelessness crisis in the state of Oregon, hinders the State's economic prosperity, and prevents too many Oregonians from maintaining housing stability, which is the foundation to every family's health, well-being, and economic stability..."*

On the Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) website, it is stated that the *"..housing crisis is one of the largest emergencies we have ever faced in Oregon, and the human suffering it causes to individuals, families, and communities is unacceptable. We must act now to provide immediate relief to unsheltered Oregonians and prevent thousands of families from becoming homeless. One fundamental aspect to fixing this crisis is building more housing..."*

Our highest objective must be to reduce the human suffering of individuals, families and communities due to excruciatingly high housing costs and homelessness. Increasing the Buildable Land Inventory is only one part of this solution. We have many opportunities to remedy this complex problem and we can learn from others what is the most efficient and effective means to bring resolution. We must also focus on increasing affordable housing options, providing more assistance to renters, and investing in homelessness services. Additionally, we can create and enforce policies that protect renters from eviction and provide tax relief for homeowners. Finally, we must create a comprehensive plan to address systemic issues that lead to homelessness in the first place.

Example 1: Hawaii's recent reversal of the most controversial sections of their emergency housing proclamation.

On July 17, 2023, Hawaii Governor Josh Green announced a set of emergency measures in response to the state's deepening housing shortage. The "Emergency Proclamation Relating to Housing" was also intended to expedite housing development, creating a program to "Build Beyond Barriers." This program involves sweeping measures very similar to Executive Order 23-04 and the HPAC recommendations. Governor Green also acknowledged that access to housing for all is essential to the security, health, wellbeing and prosperity of our communities..” On September 15, 2023, after significant protest from many non-profit agencies, including a lawsuit, the Governor reversed many of the most drastic measures many of which were similar to the most recent recommendations of the HPAC. Let's think carefully about what steps we must take to ensure the efficient and effective construction of affordable housing including the community engagement process.

Example 2. Opportunities for creative zoning and the design of effective community housing

**A) Design competitions:**

-- The *Innovation in Affordable Housing Student Design and Planning Competition* is an exciting initiative from HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R). It invites teams of graduate students from multiple disciplines to submit plans for a real-life affordable housing design issue.

Student Design & Planning Competition | HUD USER

-- *City of Portland Low-cost House Design Competition*: This competition was held to promote alternative solutions to housing by coming up with affordable and sustainable units with limited size and budget to meet urgent demands for houses for urban disadvantaged residents.

B) *ZO Conversion Program*: a state program to encourage the remodeling of existing residences into a specific form of collaborative housing where 2-4 households can thrive, living together long-term, designed collaborative housing.

C) *Publicize and reward low-cost housing achievements*. There are several architectural and construction companies that are already building affordable housing communities. We could create a data repository of these successful programs with listings of developers and construction firms. Because these firms have proven their ability to deliver needed outcomes, that means they require less oversight from governmental agencies.

D) *Leverage optimal Community Plans*. The City of Beaverton has created a Community Plan for Cooper Mountain, which recommends the development of 5000 dwellings (when Metro only required 3700) while preserving the creeks, riparian areas, and uplands of Cooper Mountain. The Planning Team worked with the community to come up with creative zoning to protect the Significant Natural Resources and the creeks. This was done using concepts such as Residential Conservation zones. By creating community clusters with a wide range of housing units with an emphasis on affordable housing, the planning team identified opportunities for the optimal quality of life for all residents of the area.

There are several policies that could be adopted, including:

- Re-zoning options could include additional height for housing structures when an existing tree is retained (this lends itself to aesthetics, reduced temperatures and a smaller footprint).
- Awards and special incentives for developers who integrate existing nature into housing construction.
- Identifying clear and objective metrics to ensure at least minimal existing trees or Significant Natural Resource in the local area. This option should be foremost rather than mitigating to a distant location in the region. Use mapped Corridors and Connectivity to prioritize protections.

Example 3. Recognize that deforestation is irreversible and has many impacts on society.

Sussex County, Delaware, has no tree protections (contrary to its neighboring counties). In the past 25 years, this county's population has nearly doubled - to 250,000 from 130,000. The county legislators decided that increasing buildable land for development was paramount to county growth and that 55,000 additional homes would be needed. The result was the clearing of 43,000 acres of forestland. This also means the removal of trees which contribute to moderating local temperatures. They provide shade and help cool the environment through a process called evapotranspiration. Thus, the removal of so many trees potentially leads to measurable increased temperatures due to the loss of this cooling effect. Those mature trees are lost forever. New York City studied their urban tree canopy. The resultant data demonstrated that mature trees are 70+ times more effective at climate defense and other benefits than saplings. Once the trees are removed and replaced with housing in such a drastic manner, there is no way to reverse this course.

Example 4. Removing barriers to shelters and affordable housing:

Many of our homeless population suffer from physical and mental illness. The percentage of those experiencing chronic homelessness in Oregon who self-report mental illness is 44% (38% for physical disabilities, 37.5% for substance abuse disorders). A large percentage of unsheltered individuals have also spoken up to indicate they challenge the current rules of society. They do not plan to comply with curfews, sobriety tests or other conventional living designs. Oregon agencies need to identify what percentage of the homeless population falls into these categories. We need to have a plan for resolving these issues and a strategy to shelter these individuals and their families.

The creator of a tiny home village in New Mexico with costs of \$30 per month per unit has revealed they were forced to change community rules. This was after it was virtually vacant for a year. This multimillion-dollar tiny home village had struggled to get residents for some time. Waived fees and loosening requirements have now filled the multimillion-dollar property with tenants.

Mental Health Benefits of Nature - NAMI California

Nature's positive effects include studies on specific psychological conditions such as depression, anxiety and mood disorders. Access to nature has also been found to improve sleep and reduce stress, increase happiness and reduce negative emotions, promote positive social interactions and even help generate a sense of meaning in life. Being in green environments boosts various aspects of thinking, including attention, memory and creativity, in people with and without depression. "The evidence is very solid," says psychologist Marc Berman at the University of Chicago. From Harvard University research and published on NAMI website: Research in a growing scientific field called ecotherapy has shown a strong connection between time spent in nature and a reduction in stress, anxiety, and depression.

I was a key driver of creating a Horticultural Therapy Center for the Parry Center for Children – a 24/7 pediatric psychiatric facility. The campus has nature's serenity and healing all around and evidence-based healing. The children find that if they can nurture a plant to live they aren't completely dysfunctional, and those breakthroughs can lead to recovery. We need to ensure access to nature for now and for the future.

For the first time in decades, Oregon's population appears to be shrinking. There is complete agreement that we need to resolve our affordable housing problems. We do need to ensure that the thousands of new units are not at a cost too great for our communities.

I concur with the many letters advocating the preservation of trees and natural resources. I hope I have provided a few creative ideas on how we might work together to solve this problem for all our residents and businesses. This can be done without jeopardizing our economic engines through partnerships with our communities for innovative solutions.

Thank you for considering these suggestions for what we can do and not just what we can't do.

Fran Warren, Washington County resident

**From:** [Pika Valdini](#)  
**To:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC Tree Code  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 2:04:12 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from le.valdini@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek,

My name is Lark Valdini, I'm 13 years old, and I live in Portland, Oregon. I'm writing to you today to raise my (written) voice against HPAC's proposal to override the municipal tree laws. Governor Kotek, your Housing Production Advisory Council's proposal would hurt so many trees, and it goes against years of work to eventually stop the climate crisis in Oregon. I know that we need more affordable housing in Portland, but sacrificing the environment and the lives of all the animals who live in those trees is not the way to make it. I'm begging you to oppose the recommendations by HPAC that would break tree codes for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet, which would allow the death of trees that are less than 48 inches in diameter—that's almost all of our trees, and most of the urban trees in other places in the state! Portland's tree code is a little feeble as it is, and we can't let HPAC cut down all of Oregon's urban trees.

Please, Governor Kotek—I'm really scared of climate change and the effects it has on animals and plants and humans and everything. Recently I've barely been able to get to sleep at night, because I just start spiraling about climate change and death (mine and that of other animals), and then I just can't get to sleep for hours because I'm up thinking about it so much. Please don't let us Oregonians (animals and humans alike) down—stop HPAC's proposal to override tree codes for plots smaller than 6,000 feet that and cut down urban trees, because it would really, REALLY hurt humans, animals, and the environment in general.

Thank you so much for reading,  
Lark Valdini



Greetings,

First, thank you for your work in expanding affordable housing. It's an obvious injustice and need.

The false dichotomies surrounding affordable housing are troubling. Saying that climate mitigating architecture (i.e., trees and wetlands) is in opposition to rapid, affordable development is patently false, and is more a result of a lack of creativity than it is reality.

A building's temperature depends largely on [how it's built](#), like [painting the roofs white](#), and [its surroundings, including shade](#). [The City of Portland even surveyed developers](#) on barriers to building housing. Of the 23-25 options presented (unclear why "other" was listed three times), trees ranked 15th. Developers seem to agree that we can leave trees as they are and build housing. Considering 0.07% of street trees are greater than 48" in diameter in Portland, we *must* leave them as they are.

**Affordable housing needs an intersectional approach** to address all of the harms low-income communities are experiencing from housing inaccessibility and the climate crisis. **We can address the housing crisis and the climate crisis at the same time.**

As heat waves become more frequent and extreme (we just had our [hottest June in recorded history](#)), citizen deaths will continue to rise as they did in the June 2021 heat wave: "[The heat killed more people](#) than the Vanport Flood (15 people), a 2014 landslide that wiped out Oso, Wash. (41 people), or the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens (57 people)." PSU professor Vivek Shandas states, "Without direct mitigation of these places [in the city] that are often **15, 20 degrees hotter [due to lesser amounts of trees and more asphalt]**, we're going to continue seeing people die."

If we are to truly care for the **well being of our low-income neighbors**, we cannot provide affordable housing in the absence of trees. They may have a place to live, but that home may well have truly unlivable temperatures. Some sidewalks in the June 2021 heat wave were hot enough to give barefoot walkers third degree burns. Trees would help prevent that from happening again.

Lastly, [the top 10% of wealth](#) (in terms of people) are responsible for 50% of greenhouse gas emissions. Low-income communities are not only struggling to afford housing but also are not contributing nearly as much to the climate crisis that they are disproportionately suffering from. These same wealthy people drive up housing costs and contribute greatly to gentrification.

Please find **bold solutions** that are not oversimplified. Thank you for your time and important work. We need it.

Tyler Gilmore  
4616 SE Milwaukie Ave, #28  
Portland, OR 97202

**From:** [Jesse Batty](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Hpac urban trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 10:11:32 AM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from jessebattyman@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Hello

I recognize the need for affordable housing but housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive. I oppose hpac recommendations which would erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections as well as tree codes. Thanks for your time.

Jesse batty

Sent from my iPhone



*The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.*

September 20, 2023

To: [Deb Flagan, Chair](#), and [Members of the Land Availability Work Group](#)

Re: **Wetlands Recommendations A & B – OPPOSE with Comments**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon has studied water issues since the 1960s, adopting positions in 1965, 1977, 1985 and, after multi-year studies (Water in Oregon-Not a Drop to Waste [Part 1](#) and Issues and Perspectives [Part 2](#)), consolidated positions on water quality and quantity in 2011.

*The League...believes that water is a resource that should be managed for the benefit of the public and as sustainable habitat for all life forms. The League supports Oregon state policies and statutes...the improvement of water quality. The League believes that the interdependence of land use planning and water planning must be recognized and required at all levels of government. The League opposes degradation of all of Oregon's surface and ground water.*

**Wetlands Recommendation A:** As we understand it, this recommendation, **Part 1**, focuses on wetland mitigation banks. We do support an increase in wetland banks, but the goal of this recommendation is excessive as well as overly expensive. **It is also important to acknowledge that the land for new wetlands banks currently has another use—often as agricultural lands.** We recommend focusing on a few specific areas in Oregon where the banks can free up land for housing development while also protecting the lands from future flooding.

The League has worked to address this important issue. In 2019, we supported [HB 2438 A](#), which would have provided monies for Cascades West Council of Governments to work on a mitigation bank—in that case related to industrial lands, but could have been for housing as well. The bill was not funded and did not pass. Funding will continue to be a challenge.

We do not support **Recommendation A, Part 2**, that would expand the use of fees in lieu of protecting wetlands. The statement that replacing or enhancing FUNCTION is laudable, but that determination might take a great deal of research. Wetlands protect from flooding, improve water quality as well as providing habitat for fish and fowl. While we believe the In-Lieu-Fee and Payment-in-Lieu programs have a place in the overall program, it should be more of a last resort rather than an easy way to address wetlands challenges.

In 2023, the League supported the Dept. of State Lands (DSL) budget requests in [HB 5037](#), including **POP 104 to increase Other Funds expenditure limitation by \$957,147 and authorize the establishment of the following five positions (4.28 FTE) in the removal/fill program.** With the increased focus on housing and on new industrial lands, it will be important for the agency to help determine which wetlands need to be set aside and not counted as “developable” lands. We **supported POP 109 to carry forward EPA grant funding for the removal/fill program.**

We supported **POP 106** *that provides one-time Other Funds expenditure limitation of \$4,011,699 and authorizes the establishment of one limited duration project management position (1.00 FTE) to complete the work on the new permitting and information system, known as the Oregon Water and Land Stewardship system.* It is expected to be completed by June of 2024. Their budget as passed included these Policy Option Packages.

**We do NOT support Parts 3-6; however, we DO support Part 7 to remove wetlands from Buildable Lands Inventories since these lands should NOT be built upon.** Excluding those lands means a presumption that they WILL NOT be built upon—developers can't have it both ways. The League has consistently argued this point. It will be necessary for local jurisdictions, along with DSL, to increase mapping of wetlands so the exclusions are as accurate as possible. This will take investment at the local and state level.

**Wetlands Recommendation B:** **We do NOT support any recommendation that would change the definition of Oregon's wetlands.** *Oregon recognizes the role of wetlands in water quality and in flood management among other values. The waters of the state are an important public asset. Management of activities in these waters must be done carefully and with full application of state and federal regulations.*

Remember the [Flooding of Vanport](#)? Or the perennial flooding of Johnson Creek in the Portland area? Or flooding in Pendleton or Tillamook? **No one, and certainly not our most vulnerable Oregonians, should have homes placed in areas that may flood.** We urge you to oppose or amend these recommendations to protect Oregon's wetlands while finding reasonable ways to assure Oregon can provide housing for ALL.

As with many of the recommendations from the Housing Production Advisory Council, the cost to implement these recommendations is significant. The League has, over many years, continued to support increased funding for many of the items now listed as recommendations, often with few voices from the development community. **We suggest that the full Council consider the cost of many of the recommendations and prioritize those that have the most broad-based support and will increase housing units, especially for Oregonians with 60% AMI or less, and that will not violate Oregon's statutes and rules.**

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.



Rebecca Gladstone  
Co-President LWVOR



Peggy Lynch  
Natural Resources Coordinator

Cc: [HPAC.Gov@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.Gov@oregon.gov), Housing Production Advisory Council  
[Geoff Huntington](#), Governor's Senior Natural Resources Advisor  
[Karin Power](#), Governor's Natural Resources and Climate Advisor  
[Brenda Bateman](#), Dept. of Land Conservation and Development Director  
[Vicki Walker](#), Dept. of State Lands Director

Lane County  
Audubon  
Society



PO Box 5086, Eugene OR 97405  
541-485-BIRD (2473)  
laneaudubon.org

Dear Housing Production Advisory Council and Governor Kotek,

I am writing on behalf of the Lane County Audubon Society to strongly object to the recent proposal from the HPAC that would essentially override protective tree codes. Scientific data has demonstrated the importance of urban trees. Municipalities across the nation have invested time and resources toward protecting and restoring tree cover. We must not roll backwards endangering the livability of Oregon.

Trees are essential to the health of communities both in the short term through providing cooling in urban areas and the long term through their role in climate change mitigation. This cannot be overlooked as the latest statistics show heat waves are the number-one weather-related cause of death in the U.S. and heatwaves are increasing in both frequency and severity. In addition, trees are an essential component in maintaining urban biodiversity (including birds and pollinators) which has been shown to have positive effects on residents. Residents exposed to trees and to greater biodiversity have healthier immune systems, lower rates of asthma and other diseases, and a greater sense of well-being.

We support efforts to make more affordable housing available to people but believe it should and can be done in a way that does not negatively impact their health, both currently and in the future. Please reconsider efforts to overturn local climate and tree policies. We believe that these proposals are a reckless, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction at the expense of the people who live there and all Oregonians.

Thank you,  
Debbie Schlenoff, Ph.D.  
Conservation Chair  
Lane County Audubon Society

**From:** [spencer mary](#)  
**To:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#); [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** I oppose overriding local tree codes + wetland protection zones  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:10:23 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from spencermmary@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I of course recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, but housing and protecting the environment should not be mutually exclusive. Please consider our current + ongoing climate crisis, and do not override policies + regulations that have been benefitting Portlanders + keeping our city beautiful + green. Surely there are other ways to incentivize developers that don't involve sacrificing our shade canopy, wildlife habitats, etc.

**From:** [Hava Dennenberg](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** IMMEDIATE NO to tree rollback  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 8:44:47 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from havalee18@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**Governor Kotek's Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC)** is currently planning to bring forward recommendations that include the ***overriding of tree codes*** for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet, which will explicitly allow clear cutting of trees under 48" diameter, which includes the vast majority of urban trees. This recommendation stands in stark contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to increase tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities. [Read more here.](#)

## **HPAC has a hearing on Friday, September 29th where this facet of their proposal will be discussed.**

We recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, but housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive. Friends of Trees, the Shade Equity Coalition (we're a member!), and many other environmental organizations around the state believe the proposal is unnecessarily pitting the housing and climate emergencies against one another. Unfortunately, this advisory body in question does not have a representative from the environmental justice sector to speak to shade equity, climate change, and the myriad of benefits urban trees provide to Oregonians. ***This is our chance to voice our concerns.***

## **HOW TO TESTIFY**

Since it is difficult to testify at the hearing itself, please make sure to submit written testimony to: [HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov) and copy [Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov).

## **Suggested Talking Points from Trees for Life Oregon**

**—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—**and a sure way to guarantee

that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

**—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.



**From:** [Robin](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Keep our tree canopy!  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:03:02 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from robinmwa@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek,

I voted for you, because I believed that you would bring a consciousness of climate change, racial and ethnic diversity, as well as low-income housing. However, I have just heard from Friends of Trees that you want to sacrifice trees in order to allow more development. This is SOOOO misguided! We NEED our trees, especially at this time of climate crisis. We must plant trees in MORE places, not take them out to allow more housing.

I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. These codes were created to ensure Oregon remains the lovely place we care about.

For years, developers have looked for ways to sabotage our standards of living by gobbling up agricultural land and doing lot line adjustments (among other underhanded things); we cannot allow them to have carte blanche!

I do not want to see state and local wetland and environmental zone protections eroded; we do need low income housing and I am all for it. How about changing the regulations to force developers to build smaller houses? Or require them to build a certain amount of low-income housing for every "luxury" development they put up?

We need to recognize that we are in a climate crisis, which was supposedly your approach; I believe you need to include other voices in your circle, to give you new advice and encouragement. We do need to all work together to make this transition towards a safer world.

Thank you,  
Robin Winfree-Andrew  
2740 Adams St.  
Eugene, OR 97405  
541-343-1557

**From:** [Rick Weber](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Keep Portlands Tree Code Intact  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:44:24 PM

---

You don't often get email from rweber37@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Housing Production Advisory Committee (HPAC) and Governor Kotek,

I strongly object to proposals by HPAC to loosen or abandon regulations under Portland's Title 11 Tree Code in an effort to promote housing construction. Trees, especially large trees, are critical assets for our city in a world of accelerating climate change and biodiversity loss. Per a 2022 study by city of Portland Parks and Recreation division, tree canopy has actually shrunk in Portland from 30.7% to 29.8% in the 5-year span from 2015-2020 – the equivalent of 823 acres, with 64% of this loss in residential areas. Further weakening tree protections under Title 11 will only accelerate this loss.

With science informing us that climate change is an existential threat which must be actively addressed within a shrinking window of time, allowing the further depletion of Portland's precious tree canopy is misguided and wrong. Portland has had an ongoing goal for over 15 years now to increase tree canopy to 33.3%... we urgently need to increase tree canopy, not remove it. Please do not weaken Portland's Title 11 Tree Code.

Regards,

Richard Weber  
Portland, Oregon

**From:** [Spencer Ayala](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Keep the tree codes  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 6:15:57 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from spencerayala91@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

I was born in Portland, and will forever live in Oregon. I'm asking you to not repeal the tree codes.

I understand that we need housing - but I remember an Oregon that was more radical in its thinking and could figure out how to keep the trees and provide for its residents.

At a time when climate change is no longer knocking - but burst through our doors, we need to keep our tree canopy.

Don't let developers find shortcuts that hurt us in the long run. Keep our state safe and green for my kid, and my kids kids.

Thank you.  
Spencer Ayala

To: Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC)  
From: LIUNA Local 737 & Oregon & Southern Idaho District Council of Laborers  
Subject: HPAC's workforce recommendations

LIUNA Local 737 and the Oregon & Southern Idaho District Council of Laborers believe that the workforce recommendations<sup>1</sup> from the Housing Production Advisory Council are poorly thought out and have the potential to cause great harm to construction workers in Oregon. Additionally, we believe that these goals are antithetical to both reaching housing production goals and continued workforce development in Oregon. We urge Governor Kotek to reject these recommendations from HPAC, which amount to an assault on decades of proven workforce development strategies that keep workers safe, supported, and well-trained.

Oregon faces a fundamental choice with regard to addressing our affordable housing challenge: will the state adopt a high road approach that centers supporting workers *as a means to solve* this crisis, or will the state instead look to undermine proven construction industry standards and, by extension, make workers the scapegoats of the housing crisis? We believe that any housing policy that seeks to lower standards for workers will be fundamentally self-defeating, putting housing further out of reach for working people.

We wish to emphasize the following key points on affordable housing policy in Oregon:

- There is not a construction workforce shortage. Rather, there is a dearth of workers who refuse to work for substandard wages because they simply cannot support themselves and their families on poverty wages.
- Currently, affordable housing projects are generally *exempt* from prevailing wage requirements; this sector is inherently part of lowering area standard wages for construction workers. Today's affordable housing production is all too often characterized by persistently low wages that do not support economic mobility or a viable pathway for workers into the middle class.
- There are no statewide apprenticeship standards on projects that receive public funding for affordable housing. Recommendations to loosen foundational worker training standards under the policy development auspices of encouraging affordable housing production amounts to an attack on apprenticeship training standards *across all sectors* of the construction industry and is also fundamentally hypocritical, as this sector does not contribute to the registered apprenticeship model of workforce development.
- The Oregon State Apprenticeship and Training Council (OSATC) exists under the Bureau of Labor and Industries. This has long been the established governing and policy body for registered apprenticeship programs in our state that approves new apprenticeship committees, programs, and policies. This forum is the proper place to discuss any potential changes to state registered apprenticeship programs.

---

1

[https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policies/Documents/Workforce%20Shortages\\_Apprenticeship%20Recommendation.pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policies/Documents/Workforce%20Shortages_Apprenticeship%20Recommendation.pdf)

- HPAC has no sitting representatives from the State Apprenticeship and Training Council, labor unions and/or any labor-management apprenticeship programs. For HPAC to issue recommendations without representation and direct input from construction trades stakeholders reflects an insufficient process that is not incorporating the subject matter expertise of representatives that have direct experience operating long-standing state registered apprenticeship training programs.
- The proposal to move to a 4:1 apprentice to journeyworker ratio is wildly out of step. This recommendation would both present a tremendous safety risk to all workers on job sites, but will also result in a diminished quality of crucial on-the-job training for all apprentices.

We are further alarmed that the recommendations by HPAC note that many of the proposed changes will need to be accomplished by-way of legislative action. LIUNA will stand in resolute opposition to any potential proposals that would undermine vital construction workforce training and apprenticeship standards during any future legislative session.

In the spirit of constructive policymaking, LIUNA respectfully urges the following high road construction workforce concepts for consideration as this process continues moving forward:

- Eliminate the carveout from prevailing wage standards for affordable housing projects. Adopting these community wage standards—which are the norm across public projects—will attract workers to these projects. Further, it will aid in putting housing further within reach for construction workers.
- Adopt statewide apprenticeship standards for publicly-funded affordable housing projects. By mandating apprenticeship utilization—which is the norm across publicly funded state projects and private renewable energy projects—affordable housing projects can contribute to continued workforce development and training, rather than being a sector that is exempted from standards.<sup>2</sup>

LIUNA is willing and fully prepared to collaborate with the Governor's office in a future legislative session to advance high road workforce standards that encompass housing production in our state going forward.

We look forward to potential future opportunities for continuing discussions on these vital issues and thank you for your consideration of these comments.

---

<sup>2</sup> During the 2022 legislative session, ODOT and HECC had their exemptions from existing state apprenticeship utilization standards removed. 15% apprenticeship utilization on publicly funded projects is now the norm in Oregon.

**From:** [Laura Gadzala](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 7:44:05 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from beach.glass@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello!

I appreciate that we have a critical housing shortage in Oregon, and Portland in particular. However, I live in Portland, which makes it particularly difficult to believe that the only lots available to build on are those with trees. This smacks of sucking up to business interests at the expense of what actually makes Oregon such a great place to live: the outdoors.

I appreciate that we have aggressive climate goals, and this path seems designed to prevent us from achieving them. Tree protections are not what is preventing developers from creating affordable housing. Developers have been paying tree removal fees like any other business expense for years, making it obvious that the profits they get in return for larger unit outweigh the fees. Also, fun fact: not having to pay a tree removal fee doesn't compel a developer to build affordable housing. It just means they'll have slightly larger profit margin on whatever condo they build.

Our tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place. Despite this, the Portland tree code is pretty weak because it was SO HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY DEVELOPERS. THEY ALREADY GOT THEIR WAY.

I oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Focus instead on developing blighted land that people have been sitting on for years.

Laura Gadzala

**From:** [Chris Lazarus](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** No development at the cost of cutting down urban trees!  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 7:40:26 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [chrislazarus0505@gmail.com](mailto:chrislazarus0505@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal to allow cutting street trees in order to build more housing.

***At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a short-sighted way to speed up housing construction***—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals. Trees keep cities/suburbs more livable!! they cool the surrounding area and provide shade in otherwise hardscaped areas.

**Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. **Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.**

**I am opposed to HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**I am also strongly opposed to HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environmental regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a **climate crisis**, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Note to Governor Kotek - I phoned for you four times before last year's election - I supported you because you have a strong environmental record - do not trash that!

please do not sacrifice trees in the name of affordable housing - we can have both!

Chris Lazarus  
7521 N Leavitt Ave Portland OR 97203

**From:** [Lori Buff](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Objection to HPAC Proposal  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 11:02:50 AM

---

You don't often get email from lorinatl@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern,

I strongly object to the recent proposal from the HPAC that would essentially override tree codes that took many people and many years to instigate. The HPAC's recommendations would greatly restrict local governments from maintaining urban forest canopy while increasing housing density, and stands in sharp contrast to work taking place throughout the nation to increase and maintain urban tree cover to meet projected climate realities.

I also oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Developers have wanted to eliminate them for years, even though such changes will definitely impact ecosystems and biodiversity.

The housing crisis will not be solved by increasing the problem of climate change while making developers rich.

Thank you,  
Lori Buff



**From:** [Susan Dornfeld](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Opposing HPAC proposal re urban trees and wetlands protection  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 1:27:45 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from susandornfeld6005@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I strongly object to the recent proposal from the HPAC that would essentially override tree codes that were instigated after many years of work. The HPAC's recommendations would greatly restrict local governments from maintaining urban forest, while increasing housing density. The HPAC's recommendations stand in sharp contrast to work taking place throughout the nation to increase and maintain urban tree cover to mitigate climate change.

I oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Developers have wanted to eliminate them for years, even though such changes will negatively impact ecosystems and biodiversity.

At this time of climate crisis, eliminating or weakening climate and tree-related regulations is a reckless, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction at the expense of state and urban area plans to meet climate and canopy goals.

Many factors affect developers' ability to quickly build more housing, but tree protections are hardly an issue. For example, Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying a fee to remove trees instead of preserving them. Such fees are just another business expense and allows developers to build more profitable units or large single homes whose prices more than cover any tree-removal fees. Eliminating tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.

Tree codes were created to make sure that Oregon remains a livable place. The Portland tree code was actually strongly influenced by developers and is not as strong as it ought to be.

A 2022 study by Portland's Urban Forestry team found that the city's urban forest has dwindled since 2015, despite strengthening tree protections that year.

HPAC's attempt to overturn local climate and tree policies strikes many Oregonians as being undemocratic and unethical.

I strongly urge you to reject the HPAC proposal and to include on your advisory council an equal number of forest and climate justice representatives who will consider both the housing crisis and the climate crisis.

Sincerely,

Susan Dornfeld

Corvallis, Oregon

**From:** [Kimberly Christiansen](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to HPAC override of tree codes  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:20:11 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from kimchristiansen789@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I just read a disappointing and alarming email from Friends of Trees outlining the HPAC plan to recommend overriding tree codes for plots smaller than 6,000 feet, with support from Governor Kotek. I am strongly against such a recommendation for several reasons:

**This recommendation stands in stark contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to increase tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities and does not reflect Portland's values.**

**It essentially overrides municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**It erodes state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** We must consider the impact the loss of trees will have on birds and other animals that share space with people. Loss of habitat is a huge problem and must be addressed in the context of this plan.

**It proposes to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

**It also conflicts with the Climate Investment Plan just passed by the Portland City Council, specifically** "Growing an equitable tree canopy to support the City's 2035 goals."

Please do not set Oregon and Portland back in the fight to mitigate climate change and livability while preserving the trees that make this place so special. Don't compromise nature and clean air for the sake of new development! This is NOT what Portland or Oregon stands for.

Please reconsider this recommendation!  
Sincerely,  
Kim Christiansen Oregon City,

September 29, 2023

Re: Opposing HPAC recommendations regarding trees

Dear Governor Kotek:

We are facing multiple crises in our state. One is housing, but another is climate equity. We cannot sacrifice one for the other. People in our state are dying from the heat due to increased summer temperatures and drought. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

As a landscape architect in Portland, I help homeowners, landowners, and developers create spaces that are functional, beautiful and welcoming to people, pets, wildlife and the planet. Trees are the primary landscape element to help shape a space. Placed appropriately, trees can help cool a home in the summer or provide an evergreen barrier to protect a home from cold winter winds. Zoning codes allowing larger homes on smaller lots provide less space for trees that grow large enough at maturity to provide many health, climate and environmental benefits. Most housing designs for developed sites leave only enough space for upright, narrow trees that provide much less cooling shade and other health and environmental benefits than large-form trees do.

The value of an existing healthy large-form tree along a street or in a yard is irreplaceable. It helps reduce stormwater runoff by absorbing winter rains in its canopy and through its roots; It is a place of shelter for birds and other wildlife; It adds financial value to the property on which it sits; Studies have shown that trees reduce blood pressure, stress, depression, anxiety and can improve concentration levels of children with ADHD; Trees filter and purify the air and the water; They reduce the excessive heat island affect of urban streets, sidewalks and rooftops; Studies show that neighborhoods with trees are safer than those without trees. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

Oregon needs housing that is healthy, equitable and climate resilient, that won't be possible without intact trees and other green infrastructure such as wetlands and environmental zones. With smart design that leaves room for both housing and large trees, we can have healthier residents while growing our climate resilience. I urge the council to focus on solutions that advance housing equity and do not destroy the environment in doing so.

Sincerely,

Connie Migliazzo  
Prato LLC  
Portland, OR

Cc:

Housing Production Advisory Council

Taylor Smiley Wolfe, Housing and Homelessness Initiative Director, Governor's Office

Karin Power, Natural Resource and Climate Policy Advisor, Governor's Office

Matt Tschabold, Sr. Housing Policy Advisor, Governor's Office

Geoff Huntington, Sr. Natural Resources Advisor, Governor's Office

Dan Ryan, Portland City Commissioner

Carmen Rubio, Portland City Commissioner  
Rep. Rob Nosse  
Senator Kathleen Taylor  
Jenn Cairo, Portland City Forester  
Brian Landoe, Portland Parks & Recreation/Urban Forestry  
Donald Oliverira, Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability  
Adena Long, Portland Parks & Recreation  
Rebecca Esau, Portland Bureau of Development Services

**From:** [Krista Reynolds](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to HPAC's proposal to override municipal tree codes  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:07:36 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [krismarie33@gmail.com](mailto:krismarie33@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express concern about HPAC's recommendations regarding trees on housing plots.

I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

I also oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Such changes will certainly impact trees.

At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

Please develop housing solutions that protect trees and our environment and also provide affordable, attractive places for Oregon residents.

Thank you,  
Krista Reynolds  
6521 Palomino Way  
West Linn 97068

**From:** [Kate King](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to Overriding of Tree Codes  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 9:07:21 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from orangefluff20@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—**and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

**—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

I love trees. I live in a city. Please do not cut down our city trees!

-Kate King

503-983-5753

[orangefluff20@gmail.com](mailto:orangefluff20@gmail.com)

**From:** [MICHAEL NEWSOM](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to Tree Removal For Housing Development  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 7:51:21 AM

---

You don't often get email from manewsom@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello:

I am writing to oppose a proposal to remove trees to accommodate more housing. The two needs, trees for climate mitigation, air quality and beauty, and housing for obvious human needs, should not be mutually exclusive.

Housing development is critical in Oregon's urban areas. Unsheltered people have suffered unfairly as housing prices have soared making housing unaffordable.

Houseless people living on the streets in poor and unsafe sanitary conditions also degrade communities. But the urban renewal history in this country has shown us that merely providing affordable housing without consideration of the overall housing environment led to urban decay. Housing is more than brick and mortar, or wood and plaster.

Greenery is a major factor in the provision of a livable environment. Oregonians have a long pro-environmental history that acknowledges the crucial role that trees play both in the state's economy and its livability. Trees should not be seen as a barrier to housing development. Instead trees should be viewed as one factor of housing livability that prevents urban decay.

Thanks for your consideration,

Michael Newsom

1015 NE Dean Street

Portland, OR 97211

[manewsom@comcast.net](mailto:manewsom@comcast.net)

503-432-6468



**From:** [melonie parrish](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** OPPOSITION TO UGB rezoning  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 19, 2023 10:50:34 AM

---

You don't often get email from mhcoates@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Committee and Governer Kotek,

I write to you as a 16 year resident of Klamath Falls, Oregon. I support supporting local cities and counties to build more housing in already existing residential areas and converting business zoned areas to mixed residential/business areas. However, I am opposed to "loosening the UGB" standards to build more housing for five reasons.

1. THERE IS NO NEED TO EXPAND UGB

Many others from urban areas have already submitted public comment regarding the availability of land WITHIN their UGBs and have stated that they do NOT see a need to grow their cities on the edges of their existing boundaries. The people that know their cities best, want the focus to be on the land already inside their UGB. Help them rebuild their city centers, add multiunit housing to corner lots, be creative, each city will have different needs. Please add more housing to areas where there is already water, sewer, power, sidewalks, streets, transit in place.

In Klamath County, in particular, there is ample supply of empty lots, empty buildings in our downtown areas. In Klamath County we definitely need MORE housing INSIDE the UGB. We need more housing near the Basin Transit System stops, more housing along South Sixth Street, more housing within walkable distance to grocery stores, pharmacies and places of employment.

2. EXPANSION OF UGB expands housing into fireprone areas

In most areas of Oregon, expansion of cities means expanding into hills and wooded areas. Haven't we seen already how detrimental urban wildland interfaces work out in real life? Did we not learn enough from 2020 and every single fire season? We need to focus on building fire resilient city boundaries. Change the building code to require fire resistant roofs, brush and tree thinning on all lots. You can't just add houses to hills without ensuring adequate timely fire response, adequate water supplies and adequate road systems.

3. POPULATION DECLINE

The overall US population is declining and our birth rate is declining.

Our Oregon birth rate is down 10 % in the past decade. People are leaving Oregon. People are aging and in the next decade the largest generation "Baby Boomers" will begin to pass on, move from single housing to nursing homes, and downsize their housing needs. Their houses will be added to the housing supply.

Look at the big picture.

#### 4. CONTRADICTORY GOALS

Oregon wants to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 45 % by 2030 via EO 20-04. If this is our overarching goal as a state, how could you possibly support expanding UGB to build housing FAR from city centers? Housing units that will then require cars to drive to jobs? How does this help achieve the goals for carbon reduction goals for 2030, 2035 and 2050?

#### 5. EXISTING UNOCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS

Before planning to build 36,000 units, did you find out how many existing housing units are currently uninhabited? In Klamath Falls along, there are hundreds of houses that pay property taxes but are not in use as they do not have current water/sewer service. These houses that sit EMPTY while the HPAC wants to build more unnecessary houses in the wrong locations. The issue is not really lack of housing units, it's that too many housing units are not available for meaningful use.

Sincerely,

Melonie Parrish  
Klamath Falls, Oregon

**From:** [Cecilia Haas](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Our Beautiful city of Portland Oregon  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:11:26 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from whitehaas@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I can't begin to understand what is happening with Potrland's growing pains. This city was once at the forefront of innovative thinking. With the urban growth boundary, miles of bike lanes, beautiful old houses being protected and restored, and our beautiful trees. All of these things are what made Portland a city where people wanted to live. I realize there is a housing crisis, but I also drive by empty buildings and houses everyday. Why aren't these buildings being remodeled to create more housing? Why aren't the owners of empty homes being taxed for non-use?

At a time when Portland is regularly seeing triple digit heat waves for extended periods are the powers that be deciding that we should cut down more trees? Climate change is happening. Throwing tree related regulations out the window is not the answer. If you create an environment that is inhospitable for people to comfortably live, they will not be filling all of those buildings that you just built, they will just move to a better city. Why can't we be at the forefront of urban planning again? Why can't the powers that be think smarter and not take the easy way out?

We oppose HPAC's proposal to override municipal tree codes, we oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections, and we oppose you Governor Kotek and your short-sided vision and your continued appeasement of greedy developers.

Andy and Cecilia Haas

**From:** [MATTHEW SHIPKEY](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Our tree canopy  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 7:11:45 PM

---

You don't often get email from mshipkey@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi,

At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. For example, Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing. Studies show this not to be the case.

I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

Thanks for your consideration,  
Matt Shipkey

**From:** [Andrew Land](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Personal testimony in response to HPAC proposal to override Tree Codes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 12:29:16 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from andrewland212@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern:

It was deeply disturbing to hear of the proposal on the part of Gov. Kotek's HPAC that tree codes be overridden to hasten development. I have witnessed in recent years living in Portland - where tree canopy has declined in recent years due to rampant development - the removal of significant green infrastructure replaced by far inferior species that are not climate resilient. I have been an **ISA certified arborist for over a decade**, and have been shocked to see The City's Urban Forestry division turn a blind eye to developers planting maples, flowering pears, and other species that are not on the approved street tree planting lists, are not drought tolerant or pest/disease-resistant, and therefore not what should be considered "trees for climate change". To imagine that regress being expanded statewide would be both heart-breaking and could have devastating results.

We are in the face of a climate crisis as well as a housing crisis, so pitting one against the other would be a tragic mistake. Trees cool the air, provide the oxygen we breathe, could have prevented needless loss of human life during the heat events of the summer of 2021, and are the primary green infrastructure needed to filter our air and water of toxins. Moreover, the essence of environmental injustice is tree removal around low-income housing. That has resulted in higher rates of respiratory and cardiac ailments, lower birth rates, and those low birth rates correlate to life expectancy - very profound implications indeed. To suggest relaxing protections around tree removal to spur development of hopefully affordable housing would tragically send exactly the wrong message. We must care for our marginalized communities **more**, not less.

Public servants took years to enact these codes, and even despite flaws they are among the primary protections tax payers have against the environmental toxins trees help address. If anything, we should be **strengthening** Oregon's tree codes, so it's deeply disturbing to see the suggestion to abandon them at all.

**I strongly oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Developers' interests and needs being put before those of citizens will certainly result in a strong push for a change of administration. The choice is yours. Do the right thing and reconsider this misguided and short-sighted suggestion, or fail Oregonians and incite a massive public movement to replace Kotek's administration with one that makes science-based decisions to protect the health of Oregonians statewide.

Sincerely,

Andrew Land  
228 N Shaver Street  
Portland, OR 97227

**From:** [Michael Hill](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Please believe the argument(s) for Oregon's urban trees!  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:43:47 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from wheat39@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I think it's a great idea to share with you this powerful argument FOR trees and Urban Trees!

### Friends of Trees





# Save Our State's Urban Trees from Tree Code Rollback

**Governor Kotek's HPAC proposes overriding tree codes in favor of development.**

**Governor Kotek's Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC)** is currently planning to bring forward recommendations that include the ***overriding of tree codes*** for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet, which will explicitly allow clear cutting of trees under 48" diameter, which includes the vast majority of urban trees. **This recommendation stands in stark contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to increase tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities.**

[Read more here.](#)

**HPAC has a hearing on Friday, September 29th where this facet of their proposal will be discussed.**

**We recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, but housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive.** Friends of Trees, the Shade Equity Coalition (we're a member!), and many other environmental organizations around the state believe the proposal is unnecessarily pitting the housing and climate emergencies against one another. Unfortunately, this advisory body in question does not have a representative from the environmental justice sector to speak to shade equity, climate change, and the myriad of benefits urban trees provide to Oregonians. ***This is our chance to voice our concerns.***

## HOW TO TESTIFY

Since it is difficult to testify at the hearing itself, please make sure to submit written testimony to: [HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov) and copy [Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov).

## Suggested Talking Points from [Trees for Life Oregon](#)

**—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—**and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. **Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.**

**—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly



impact trees.

—**Governor Kotek’s HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC’s members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

**We hope you'll take this opportunity to let your voice be heard.**

Thank you for your help,



Yashar Vasef  
Executive Director



Friends of Trees inspires people to improve the world around them through a simple solution: Planting Trees. Together.

(503) 282-8846: Portland office  
(541) 632-3683: Eugene office

[friendsoftrees.org](http://friendsoftrees.org)  
[friendsoftrees.org/eugene](http://friendsoftrees.org/eugene)



**From:** [Juliette Harding](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** please DO NOT override our existing tree codes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 5:41:01 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from oeyharding@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Greetings -

I understand that Governor Kotek's Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) is currently planning to bring forward recommendations that include the **overriding of tree codes** for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet, which will explicitly allow clear cutting of trees under 48" diameter, which includes the vast majority of urban trees.

I am a resident of Portland and I **strongly oppose HPAC's proposal** to override municipal tree codes. I also oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Please keep our tree regulations in place. Our tree canopy, which is so vital to climate resilience, does not need to be sacrificed in order to supply affordable housing. The Portland tree code was strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is. And doing away with tree protections will NOT guarantee that developers build more affordable housing.

At a time of climate crisis, weakening climate- and tree-related regulations is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and will only serve to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

Thank you,

Juliette Harding  
5561 SE Oak St.  
Portland, OR 97215

**From:** [Marian Gallagher](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Please do not override the tree code  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 8:04:03 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from marian.gallagher@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I understand that the HPAC has an ambitious schedule for an urgent need.

It is true that Oregon needs to create more affordable housing, but we also need to take urgent steps to avert the climate crisis we are already starting to suffer from. This includes the people who will live in the affordable housing you are building. It is well known that more trees, not fewer, is one of the best ways to combat climate change. At the same time, trees greatly improve the well-being of people who are fortunate enough to live in close proximity to them.

Your recommendations to override the tree code are tone deaf and short-sighted. You may save a few days here and there in construction schedules (and then again, maybe you won't), but you will lose so much more. And what will be the cost several years from now (or sooner) when it becomes apparent that the trees you remove really should be replaced?

The tree codes are the result of many thoughtful discussions and negotiations among many stakeholders and should not be discarded in this manner.

I will be paying close attention to the HPAC's next steps.

Marian Gallagher  
Portland, OR

**From:** [Brittany Neighbours](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Please do not override urban tree codes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 11:53:35 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from brittanyneighbours@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to you to pledge my support for keeping our urban tree codes in Oregon and Portland as they are, to protect plots that are smaller than 6,000 square feet and to prevent clear-cutting of trees less than 48" in diameter. Trees are an absolutely essential part of our ecosystem and community, and provide many important benefits to city life.

I appreciate that more attention is being placed on developing affordable housing, but this should not be at the expense of our trees. Trees are essential in combating climate change and providing safe, healthy, liveable spaces for all.

Please see the following points from Trees for Life that I agree with completely:

—***At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction***—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

—**Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. **Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.**

—**We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

—**We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

—**Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Please consider this request from a very concerned citizen.

Brittany Neighbours  
Mt. Scott Arleta Neighborhood Portland, OR

**From:** [Patricia Freeman](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Please do not roll back protection of urban trees!  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 9:57:48 AM

---

You don't often get email from patricia.freeman@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear HPAC:

I have never written a letter like this before, but I am doing so now because I am deeply concerned about the proposed rollback of regulations that offer a small modicum of protection for urban trees.

At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is deeply misguided, even if the rollback would speed up housing construction—which is unlikely, given that the cost of tree preservation is relatively trivial among the myriad factors developers consider when deciding whether to build. And even if we build more housing, do we really want to create more desolate, treeless urban landscapes that will house those who cannot afford to live in greener areas of the city? Portland's longstanding reputation as a lovely place to live has a lot to do with the abundance of tree-lined streets in many of our neighborhoods. Do we want to go in the opposite direction at a time when the city is being portrayed by the media as a hellscape?

Most importantly, developers can ALREADY remove trees by paying fees, and they do so every day when they want to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home.

Rolling back urban tree regulations will certainly make it cheaper to continue building structures developers expect to be profitable, but tree-removal fees are not a key factor in stopping construction of affordable housing. Killing tree codes may well result in ZERO new construction of the kind of housing this proposal purports to increase. I OPPOSE HPAC'S PROPOSAL TO OVERRIDE MUNICIPAL TREE CODES that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

I also oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.

Thank you for your attention.

Patricia Freeman

**From:** [Claire Rivers](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Please do not roll back tree codes in a misguided effort to spur the building of housing.  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 9:17:13 PM

---

You don't often get email from rivers.pdx@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Everyone deserves an affordable place to live. And everyone deserves "shade equity," meaning not only access to parks with trees but to live on streets shaded by trees, to have porches/balconies that look out on trees, to be able to hear birdsong and see squirrels on a daily basis. We as human beings are part of nature and need to live in and with nature. By overriding the tree code, or wetland and environmental zone protections to build housing you're paving the way for developers to build soulless shoe box apartments that will bring them a good profit and create places that no one with a choice will want to live in. We need more trees and more wetlands to address an ongoing climate emergency and more affordable housing to address our ongoing housing emergency and it's completely possible to do both of these at the same time.

**From:** [Katie McInnis](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Please Preserve our Urban Trees  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 6:15:24 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [katminrin@gmail.com](mailto:katminrin@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

During this time of Climate Crisis every tree counts. It doesn't matter how tall it is, where it is, or what type. Urban trees are especially important. Not only do they process carbon and release oxygen, they provide shade, habitat, and beautification that cannot be easily replaced. What's more, trees are living things. While they may not speak to us, or communicate in other ways we understand, we know that they are capable of communicating among themselves across landscapes.

Just as every person fighting for our climate matters, just as every person turning off their lights or paying for carbon offsets matters, every tree matters. Trees matter not only for their service, but for their essence as a living being. Would we so quickly dismiss them if instead of seeing them as "it" we saw them as "she" or "he"? Please consider measures to prevent the removal of trees from our landscape. We need them, more than they need us.

Respectfully,

--

Katie Rinaldi, DVM, CWR  
(765)603-9045  
[katminrin@gmail.com](mailto:katminrin@gmail.com)

**From:** [Susan Applegate](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Please, no relaxing of tree codes in Portland  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 1:04:19 PM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from susan@applegatebookdesign.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Our urban tree canopy protects all of us from global warming and longer hot spells in the summer. It takes 2 generations to grow a mature shading street tree such as the big leaf maples on my street. Do not sacrifice trees for more housing: we need both and the need to choose between them seems short-term and unfair. To cut urban trees is to diminish our children's quality of life.



**From:** [Christopher Eykamp](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Preserve urban trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 9:38:41 AM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [chris@eykamp.com](mailto:chris@eykamp.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to express strong opposition to the proposal to override rules related to trees in Portland and other cities in a misguided effort to make development easier.

While I agree that housing construction is important, given the increasing impact of global heating, removing already weak rules protecting trees is the wrong approach. I am skeptical that the rules in Portland and other cities related to trees have much practical impact on housing development; creative developers have been working around such rules for decades, and there are plenty of ways to develop housing without removing mature trees and destroying what remains of our tree canopy.

Trees are hugely important in communities experiencing the urban heat island effect, and allowing the further removal of trees in poorer neighborhoods (which, in Portland at least, is where most such tree removal would occur) only increases equity and environmental justice concerns. I understand Governor's urgency around housing, but we can't simply stomp on all our other important policy goals in order to achieve this one.

Please do not override urban tree codes or other environmental rules to promote housing development.

Thank you,

Chris Eykamp  
Portland, Oregon

**From:** [Lindsay Ruoff](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Protect Oregon Trees!  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 10:05:16 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [laruoff@gmail.com](mailto:laruoff@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Housing Production Advisory Council and Governor Kotek,

I have just heard about the plan to override tree codes for some plots in order to develop land into housing options. **Please do not override or weaken protection of our state's canopy! While we are in dire need of affordable housing in Oregon, and in particular in Portland where I live, pitting housing development against protection of our trees is not the answer.**

In recent years we have already seen the rampant destruction of trees for property development, resulting in tall hundred-unit properties built butted-up right against the street with no shade canopy, overhang, and often rarely even roofs. It's true that we are desperate for affordable housing and many of the people of our state are suffering on the streets. However, often poorly built and poorly conceived of housing, built quickly and without long-term consideration of the choices made in that development are NOT what Oregon needs. The removal of trees to create these buildings leave tenants of the new spaces in tiny apartments with no natural surroundings, depending heavily on electricity to keep them cool up the many built stories. It is alienated housing, removing people from community and natural settings. Further, these buildings often are developed with no overhang or roofs to provide shade. In a time of climate emergency this is a disservice to the people of our state.

The trees being sacrificed are fixtures of our ecosystem. The people who live in our communities' wellbeing is dependent on the wellbeing of our trees and ecosystems. It's an embarrassment to Oregon, which is typically thought of as a very 'eco friendly' state, to jeopardize our ecosystems in this way for quick-fix structures that in the long run will not be built to standards to endure climate disaster. We are better than that. If we want to live up to this name and identity, please put innovative and creative thought into how new developments can be built INTO and WITHIN the ecosystem, in order to reap the benefits these age-old trees provide.

There have been countless studies to drive home the fact that people living in east county Portland, where there is far less of the canopy preserved, suffer from heat and cold-related deaths at far greater proportions than those in inner and west locations with more shade. Besides the truth that trees provide beauty, quality of life, natural spaces, and home for native animals and insects, they provide life-saving shade, space for community, and so much more.

It is time to make a dedicated effort to preserve all of Oregon's natural resources, including trees. This is a racial and socio-economic equity issue as the temperature-related deaths in the concrete jungles of east Portland disproportionately affect Portlanders of color who have endured decades of housing oppression -- redlining, gentrification, and generational land loss. Attempts to replant lost trees in these areas has been so unsupported we see trees planted by the City of Portland, nonprofits, and individuals, brown and dry as timber mere years after being planted due to lack of a sustaining plan to truly commit to the redevelopment of the

canopy by watering these trees with regularity enough to keep them alive. It is insincere and wasteful.

We don't get more chances to get this right. Housing and preservation of the pillars of our ecosystem are NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE. We need true vision of a future where the people of Oregon are held, housed, protected by, and protectors of the vast beauty and health of our canopy.

Do the right thing and protect our people by protecting our land and creating innovative affordable housing set within the bounty of our groves.

Sincerely,  
Lindsay Ruoff  
East Portland resident  
living at E Burnside and 108th Ave.

**From:** [Kathryn L](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Protect our urban trees - Save them from protection rollbacks!  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:12:21 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from kathrynlowelmt@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

*Hi,  
I'm writing as a concerned Portland constituent.*

*We are regular donors to Friends of Trees and it has come to my attention that Governor Kotek's HPAC could override urban tree codes.*

*I voted for Governor Kotek but did not vote for that!*

*Trees are part of what makes Portland a great city.*

*At a time when we've already lost thousands of residents in Multnomah County, we can't afford to lose more people by creating a bleak, over-developed city without a well developed tree canopy.*

*One that not only improves our quality of life but also helps us meet our climate goals.*

*Affordable housing and meeting our climate and canopy goals is not mutually exclusive!*

*Find a way to do both.*

*Thank you,  
Kathryn Lowe*

**From:** [Faith Burlingame](#)  
**To:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#); [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Protect the trees  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 9:26:43 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [faithburlingame@gmail.com](mailto:faithburlingame@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

It was brought to my attention that Gov. Kotek has agreed to allow the codes in place to protect our city's trees in favor of building more housing. We definitely are in dire need of affordable housing options but not at the expense of our trees, which are instrumental in fighting climate change.

**We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

Please reconsider this decision.

Best,

Faith Burlingame (She/Her)

**From:** [Linda Bierly](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Protect trees  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:39:01 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from bierlyskl@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**To HPAC:**

**We need every tree. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that sacrificing trees will increase housing. Friends of Trees has given important arguments in favor of saving trees. Please take the time to read and heed!**

***At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction***—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. **Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.**

**—I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**—I oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

**Shame on Gov. Kotek! I am regretting my vote for Gov. Kotek and not likely to vote for her again.**

**Linda Bierly  
2308 Ptarmigan St. NW  
Salem, Oregon 97304**

**From:** [Tim Glaser](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Protect urban trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 3:45:13 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [tglaser@gmail.com](mailto:tglaser@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

I oppose HPAC's proposal that would essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's. I find it important to keep this as an intentional part of the development process and considerations. Developer funding interests need checks and balances that keep citizens' interests in mind and the trees of our urban areas are not to be discounted. The metrics given for the conditions to override are so far overly permissible (under 48" diameter on any property under 6,000 square feet).

I don't believe that overriding the tree codes will be a contributor to more housing or cheaper housing and I doubt anyone involved in this effort would genuinely feel differently.

Please let me know where I can find a clear rationale for overriding municipal tree codes and a projection of the impact(s) this change will have. Please provide the origin story (the interests involved) that led to the proposal.

Thank you for reading this and taking my interests to heart.

Tim

**From:** [Amanda Powell](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Provide needed housing and neighborhood shade!  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 10:11:35 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from apowell@uoregon.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Housing Production Advisory Council Members (HPAC),

I am an Oregonian who is painfully concerned about our lack-of-housing crisis: three members of my close family have gone through homelessness or long-term inadequate housing.

At the same time, am very alarmed about the plan to reduce or eliminate tree-related regulations in the attempt to speed up housing production. Human communities don't exist apart from nature but in nature. Being deprived of tree-canopy, shade, natural beauty, the shade and oxygen that trees provide—these are hardships that should not be foisted on people who need subsidized housing. That is environmental injustice.

And how will doing away with tree protections, ensure that builders really do create affordable housing?

The HPAC council should include voices that speak to the climate crisis that is not separate from, but deeply involved in, our housing crisis.

Please keep protection for plentiful and resilient trees in the vision—and requirements—for our needed housing expansion.

I hope to hear back from you, and to hear that trees will continue protected.

My best wishes,  
Amanda

~~~~~  
Amanda W. Powell  
Dept. of Romance Languages | Senior Lecturer II in Spanish | Emerita  
University of Oregon

She / ella / elle / ela / lei



**From:** [Orion Lumiere](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Public testimony for HPAC hearing on September 29  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 9:18:11 PM

---

You don't often get email from orionisisgray@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and for the Governor and HPAC's hard work planning for affordable housing.

I do however oppose HPAC's recommendations to override tree codes for smaller plots. It will contribute to a loss of urban trees which is really a problem for us low-income families. As a single mom, I often have to rent in parts of the city with less trees and more pavement, and those places are hotter because of it. So we get the double whammy of no shade and no AC in the old houses we are stuck renting, and the summers are getting unbearable. Overriding tree codes pits trees against affordable housing and that is not necessary or right. Homes and trees should go hand-in-hand to help the hard working families, seniors and people with disabilities living in low-income neighborhoods stay cool and reduce our energy bills. We need more trees, not less trees, alongside our affordable housing!

Thank you again for this opportunity and your important work.

.....  
Orion Lumiere  
**(503) 756-0676**  
orionisisgray@yahoo.com

**From:** Amber Geiger Productions  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV  
**Subject:** Re: I would like the opportunity to testify this Friday.  
**Date:** Monday, September 11, 2023 9:42:28 AM

productions@ambergeiger.com appears similar to someone who previously sent you email, but may not be that person. [Learn why this could be a risk](#)

I'm sending a revised comment to be submitted instead. Very disappointed that public oral comment was not made possible. I request that it is prioritized for the future meetings.

#### Amber Geiger Morgan Public Testimony (Revised):

One of the housing proposals aims, is to bring equality to underserved populations. What it doesn't take into account is that preserving large canopy trees is also an equality and life safety issue. It is well studied, by our own Professor at PSU, Vivek Shandas, that low income neighborhoods are disproportionately affected by the heat domes because of their lack of large canopy trees in their neighborhoods. Low income neighborhoods can be more than 20 degrees hotter on the same day than higher income neighborhoods with the large canopy trees. Replanting a small tree doesn't fix this problem, we must actively protect and support the continued growth of our large canopy trees which store larger amounts of carbon and provide shade that smaller trees can not.

The trees proposal says any tree OVER 48" in diameter will be protected. And any tree under 48" in diameter can be cut down.. That will mean that most of the large canopy trees in our urban environment could be cut down with no protections. Do any of you know in reality how big a 48" diameter tree is? Let me help you imagine it. I have a 100 year old pine tree in my backyard. It is only 35" diameter. I have to open my arms wide, and my husband has to open his arms wide on the other side of the tree and our fingers just barely meet as we form a circle around the tree. That's a VERY large tree that is doing a lot of work protecting the community with fresh air, shade, carbon storage, and a home for birds and other wildlife. So a 48" diam tree is a massive tree. Much larger than my tree. It is probably 3 people standing with arms stretched out in a circle around the tree.

Somehow we keep forgetting that we need trees to exist! They provide us with much needed shade and give us oxygen. This is something that we all can agree we need more of with each passing summer. Trees are what make our region a home that is livable.

Please consider the tree design recommendation very seriously and understand clearly the ramifications to Portland's large tree canopy and the resulting health and life safety of underserved communities that are especially impacted. We will actually be harming those communities even more with this recommendation. We must consider community health and climate resilience while providing housing. The recommended tree code is unacceptable and would increase fatalities in those neighborhoods. We need to be developing UP. That is a proven way to provide more housing and not harming the environment in ways that will harm ourselves.

Sierra club endorsed Governor Tina Kotek. If they knew that she would even consider a recommendation such as the tree and wetlands ones stated here today, they would never have supported her. Tina signed the Climate Resilience Package. These recommendations are in direct contrast to the efforts of the Climate Resilience package.

--  
amber geiger | PRODUCER  
cell: 503.816.2371  
email: [productions@ambergeiger.com](mailto:productions@ambergeiger.com)  
web: [www.ambergeiger.com](http://www.ambergeiger.com)

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** This email and its contents are confidential for the designated recipient(s) only. You may not disclose or use the information within this email or its attachments to unauthorized third parties.

Anyone who receives this email by error should treat it as confidential and reply by email to [amber@ambergeiger.com](mailto:amber@ambergeiger.com). Thank you.

On Sep 8, 2023, at 3:40 PM, GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)> wrote:

Thank you, Amber. I will submit your testimony to council and add it to the document online.

Whatever is not addressed will be open at the next meeting for public comment.

Dagny

---

**From:** Amber Geiger Productions <[productions@ambergeiger.com](mailto:productions@ambergeiger.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 8, 2023 3:37 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: I would like the opportunity to testify this Friday.

Hi Dagny, I'm concerned that there will not be time for the public testimony specifically related to the trees in development recommendations. I'd like to submit public testimony here for the record but also request that another meeting be held specifically to address the recommendations not addressed today.

#### Amber Geiger Morgan Public Testimony:

One of the housing proposals aims, is to bring equality to underserved populations. What it doesn't take into account is that preserving large canopy trees does exactly that. It is well studied, by our own Professor at PSU, Vivek Shandas, that low income neighborhoods are disproportionately affected by the heat domes because of their lack of large canopy trees in their neighborhoods. Low income neighborhoods can be more than 20 degrees hotter on the same day than higher income neighborhoods with the large canopy trees. Replanting a small tree doesn't fix this problem, we must actively protect and support the continued growth of our large canopy trees which store larger amounts of carbon and provide shade that smaller trees can not.

The trees proposal says any tree OVER 48" in diameter will be protected. And any tree under 48" in diameter can be cut down.. That will mean that most of the large canopy trees in our urban environment could be cut down with no protections. Do any of you know in reality how big a 48" diameter tree is? Let me help you imagine it. I have a 100 year old pine tree in my backyard. It is only 35" diameter. I have to open my arms wide, and my husband has to open his arms wide on the other side of the tree and our fingers just barely meet as we form a circle around the tree. That's a VERY large tree that is doing a lot of work protecting the community with fresh air, shade, carbon storage, and a home for birds and other wildlife. So a 48" diam tree is a massive tree. Much larger than my tree. It is probably 3 people standing with arms stretched out in a circle around the tree.

Somehow we keep forgetting that we need trees to exist! They provide us with much needed shade and give us oxygen. This is something that we all can agree we need more of with each passing summer. Trees are what make our region a home that is livable.

Please consider the tree design recommendation very seriously and understand clearly the ramifications to Portland's large tree canopy and the resulting health and life safety of underserved communities that are especially impacted. We will actually be harming those communities even more with this recommendation. We must consider community health and climate resilience while providing housing. The recommended tree code is unacceptable and would increase fatalities in those neighborhoods. We need to be developing UP. That is a proven way to provide more housing and not harming the environment in ways that will harm ourselves.

Sierra club endorsed Governor Tina Kotek. If they knew that she would even consider a recommendation such as the tree and wetlands ones stated here today, they would never have supported her. Tina signed the Climate Resilience Package. These recommendations are in direct contrast to the efforts of the Climate Resilience package.

--  
amber geiger | PRODUCER  
cell: 503.816.2371  
email: [productions@ambergeiger.com](mailto:productions@ambergeiger.com)  
web: [www.ambergeiger.com](http://www.ambergeiger.com)

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** This email and its contents are confidential for the designated recipient(s) only. You may not disclose or use the information within this email or its attachments to unauthorized third parties.

Anyone who receives this email by error should treat it as confidential and reply by email to [amber@ambergeiger.com](mailto:amber@ambergeiger.com). Thank you.

On Sep 8, 2023, at 2:29 PM, GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)> wrote:

Of course, <https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policies/Pages/Housing-Production-Advisory-Council.aspx>

Under meeting materials you will find the recommendations posted under the last August meeting.

Let me know if I can help with anything else,  
Dagny

**From:** Amber Geiger Productions <[productions@ambergeiger.com](mailto:productions@ambergeiger.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 8, 2023 2:19 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: I would like the opportunity to testify this Friday.

Thank you. Can you send me the Recommendations page again. I can't find the link.

--

amber geiger | PRODUCER  
cell: [503.816.2371](tel:503.816.2371)  
email: [amber@ambergeiger.com](mailto:amber@ambergeiger.com)  
web: [www.ambergeiger.com](http://www.ambergeiger.com)

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email and its contents are confidential for the designated recipient(s) only. You may not disclose or use the information within this email or its attachments to unauthorized third parties.  
Anyone who receives this email by error should treat it as confidential and reply by email to [amber@ambergeiger.com](mailto:amber@ambergeiger.com). Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 8, 2023, at 2:13 PM, GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)> wrote:

Hello,  
It is toward the end of the 2:20-3:50 2<sup>nd</sup> reading segment.

Dagny

---

**From:** Amber Geiger Productions <[productions@ambergeiger.com](mailto:productions@ambergeiger.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 8, 2023 2:03 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: I would like the opportunity to testify this Friday.

Hi Dagny, I'm not seeing when the timing of the tree design recommendation. Is that not being discussed today?

--  
amber geiger | PRODUCER  
cell: [503.816.2371](tel:503.816.2371)  
email: [productions@ambergeiger.com](mailto:productions@ambergeiger.com)  
web: [www.ambergeiger.com](http://www.ambergeiger.com)

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email and its contents are confidential for the designated recipient(s) only. You may not disclose or use the information within this email or its attachments to unauthorized third parties.  
Anyone who receives this email by error should treat it as confidential and reply by email to [amber@ambergeiger.com](mailto:amber@ambergeiger.com). Thank you.

On Sep 7, 2023, at 4:25 PM, GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)> wrote:

Hi Amber,  
The agenda posted for tomorrow will list the recommendations and their order that are open for testimony. We try to adhere to the allotted times as best as possible  
<https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policies/Documents/HPAC%20Agenda%2009.08.2023.pdf>

Thank you,  
Dagny

---

**From:** Amber Geiger Productions <[productions@ambergeiger.com](mailto:productions@ambergeiger.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 7, 2023 4:15 PM  
**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: I would like the opportunity to testify this Friday.

You don't often get email from [productions@ambergeiger.com](mailto:productions@ambergeiger.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Providing testimony for the trees in design recommendation. Do you know what time that will be approximately? Will it go in order of the meeting materials list?

And I've registered. Thanks!

Amber

--  
amber geiger | PRODUCER  
cell: [503.816.2371](tel:503.816.2371)  
email: [amber@ambergeiger.com](mailto:amber@ambergeiger.com)  
web: [www.ambergeiger.com](http://www.ambergeiger.com)

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email and its contents are confidential for the designated recipient(s) only. You may not disclose or use the information within this email or its attachments to unauthorized third parties.  
Anyone who receives this email by error should treat it as confidential and reply by email to [amber@ambergeiger.com](mailto:amber@ambergeiger.com). Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 7, 2023, at 11:15 AM, GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)> wrote:

Hi Amber, there will be a few opportunities for testimony throughout the meeting. Please let me know which recommendations you will be providing testimony for. They are listed on the website under meeting materials. I have also provided the registration link for the webinar.

<https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policies/Pages/Housing-Production-Advisory-Council.aspx>

[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_1l\\_xl4Bd5HCIXtHPdJa7bA#/registration](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1l_xl4Bd5HCIXtHPdJa7bA#/registration)

Thank you,  
Dagny

---

**From:** Amber Geiger Productions <[productions@ambergeiger.com](mailto:productions@ambergeiger.com)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 6, 2023 6:44 PM

**To:** GOV Hpac \* GOV <[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)>

**Subject:** I would like the opportunity to testify this Friday.

You don't often get email from [productions@ambergeiger.com](mailto:productions@ambergeiger.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

If possible, can I testify on Friday at the council meeting? I'm not available til 130 so hoping to not be first up. Thank you!

Amber Geiger

--

amber geiger | PRODUCER

cell: [503.816.2371](tel:503.816.2371)

web: [www.ambergeiger.com](http://www.ambergeiger.com)

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email and its contents are confidential for the designated recipient(s) only. You may not disclose or use the information within this email or its attachments to unauthorized third parties.

Anyone who receives this email by error should treat it as confidential and reply by email to [amber@ambergeiger.com](mailto:amber@ambergeiger.com). Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

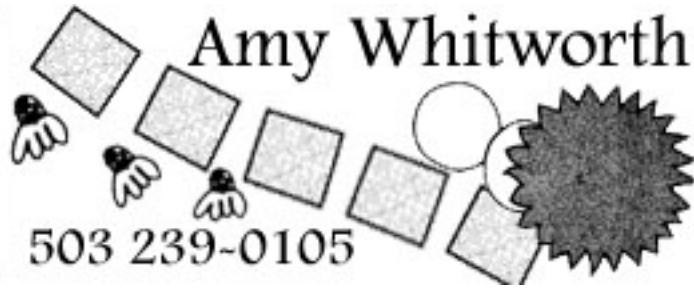
**From:** [Guillermo Mountain](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Re:  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 7:23:36 PM

---

You don't often get email from hillstream12@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

—**Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.



WWW.PLAN-IT-EARTHDESIGN.COM

September 19, 2023

Re: Opposing HPAC recommendations regarding trees

Dear Governor Kotek:

We are facing multiple crises in our state. One is housing, but another is climate equity. We cannot sacrifice one for the other. People in our state are dying from the heat due to increased summer temperatures and drought. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

As a professional landscape designer, I help homeowners create spaces that are functional, beautiful and welcoming to people, pets, wildlife and the planet. Trees are the primary landscape element to help shape a space. Placed appropriately, trees can help cool a home in the summer or provide an evergreen barrier to protect a home from cold winter winds. Zoning codes allowing larger homes on smaller lots provide less space for trees that grow large enough at maturity to provide many health, climate and environmental benefits. Most housing designs for developed sites leave only enough space for upright, narrow trees that provide much less cooling shade and other health and environmental benefits than large-form trees do.

The value of an existing healthy large-form tree along a street or in a yard is irreplaceable. It helps reduce stormwater runoff by absorbing winter rains in its canopy and through its roots; It is a place of shelter for birds and other wildlife; It adds financial value to the property on which it sits; Studies have shown that trees reduce blood pressure, stress, depression, anxiety and can improve concentration levels of children with ADHD; Trees filter and purify the air and the water; They reduce the excessive heat island affect of urban streets, sidewalks and rooftops; Studies show that neighborhoods with trees are safer than those without trees. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

Oregon needs housing that is healthy, equitable and climate resilient, that won't be possible without intact trees and other green infrastructure such as wetlands and environmental zones. With smart design that leaves room for both housing and large trees, we can have healthier residents while growing our climate resilience. I urge the council to focus on solutions that advance housing equity and do not destroy the environment in doing so.

Sincerely,

Amy Whitworth, Earth Friendly Garden Designer + Community Educator  
Plan-it Earth Design  
Portland, Oregon

Cc:

Housing Production Advisory Council

Taylor Smiley Wolfe, Housing and Homelessness Initiative Director, Governor's Office

Karin Power, Natural Resource and Climate Policy Advisor, Governor's Office

Matt Tschabold, Sr. Housing Policy Advisor, Governor's Office

Geoff Huntington, Sr. Natural Resources Advisor, Governor's Office

Dan Ryan, Portland City Commissioner

Carmen Rubio, Portland City Commissioner

Rep. Rob Nosse

Senator Kathleen Taylor

Jenn Cairo, Portland City Forester

Brian Landoe, Portland Parks & Recreation/Urban Forestry

Donald Oliverira, Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

Adena Long, Portland Parks & Recreation

Rebecca Esau, Portland Bureau of Development Services

**From:** [Deborah Trandum](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Save Our State's Urban Trees from Tree Code Rollback  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 8:05:19 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [deborahtrandum@gmail.com](mailto:deborahtrandum@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Good morning,

Portland is a city of trees. We are famous for it. With record temperatures every summer we cannot afford to lose them.

I understand the need for more affordable housing, but trees and housing do not need to be mutually exclusive. Trees absorb rainwater and provide shade, and when communities do not have sufficient tree coverage, they're vulnerable to climate change-driven flooding and extreme heat, two things Portland is uncomfortably familiar with. More often than not, those communities are home to mostly Black, Indigenous, and other people of color residents, as well as low-income residents. Allowing developers to clear cut all but the largest trees will do immense harm to a community struggling with the environmental challenges global climate change is bringing to the Pacific Northwest.

Please consider the long term effects of this proposal. I'm sure with enough consideration you will realize that the long-term damage it **will** cause will absolutely outweigh the unproven potential benefit.

**Thank you,**  
**Deborah Trandum**



**From:** [Elaine Nelson](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Save Our State's Urban Trees from Tree Code Rollback  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:31:13 PM

---

You don't often get email from elaine\_nelson47@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

## **Governor Kotek and Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC),**

**—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—**and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. **Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.**

**—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Sincerely,

Elaine Nelson  
6786 SW 204th Ave, Aloha, OR 97078

**From:** [maike.pierce](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Save Our State's Urban Trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 11:34:01 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [maikepierce@gmail.com](mailto:maikepierce@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Housing Production Advisory Council

We recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, but housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive.

We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in.

At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.

In reality we are facing both, a housing and a climate crisis, and both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Please consider other solutions for the housing crisis instead of overriding tree codes.

Sincerely,  
Maike Pierce and family

**From:** [Charlotte Bartruff](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Save Our State's Vital Urban Trees  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:50:26 PM

---

You don't often get email from [charlottebartruff@gmail.com](mailto:charlottebartruff@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Oregon's cities are in a climate crisis, with our most vulnerable residents already dying from scorching heat. Urban tree canopy is a key factor in keeping urban neighborhoods cooler, but its inequitable distribution within cities including Portland is magnifying climate impacts on historically marginalized communities. That is why I strongly object to the recent proposal from the Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) to restrict local governments from maintaining their urban forest canopy while increasing housing density.

Instead of creatively engaging the challenge of maintaining tree cover while increasing housing density, HPAC suggests, in effect, that cities should be stripped of their power to implement existing tree codes, and that all trees could be removed without any restrictions or fees. This is a greenlight for developers to clear-cut lots without even paying for replacements the city could plant elsewhere. As a result, the extensive growth that Portland anticipates over the next decades would exacerbate the declines in tree canopy and increase the heat-related illnesses and deaths we're already experiencing.

Affordable housing should be healthy housing. Housing that removes existing trees and provides no space for trees is not healthy. U.S. Forest Service research has found direct links between human health and nearby canopy and, as we've noted, these benefits will become ever more important in our increasingly hot cities. Indeed it is critical to protect all green infrastructure on the urban landscape: trees, wetlands, environmental zones, the Willamette River Greenway, and more.

Housing and green infrastructure are not mutually exclusive and should not be pitted against one another. Both are necessary. It would be far more innovative and equitable for your council to be charged with meeting goals for housing, public health, and climate justice simultaneously. With smarter, upfront, climate-centric designs that integrate housing and space for trees, we can have healthier residents

and be better climate-prepared.

The HPAC proposal seems designed with one goal in mind—to facilitate developers' ability to build more, profitable, though not necessarily better or affordable, housing at all costs and at the expense of community health, climate and tree canopy equity, environment, livability, and other stated Oregon goals.

Finally, it appears that no one representing these other crucial state interests and goals sits on HPAC. This stymies truly integrative planning that would result in better, healthier outcomes for Oregon residents. Not only do I urge you to reject this HPAC proposal, I also urge you to include at least one or more urban forest and climate justice representatives on your advisory council. We look forward to hearing from you about this important issue as soon as possible.

**From:** [julia barbee](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Save our trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 5:51:00 PM

---

You don't often get email from juliabarbee@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Tina,

**I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

I recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, but housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive.

The canopy by my house was reduced this year already, I see that more expensive areas just blocks away have more green areas, more landscaping, and the poorer areas closer up my home lack gardens and trees making those areas hotter. Please protect our livability, and focus on affordable housing WITH green spaces included.

Julia

[www.juliabarbee.com](http://www.juliabarbee.com)

**From:** [Brinleigh Grimberg](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Save Our Trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 4:30:41 PM

---

You don't often get email from [tawneymeadow@gmail.com](mailto:tawneymeadow@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Tina Kotek,

I express my support for maintaining our current laws that protect our valuable trees and wetlands. These natural resources are important for our environment and communities. I kindly ask you to consider preserving these protections rather than making changes that could harm them.

Our trees and wetlands play an important role in maintaining a healthy environment. They provide many benefits, from improving air quality and reducing flood risks to enhancing the beauty of our landscapes.

I believe that by preserving our current laws, we can strike a balance between development and environmental conservation, preserving a better future for our state. Your commitment to protecting these natural assets is much appreciated.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Brinleigh

**From:** [JC](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Save our Trees!!  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 8:34:33 PM

---

[You don't often get email from johnpaul.castiaux@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Come on guys. One of the best trees in the mississippi area just got cut down for this. At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Such changes will certainly impact trees.

—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

**From:** [John Spann](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Save Our Trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 9:08:05 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [jfspann@gmail.com](mailto:jfspann@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Yes, save our trees.

We live in probably one of the most affordable, and underserved, neighborhoods in Portland. This neighborhood is also the hottest neighborhood in Portland. Further removal of any trees should be heavily considered if not outright stopped in neighborhoods like mine, where rampant tree removal has already occurred in the name of "affordable housing".

Let's be honest, empty buildings in our downtown areas can be made affordable without any further environmental impact.

John Spann  
Lents, Portland  
480 478 5023



**From:** [James Thompson](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** save our urban trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 11:21:00 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from james@jetwoodshop.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**I am writing to voice my strong opposition to Governor Kotek and HPAC's recommendations that would *override tree codes* and allow clear cutting of trees under 48" diameter, which includes the vast majority of urban trees.**

**Despite arguments that these recommendations are needed to meet the regions housing crisis, many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. These recommendations would do away with environmental regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. I recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, but housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive.**

**I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place and to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.**

**Let's do the right thing. Reject the recommendations of the governor and HPAC to ensure the state and its cities and towns will be able to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals and Save Our Urban Trees!**

Sincerely,

**James Thompson  
Portland, Oregon  
97210**

**From:** [Forrest Thorne](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Save the Trees - Do Not Rollback This Regulation  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 1:20:34 PM

---

[You don't often get email from forrest.525@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Hello,

Currently, HPAC is recommending rolling back the tree code for plots smaller than 6,000 sq ft.

Do not allow this to move forward. It is important to the communities across the state to preserve trees which provide shelter from heat and habitat for animals. This recommendation by HPAC is near-sighted and absolutely not the best decision. Development does not go before environmental needs of a community. Trees are important to a healthy community that is worth living in. Consider that before allowing developers to clear-cut lots to make room for large block housing that will be a costly mistake.

If the community is not an enjoyable environment, people will grow to hate it. Trees contribute to this general love and happiness with the surroundings. Do not suggest starting over with new trees. Do not suggest growing new plants. These things are not the same and do not provide the same home, and you especially cannot depend on the developers to be responsible with the life of any newly planted trees. I appreciate you taking the time to read this. If you would like to discuss this further, please respond to this e-mail and I will get back to you.

Thanks,

Forrest

Portland Resident

**From:** [Emma Pelton](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Save urban trees while still developing affordable housing  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 8:46:10 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [emmapelton@gmail.com](mailto:emmapelton@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

We recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, but housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive.

**—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—**and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. **Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.**

**—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Thank you.

I am a proud former renter and current homeowner in a low income part of East Portland. We have multiple mature Douglas firs as well as pines, cascara, and maple trees. More trees and more mature trees are essential to keep people in our part of the city from increasing deadly heat waves.

Emma Pelton  
Portland Oregon

**From:** [Rebecca Steffoff](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** September 29th hearing on HPAC recommendation  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 9:23:46 AM

---

[You don't often get email from [rebecca@steffoff.com](mailto:rebecca@steffoff.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

As a resident of Portland for more than thirty years, I'm writing to urge rejection of the Housing Production Advisory Council's recommendation to allow developers to override our urban tree codes on plots of less than 6,000 square feet. This would allow virtual deforestation of one of Portland's glories: its urban canopy. The city's tree code was a hard-won victory for many who saw the importance of preserving urban tree cover, especially in this age time of rising temperatures and widespread deforestation. I'm among those who feel that our protections for urban trees--and state and local wetlands and environmental zones--are already insufficient, and I implore you not to weaken them further.

I recognize the need for housing planning, but a council that gives more voice and weight to development than to conservation and protecting our ever-shrinking natural resources is unbalanced. Experience has also shown that weakening protections rarely results in an increase in much-needed affordable and low-income housing.

Please reject recommendations that privilege developers' interests over the needs and health of our shared urban environment. At this point in the climate trajectory, no tree should be felled unnecessarily or without due consideration to alternatives.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Steffoff

Portland, Oregon

--  
Rebecca Steffoff  
[rebecca@steffoff.com](mailto:rebecca@steffoff.com)  
[steffoff1@gmail.com](mailto:steffoff1@gmail.com)

**From:** [Eric Brody](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Stop the Tree Code Rollback  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:29:41 PM

---

[You don't often get email from [eric.brody@shiftadvantage.com](mailto:eric.brody@shiftadvantage.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

My wife and I were big contributors to Gov. Kotek's campaign and convinced many people in our network to also give money or time to help get Go. Kotek win the governorship. We are extremely disappointed that Gov. Kotek is only listening to developers and not other stakeholders in addressing the building codes and protections to Oregon's trees and wetland.

We strongly oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Thank you,  
Eric Brody  
503-288-6309

**From:** [Annabelle Valdini](#)  
**To:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#); [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Submitting Written Testimony Opposing HPAC's Proposal to Override Tree Codes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 10:25:12 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [annabellevaldini@gmail.com](mailto:annabellevaldini@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek,

My name is Annabelle Valdini, I'm 16 years old, and I live in Portland, Oregon, in zip code 97202. I'm writing to you today to submit written testimony opposing HPAC's proposal to basically override the municipal tree laws already in place. Governor Kotek, your Housing Production Advisory Council's prepared recommendations would hurt lots of trees and they go against decades of work to slow and stop the climate crisis in Oregon. I know that we need more affordable housing in Portland, but sacrificing the environment and all the animals who live in those trees is not the way to get it. I am urging Governor Kotek to oppose the recommendations prepared by HPAC that would override tree codes for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet, which would allow the clearcutting of trees that are less than 48 inches in diameter—the vast majority of Portland's trees (and most urban trees elsewhere in the state). Portland's tree code is weak as it is, and we cannot let HPAC allow clearcutting of so many of Oregon's urban trees.

Please, Governor Kotek—i'm really scared that all the animals that live in the trees will have nowhere to go and then they'll just all die because they have nowhere to live. We cannot let these animals die, so please, I'm urging you to oppose HPAC's attempt to override tree codes. Also, we cannot let the climate crisis get any worse than it already is, so letting your HPAC allow the clearcutting of all these trees would just be bad for everybody, because trees help the climate crisis by providing shade and animal habitats, and also they take carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas) out of the atmosphere.

PLEASE don't let me and all the animals living in Oregon's cities down—stop HPAC's proposal to override tree codes for plots smaller than 6,000 feet that will allow the clearcutting of trees smaller than 48" in diameter because it would really, REALLY hurt humans, animals, and the environment in general.

Thank you,  
Annabelle Valdini

**From:** [Rebecca Nixon](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony Against HPAC Work Group Tree Recommendation  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 5:00:09 PM

---

You don't often get email from [bex\\_darkartist@yahoo.com](mailto:bex_darkartist@yahoo.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear HPAC Work Group and Governor Kotek:

I am writing to testify against your proposal to force cities to permit the removal of trees under 48" diameter for development of residential lots under 6000 sq ft.

Our state needs more housing, but we need housing that is safe and allows its residents to prosper. Removing existing large trees to make room for more housing will create or exacerbate dangerous heat islands in our cities that harm residents.

- In areas of Portland with minimal tree cover, such as outer East Portland, temperatures have been measured to be up to 25 degrees hotter than shady areas of the city. (<https://www.wweek.com/news/city/2021/07/14/this-is-the-hottest-place-in-portland/>)
- City residents of lower socioeconomic status are also disproportionately exposed to extreme heat. (Voelkel, J., D Hellman, R Sakuma, and V Shandas, 2018. Assessing Vulnerability to Urban Heat: A Study of Disproportionate Heat Exposure and Access to Refuge by Socio-Demographic Status in Portland, Oregon. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 15(4), 640.)
- The Powellhurst-Gilbert neighborhood of East Portland has already lost over 500 trees this year due to an expansion of Highway 26/Powell Boulevard. (<https://www.kptv.com/video/2023/06/09/odot-removing-more-than-500-trees-powell-blvd-safety-improvements/>)

Even if replacement trees are planted, it will take many years to replace the benefits of any large trees that are cut down today. Tree age can be estimated using the growth factor of the tree species and the trunk diameter at approximately breast height. Every inch of trunk diameter at breast height equals approximately the number of years of age equal to the growth factor. The Douglas Fir, the Oregon state tree, has a growth factor of 5. Every inch of trunk diameter represents approximately 5 years of age for the tree. A Douglas Fir with a 48" trunk diameter could be 240 years old. To cut down such a tree with no hope of fully replacing its benefits for another 8 generations is shortsighted and harmful.

Please reconsider your plan to force tree removal for housing development. Oregon residents need trees as well as housing.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Nixon

**From:** [Walt Lockley](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY for HPAC hearing Sept. 29  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 6:05:43 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from waltlockley@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

## Testimony regarding the recommended suspension of municipal tree codes

I'm writing as a former volunteer for Friends of Trees in Portland.

My work with Friends of Trees taught me that Portland's tree canopy is a unique, valuable civic asset that looks and feels good, sure, but it also delivers a long list of economically practical advantages for a tiny investment. The canopy pays off. It didn't just appear one day. It's not left over from the 1890s. It was built. Portland's tree canopy is the result of ongoing physical work and emotional commitment.

I hope this board will recognize that suspending civic tree codes, as part of an effort to streamline / incentivize housing, is not only a mistake, it's backwards.

A responsible state-wide housing plan would require planting *more* trees as well as leaving existing trees alone. Obviously. For look & feel & livability. Because trees promote a humane environment. Because they're a cheap smart investment. And most urgently, oh yeah, because we're faced with more than one crisis at a time. Trees are acknowledged as the single best weapon in the fight against climate change. "Trees are the ultimate carbon capture and storage machines," quoting the UK's Woodland Trust.

We all grew up knowing and seeing developers with shockingly lazy habits. Clear-cutting is one of those lazy habits. They've pretended there is no common good, there's only private gain. They can bring heartbreaking changes to a neighborhood and shrug off any responsibility. That attitude, writ large, has left us with multiple ugly crises to deal with.

And details like this one to work out.

I urge HPAC recommends abiding by the civic tree codes as they are.

Walt Lockley  
4124 SE Hillside Drive  
Milwaukie OR 97267  
503 522 4463



**From:** [Jan Bryant](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony for September 29th HPAC Hearing  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 9:55:23 AM

---

You don't often get email from janbrynt@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

The current tree code in Portland has made significant concessions for the development of more housing and should not be further weakened. As a resident of Portland for 50 years I implore you to let the city continue to maintain our tree codes and improve them to meet the increasing challenges of climate change. The cooling benefits of a healthy urban tree canopy are well documented. More trees and more housing can be achieved together.  
Thank you  
Janet Bryant

**From:** [Nathan Adams](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony RE: HPAC proposes overriding tree codes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 12:18:38 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [nathan.adams2025@gmail.com](mailto:nathan.adams2025@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Good afternoon Housing Production Advisory Council members,

Please take this testimony into the record. As I do not want to see the cities of my green state chopped up and paved the way Los Angeles and other large cities have been. Only for them to be fighting for the restoration of green spaces and trees to be brought back. Both at great monetary expense and decades of lost mental well-being, some 50 to 70 year later. Please keep our cities green for years to come and save ourselves the time and expense of this costly mistake.

At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Parking lot requirements are a greater hindrance than tree protections. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

I oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Such changes will certainly impact trees.

Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Remove parking requirements first. Then we can assess if trees are the issue.

Thank you for your time.

**From:** [Staley Mims](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony Submission for HPAC Hearing Friday September 29, 2023  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 6:29:29 PM

---

You don't often get email from staleym@efn.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

September 27, 2023

I wish to submit the following statement to Governor Kotek's Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) regarding current planning to bring forward recommendations that include the *overriding of tree codes* for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet, which will explicitly allow clear cutting of trees under 48" diameter, which includes the vast majority of urban trees.

Statement of Testimony:

I, Staley W. Mims, an adult citizen and registered voter of the State of Oregon strongly oppose any recommendations to override local tree codes.

At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

I oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Such changes will certainly impact trees.

I am aware that Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

We live in times of shrinking population in Oregon cities. We live in times where Red State interests are buying up Commercial Properties and leaving usable building empty and in the process of dilapidation for the purpose of tax deduction in their own states. This year we have an unprecedentedly large Tax kicker when service, safety and livability issues go unfunded.

End of Statement

Respectfully submitted

Staley W. Mims

3737 SE Holgate Blvd.

Portland, OR 97202

**From:** [Lisa K](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony to save our urban trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 11:00:08 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [lisa.sheshe@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.sheshe@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

I understand the need to build more dwellings in the city, but I also feel that can be accomplished without removing the trees in the city but rather by creatively incorporating them into the landscape. At this crucial time where we seem to be losing the fight against climate change, trees seem to be the only reliable mitigation we have left and we already have FAR too few. In addition to cleansing the air around us, I rely on trees around the city for shade from the new brutal temperatures brought on by climate change, and for the humans who will undoubtedly remain unhoused (since these building projects only seem to further enrich the wealthy instead of helping the individuals who need it) trees are their ONLY form of protection from the elements. I can NOT think of a more damaging and short-sighted proposal to combat our ongoing issues. I am sure we can find a better solution. PLEASE reconsider and go back to the drawing board.

Thank you,  
Lisa Kraxberger

**From:** [Joanne Delmonico](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 5:32:41 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from joannedelmonico@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek,  
Subject: **Address the Housing crisis and the Climate Crisis; we can do both!**

Dear Governor Kotek:

I live on 3.6 wooded acres just miles from downtown Portland. We have 28 housing units in one building on less than one acre. When a group of us developed the property, we were able to instruct the architect and builder that we wanted to preserve as much of the green space and trees as possible. They got creative and built a 4 story building that houses all 28 units. This is middle income housing. This is what we need and we can do without compromising and displacing our dwindling natural areas and wildlife. We know that we need our mature trees to help with drainage, shade, carbon sequestration, wildlife and for our mental health and well being. Did you know that areas with more trees and green have a much lower incidence of crime? Yes, partly demographics but can we do both.. preserve the green spaces while also providing affordable housing?

There are so many empty strip malls and vacant buildings with existing infrastructure near public transportation. In Washington County, workers can't afford to live here so drive a long distance, create traffic and pollution. Can we get creative and make use of existing infrastructure. .

Why ease up on tree protection and wetland protection instead of looking at other options?

Why not provide tax and loan incentives for building within UGBs already served by utilities, roads, and public transportation. Yes, incentives for building more affordable housing in already serviced areas. Developers have told us that their main interest is financial so it is more lucrative to cut all trees and build large, expensive homes. it increases their profit margin. And we know developers are making a lot of money during this housing crisis. It is unfair to expect the public to stand by while the developers wreak havoc on the environment.

I have lived in this area for 25 years and watched as developers mow down every tree and shrub on a site and put up large expensive homes to make a profit while the housing crisis is upon us and most middle and low income families can't afford to live here.

I am glad to see that Washington County had once again, after 3 years, opened the waitlist for affordable housing. There are 244 family units available. The waitlist closed after 3 days and likely won't open again for another couple of years according to the County Housing division.

<https://www.kgw.com/article/news/local/washington-county/washington-county-public-housing-waitlist/283-f1a1ff76-0ea1-4d5e-8838-2e9f53446172>

Affordable housing is important to all of us, but please don't prioritize housing over Oregon's land use laws and regulations that protect the already shrinking wetlands and natural areas. We need both, and I look to you for leadership to find a way to do both.

Let's get creative to solve this housing crisis.

Thank you.

Joanne Delmonico

9601 NW Leahy Road, Portland, OR 97229

-Washington County Democrat PCP and Neighborhood Leader

-MCAT member

-Treekeepers of Washington County co founder ([treekeeperwc.org](http://treekeeperwc.org))

-Trillium Hollow Cohousing resident, Washington County

Great opinion article!

<https://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/2023/08/koteks-misguided-fight-with-oregon-environmentalists-steve-duin-column.html>

Thank you Governor Kotek. I hit the pavement, did some talking and walking and did my best to help you get elected. Please do the right thing with regard to the protection of the environment.

Sincerely

Joanne Delmonico



**From:** [Sam W](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Time Sensitive: Housing Development and Trees  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 10:13:23 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sam.wardwell96@proton.me. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it concerns:

Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

Sam Wardwell

***Pronouns: they/them***

***I acknowledge the Traditional Stewards of the land I work on as the first people of this country.***

Sent from Proton Mail mobile

**From:** [Lisa Beaty](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree canopy protection  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 7:00:09 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mlgandc@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

[HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)

Looking through the members of this council, I find it disturbing that not a single member represents the interests of protecting our environment. Although housing is needed, the housing built in the past five years shows a horrible disregard for the health of trees, permeable soils, and wildlife. You may be reacting to the immediate need for housing, but your decisions will have impact long beyond the current housing crisis and decisions you make cannot be undone. Tree preservation codes need to be unified and strengthened throughout the Portland Metro region. Currently, developers are paying small fees to be able to flatten acres of trees to enable easier building: the convenience is worth the expense of the fees, and current development practice seems to prefer starting with a barren site and building homes on lots with minimal setbacks and backyards which will never support the root system of a local tree canopy. Please consider the long term effects of the choices you make before enacting legislation that further (permanently) reduces the tree canopy in our area.

“ ‘Trees in an urban forest, as a whole, represent some of the most vital infrastructure in a city, she said. However, unfortunately, they’re not always treated as such.’ ” Portland Urban Forestry Manager Jennifer Cairo [Portland tree canopy has stagnated or shrunk, harming city’s climate change aspirations - oregonlive.com](#)

Thank you.

Lisa Beaty

**From:** [Deena Fishbein](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree Code Roll Back  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:36:14 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from df220138@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I am writing in protest of Governor Kotek's HPAC plan to make it easier for Portland developers to remove trees under 48" in diameter when building new housing. Trees are incredibly important components of urban livability. They buffer us from urban heat island impacts, which contributed to the deaths of 69 Portlanders during the heat dome of 2021. They clean our air, easily creating enough oxygen for two people per single tree and a respiratory health benefit of over \$6 million according to a recent PSU research study. They also keep water cycles intact, meaning they provide protection from drought. All the housing in the world for our city won't matter if we are subject to increasingly frequent and severe wildfires that make life inhospitable. Make no mistake, changes in our urban canopy would not be an isolated event; as we are impacted by the health of our surrounding forests, so to are the forests impacted by what the city does.

It takes years and years to accomplish a mature tree canopy. Even if developers promise to plant more trees somewhere else, that will still be a backslide environmentally in a climate-train disaster in the making

**PLEASE DO NOT ROLL BACK THE TREE CODE. DO REQUIRE DEVELOPERS TO CONTINUE INCORPORATING SUPPORT FOR OUR TREE-PERSONS.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Deena Fishbein  
3561 SE Long St, PDX 97202

**From:** [Suzie Wolfer GD](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree Code Rollback Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC)  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 5:40:24 PM

---

You don't often get email from [suzie@suziewolfer.com](mailto:suzie@suziewolfer.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Trees are the guardians not only of our children's future but also the future of the plants, animals, insects and fungi that were here long before us.

The very health of the Earth and her creatures, and the mycelium layer will benefit from the habitat that every single tree creates.

Please please please please please. Make Portland a city that's known for its green spaces and trees, not homelessness and violence.

I am a fifth generation Oregonian descended from settlers, who came across the plains in covered wagons in the 1860s who made friends with the native people and founded the little town of Aurora Oregon. My ancestors lived in harmony with each other, the planet, the indigenous people here.

I have deep roots in this land, and feel it crying for more trees, more native habitat, more support for the insects, birds, and the animals that live here or migrate here, who were here long before we arrived.

I hope Portland and Oregon will be known for this legacy of leaving the land better than we found it. Not an overdeveloped wasteland, that generated quick profits for entrepreneurs ready to jump on a sudden opportunity in land use policy.

Please design legislation that supports this land, its heritage and our planet, as well as the vulnerable humans who call Oregon Home.

I know Governor Kotek's job is complex and intersectional with many opposing demands, but this destructive policy and a green light to for-profit developers is not the answer. It makes me question my vote for her.

I OPPOSE changes to the Tree Code because:

- Simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing, but it will ensure higher profits for developers
- The phrase "marginal or degraded wetlands" is caused by development, eroding state and local wetland and environmental zone protections will not solve the homeless problem
- This policy stands in sharp contrast to the federal government's investments in urban forestry, Portland Clean Energy Fund (PCEF), where the city is investing millions of dollars over the next five years in planting tens of thousands of trees to help counter the city's well-documented shade inequity.
- Healthy housing includes native trees and habitat. The proposed changes appear to indicate that nearly any city lot could be clear-cut. Would you want that to happen in your neighborhood?

- The committee has no members who appear to understand climate crisis and environmental justice and are over-represented by for-profit concerns.

Really Is that what defines us a Oregonians? I say NO

**From:** [joseph gresenz](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree Code Rollback- Opposition  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 5:53:20 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from joe.gresenz@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I want to voice my concerns over proposed rollbacks to tree code in favor of developers. I think this is a short sighted attempt to solve a non-existent problem. Our urban trees are not the primary impediment to low cost housing development and this plan is nothing more than a giveaway for developers. I strongly oppose eroding protections for urban trees in our state. We desperately need the shade, stormwater & CO2 absorption and the wildlife habitat that our trees provide. I sincerely hope that this council takes all of that into account and opposes Gov Kotek's proposal. Thanks.

Sincerely,  
Joe Gresenz  
(210)336-4905  
Portland, OR

**From:** [Francisco Gadea](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree Code Rollback?  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 7:13:26 PM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from frankie0004260@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

I am very concerned and disappointed to find out that Governor Kotek's HPAC proposes overriding tree codes in favor of development. While we certainly have a housing crisis in Oregon we are also in a climate change crisis. We should be working towards making progress on both of these crisis at the same time. This proposal would make our cities less resilient to climate change by reducing tree cover.

Urban trees are needed because of the myriad of benefits they provide. Not only do trees provide environmental benefits but also to our communities. Trees help clean the air by releasing oxygen and consuming CO2. Trees provide a habitat for birds, insects, etc. Trees provide shade in hot days. People enjoy having trees in our communities.

Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

I am disappointed that Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. I very strongly oppose this!

Sincerely,

Francisco Gadea  
3519 NE 15th Ave #166  
Portland, OR 97212

**From:** [Lily Rosenbaum](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree code  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 5:39:48 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lily.lowell@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please do not let the greedy developers destroy Portland's remaining greenery!

I'm a preschool teacher and mom of 2. When my friends from the Midwest have visited here, they have all said "wow, it's so green!" I guess I've taken the trees for granted. If they are cut down in a shortsighted attempt to placate developers, our gorgeous city will never be as green again in our lifetimes. It takes decades for trees to get to the height where they provide proper shade cover, and trying to start again from scratch would be an uphill battle that I'm sure people won't even have the energy for. That would be so sad. Also, there's no guarantee that developers would actually build affordable housing!

—**Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid.

—**We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

—**We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

—**Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Thank you,  
Lily Rosenbaum



**From:** [Kim Brown](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree code  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 7:14:15 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from kimberly.alexis.brown@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

I live in Portland and I am concerned about the upcoming changes to the tree code on plots smaller than 6,000 square feet. I am well aware that we need more affordable housing but that does not need to come at the cost of our urban tree canopy, something that we are trying to increase not decrease.

It is well studied how many benefits urban dwellers get from proximity to trees and a stark difference can be seen (and felt) between East and West Portland as most of East Portland is devoid of trees coverage.

Preserving trees now is going to save money for the city in the long run as trying to replant trees, conduct watering, and maintain them is costly and doesn't often always work out. I know because I worked for the city doing street tree inventory and newly planted trees are often neglected mostly because developers are required to put them in but often neglect them afterwards.

When I think of Portland, I think of beautiful trees. Do not change that. There is not accountability that this change will even create more affordable housing.

Kim Brown

**From:** [mindy gramberg](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** tree code  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:52:54 PM

---

You don't often get email from [mojitoez@gmail.com](mailto:mojitoez@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

I am writing to voice objection to the proposed rollback of the tree code to enable "easier" building of housing. I am against this because I have heard from numerous professionals in the development field that the tree code is not the problem. The city bureaucracy is the problem. Poor communication within and between departments is the problem. Allowing the random cutting of trees won't solve any of this and will leave us more vulnerable to heat problems.

Please reconsider this ill-fated move before it's too late.

--

respectfully,  
Mindy Gramberg

**From:** [barbara g](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree codes changes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 10:44:27 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from bgicking@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek-

After voting and supporting you, it's very disappointing to hear that you are considering lessening or eliminating the state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. We can have both density housing, trees and wetlands without capitulating to developers. This will not be a winning strategy in the long run. It is already well established that low income neighborhoods are hotter with less tree canopy than other neighborhoods and it's due to lack of trees and wetlands. We need to keep this tree canopy to reduce our need for AC and because it increases the biodiversity of nature. We live in an older neighborhood with lots of trees and have weathered the last few increasingly hot summers with our tree shade and a whole house fan, no AC. The tradeoff in terms of climate change goals simply isn't worth it. We need to find another way to incentivize developers other than eliminating these restrictions. They will find a way to make it work and we will have more liveable, beautiful neighborhoods in the end.

Sincerely,  
Barbara Gicking  
Portland, OR

**From:** [Stephen Bachhuber](mailto:srbachhuber1@gmail.com)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree codes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 9:05:45 AM

---

[You don't often get email from srbachhuber1@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

I write in opposition to overturning or relaxing tree codes to promote more affordable development.

Urban tree canopy is essential for livability in the face of climate change, and will ultimately reduce costs of development rather than increase them. I personally lived in a house shaded to the south west by a huge oak, and needed no air conditioning during some of the warmest summers of the past decade. Tree canopy saves on long term operating costs, and makes urban living pleasant.

Pursuing the idea of cost further, the idea that overriding local tree ordinances will significantly reduce costs is misguided. The preservation and planting of trees are a minor cost in comparison to all the other price drivers of permitting and construction.

Additionally there is no guarantee that a suspended tree code will bring affordable development. In reality it will be used to increase the profit margins on market rate development.

So I ask you to maintain tree codes. Please look at long term costs and accept that tree canopy reduces costs. Please broaden your focus beyond a short term initiative to spur dwelling construction, and consider long term values like livability and reducing carbon pollution. Thanks for your work.

Stephen Bachhuber  
3428 SE 9th Avenue  
Portland OR 97202  
503-319-3950

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [seedmunch](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree Codes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 8:40:04 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [seedmunch@gmail.com](mailto:seedmunch@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Governor Kotek and Members of HPAC,

Portland's numerous trees are what make it a beautiful city. It's one of the reasons I'm proud to live here, and the tree codes are very important as to why I'm proud to live in Oregon. Our focus on preserving the beauty of our environment and mutual living space is why I'm happy to pay taxes in this state, and why I voted for Governor Kotek in the first place.

I recognize the absolute importance of affordable housing, for the rights of human beings and the betterment of our community's moral constitution. Any development necessary for this need not harm our environment in the process. If anything, new development provides us an opportunity to add *more* trees, especially in urban areas.

New development is also not necessary to provide affordable housing, nor is it advisable. This is what eminent domain is *for*. Take ownership of the many unoccupied buildings in this city, convert them to livable space if need be so that they can serve to actually help our populace. Hotels, apartment buildings, office buildings, and many other frequently empty constructions are classist blights on the city of Portland, and Oregon as a whole, when they could be repurposed for those in need. Additional construction often hurts our environment, and all too frequently serves to protect the wealth inequality that victimizes so many of our fellow persons.

We need to continue to grow trees to combat climate change, and reduce the surface area of the planet covered by concrete, which builds up heat within our atmosphere. If anything, make the tree codes more limiting, and continue to make this state's municipalities somewhere worthy of being proud to live in.

Concerned taxpayer and resident,  
Robert Withnell

**From:** [Kathryn Green](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree Codes  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 9:24:11 PM

---

You don't often get email from kathrynlauraine@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek,

Please do not roll back tree regulations as a way to speed up housing construction.

When cities around the country are looking to green their urban areas, this is a short sighted solution in the face of a devastating climate crises.

***I stand with Friends of Trees in the following:***

**—We oppose HPAC’s proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**—We oppose HPAC’s recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.**

Thank you.

Warmly,  
Kathryn Green

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Jonah Bauwens](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree proposal  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:41:18 PM

---

You don't often get email from jzbauwens@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**—We oppose HPAC’s proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.



## Comments on the HPAC PLAN 9.25.23

To: [Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov), [HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)

Cc: [Karin.Power@oregon.gov](mailto:Karin.Power@oregon.gov) [taylor.smileywolfe@oregon.gov](mailto:taylor.smileywolfe@oregon.gov)  
[matthew.tschabold@oregon.gov](mailto:matthew.tschabold@oregon.gov) [Rep.DanRayfield@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Rep.DanRayfield@oregonlegislature.gov)  
[Sen.RobWagner@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Sen.RobWagner@oregonlegislature.gov)  
[Rep.maxinedexter@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Rep.maxinedexter@oregonlegislature.gov)  
[Sen.Kaysejama@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Sen.Kaysejama@oregonlegislature.gov)  
[Sen.KateLieber@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Sen.KateLieber@oregonlegislature.gov)

To Governor Kotek and to the Housing Production Advisory Council, Co-Chairs Tovey and Hall

Governor Kotek's Executive Order 23-04 created the Housing Production Advisory Council with the stated purpose to "recommend an action plan to meet the State's annual housing production target of 36,000 homes per year for the next ten years. The recommended action plan shall include concrete executive actions, policies, and investments needed to meet this production target."

Instead of finding creative and innovative approaches to meeting the 36,000 home per year target such that "more than fifty percent of the target "must be affordable to households making less than 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) to meet the need," the Council to date has listed what developers would like to see that would make it easier and more profitable for their industry by clearcutting forestland and using valuable agricultural land outside the Urban Growth Boundary.

The April 2023 HPAC Framework states that their goal is to "recommend specific actions the Legislature and State agencies can take to rapidly accelerate housing production, with these minimum requirements:

- A. Address known barriers to housing as prioritized by the Council.
- B. Identify changes to State laws and rules that hold promise for accelerating production, thereby supporting the state's annual housing production target.
- C. Prioritize housing affordability levels by the scale of the deficit of each housing type.
- D. Plan for production that is equitable and affirmatively furthers fair housing.

Underlying the HPAC recommendations is the assumption that a large increase in housing availability will automatically drive housing costs down enough to become affordable for low-income households, and that the state will subsidize building costs and monthly rental or mortgage payments. This will not solve our houselessness crisis and will only create a huge financial burden for the state for years to come.

We wish to take issue with these assumptions and would like to offer a few innovative solutions.

The problem that needs to be solved is that low-income housing is not designed or produced to be affordable for low-income households. Market price housing design and build techniques are inappropriate for low-income mass building in the quantity needed. Rather than building out into wetlands and expanding the urban growth boundary, and wiping out Oregon's hard-won landmark land use legislation built on years and years of public input, we need to be building up and filling in the tens of thousands of acres within our current urban growth boundary.

[As Sightline Institute researchers](#) put it:



***“We have enough buildable land within the Urban Growth Boundary already. There are tens of thousands of acres inside Oregon’s cities for residential development. Oregon’s UGB has protected farmland and reduced sprawl. Higher density development keeps housing from spreading into wildfire prone areas and reduces transportation miles (carbon-emitting). Low density housing has a higher carbon footprint. Compact walkable/bikeable neighborhoods can increase health with lower transportation costs. Housing without access to public transportation is not affordable.”***

**What does affordable mean?** In 2022, the median household income in Oregon amounted to \$86,780. To qualify for any rental assistance from the Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program which is now defunct due to lack of funding, household income could not be above [80% of the area median income \(AMI\) for the county of residence](#). For example, for a family of two, household income needed to be lower than \$41.2K to \$61.9K depending on the county of residence. Sightline’s statistics on Oregon’s housing needs reported:

**“46% of people needing housing are those making less than 80% of Average Median Income (AMI) with the greatest impact on those lower than 60% AMI (this includes full time workers in fast food, childcare, and teachers aides). Another 17% needing housing are between 80-120% of AMI. So “market” rate housing or building at the status quo will serve only 37% of Oregonians.”**

The **Oregon Employment Department** produced [a research paper](#) titled “Poverty and the Oregon Workforce” last December that found that Oregon’s poverty rate was 12.2% in 2021, up from 11.4% in 2019.” [\[For reference](#), in 2019, the Official Poverty Measure’s (OPM) “poverty line”—the minimum amount of income a family unit must have to not be counted as poor—was \$25,926 for a two-adult, two-child family unit. The Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) poverty line (includes state and federal subsidy programs) for the same family was \$28,881 (assuming they rented and lived somewhere with average housing costs).”

The HPAC recommendations will not substantially help these households most in need of housing.

Land is available for development, but funding for infrastructure and development readiness, and “system development charges” (SDCs) are very expensive and is passed through to the new owner/renter. Because many cities in Oregon are underfunded due to property tax limitations from Measures 5 and 50, they cannot afford to help with these site readiness costs.

**Possible solutions to lower building costs:**

1. We support the HPAC Framework recommendation for a **Housing Accountability and Production Office** to help local jurisdictions plan and streamline regulations, (as outlined in the failed HB 3414). However, we suggest keeping decisions about permitting at the local level to protect water resources along with tree canopy and green spaces for health and climate resilience, since this is what most Oregonians care about. Any actions we take need to address environmental equity, and removing trees from areas planned for low-income housing will widen the disparity in environmental equity. In addition, the federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding is now available for Urban Forestry to increase tree canopy in environmental justice communities. There is no reason to gut environmental protections. In fact, there is a movement afoot in the construction/development industry called [biophilic design](#), which is an approach to architecture that seeks to connect building occupants more closely to nature. Biophilic designed buildings incorporate things like natural lighting and ventilation, natural landscape features and other elements for creating a more productive and healthy built environment for people, while using green building practices to reduce the costs of energy, water, and materials. There is a growing number of green building contractors and designers, such as [CBRE](#), and [Urban NW Homes](#). [“From Process to Product: A Review of Three Northwest Green Building Programs”](#) noted:

- Program designs must provide economic rationale for owners or developers, specifications and tools for designers, product availability and incentives for builders, and simplified code review for officials.
  - Centralized entities (utilities, cities, counties, development associations) have the ability to influence building practices and should be leaders in green building programs to achieve organizational and public benefit/societal goals.
2. **Provide State funding for loans for site readiness**, similar to the Regionally Significant Industrial Sites (RSIS) program with a long payback schedule (but without the employment requirements). [Sightline’s suggestion](#): “HB 2980 was proposed in 2023 with bipartisan support but was lost due to the walkout. It provided a Revolving Loan Fund of \$300 million, supporting 12,000 units in the first round. It has the best impact when targeting the lowest Annual Median Income (AMI) in the 60-80% range. This has the potential to leverage \$4.5 billion in other funding.” Sightline also suggests funding for development of poorly utilized land (parking lots, empty office buildings, vacant land, brownfields) as proposed in HB 2981: \$20 million for infrastructure grants or loans associated with 60-120% AMI (‘workforce’) housing and \$20 million for low-cost capital land acquisition for ‘workforce’ housing developers. Currently there is no incentive for owners of poorly utilized land to make that land available for development. Consider tax code changes that penalize holding poorly utilized land and use that money to help pay for development.”
  3. **Zoning and incentives**: We support incentives that truly support low-income housing by providing development funding and tax abatements on property or income *only* to housing that has a significant percentage such as 20% below 60% AMI and another 20% below 80% AMI that is built at the same time as market rate components and must remain affordable units for at least 30 years. Multifamily, mixed-use, multi-level, community living, and cottage style designs with [shared courtyards](#) should be encouraged through incentive programs. There are also a number of [incentive programs](#) to build to net-zero specifications.
  4. **Make use of national and local architectural design competitions** to find scale-able, low-income, green, wildfire- and energy-efficient code compliant designs. In addition to the cash prizes for winning designs, a reward for each housing unit built using the design could be offered to the architect or construction company from state funds. Competitions such as [the Innovation in Affordable Housing Student Design and Planning Competition](#), [City of Portland \(Maine\) Low-cost House Design Competition](#), [ZO Conversion Program](#) and [Modular Home Design Challenge](#) are examples. Los Angeles has an Affordable Home Challenge on the [Buildner website](#). The award-winning designs and community plans could be stored in a data repository with listings of developers and construction firms with successful low-cost projects., including mass timber and prefabricated modular building designs.

In conclusion, we ask that the governor’s Housing Production Advisory Council dig a little deeper to find solutions for low-income housing by looking into our proposed solutions and others. Merely increasing market rate housing units without considering the environmental and societal costs of losing more land to development, especially in environmental justice communities, will only exacerbate climate warming and add to healthcare costs. Our housing development infrastructure plans should include protecting our existing carbon-sequestering trees and wetlands for future water supply. We all deserve to live in the healthy environment that Oregon is recognized for.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments.

[Josie Koehne](#) for [Treekeepers of Washington County](#)

**From:** [Zoe Anton](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Trees and Affordable Housing  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 8:25:19 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from zoe.anton@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

I am writing to you as a small developer in Eugene, Oregon, focused on affordable housing. I, and other people like me, have been waiting for years for the city and state to remove the barriers to building affordable housing, such as single family zoning and parking requirements. Thank you for taking the steps that are allowing us to build additional housing, at 80% AMI or lower, without contributing to sprawl and helping people live in an existing walkable neighborhood. We plan to build more, all without removing any trees.

Tree removal is counter to making healthy cities and **will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing**. Lower-income people also deserve to be in beautiful places with shade and all the other benefits that trees provide. Please reconsider removing tree protections in the name of affordable housing.

Thank you,  
Zoe Anton  
503.676.4007

**From:** [Kria Lacher](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Trees and homes  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 1:37:07 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [kria.lacher@gmail.com](mailto:kria.lacher@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi

I find it troubling that this proposal is even on the table. The proposal to reverse the protections on our urban forest is a giant step in the wrong direction. The rest of the world is planting trees to deal with climate change. We need more trees, not less. We have another very real issue of climate change as well as a housing issue.

I understand wanting to accommodate the new zoning codes which allow for more density. There are two plains that can be planned for infill. One choice is spreading the floor plans out over the entire lot, which might require tree removal. The other choice is it can go up in height. Personally I would much prefer to live in a city with trees and I'd prefer the height to increase density rather than the removal of trees. There are other ways to plan for infill other than "this is how we always do it" method.

The proposal as written would impact the vast majority of lots creating even more of a disparity between rich and poor in quality of life. Do we really want a city that has trees in wealthy neighborhoods and not in more moderate income neighborhoods? That more or less is where that would go. This proposal would exasperate that already existing situation. And the city does not even enforce the tree removal issue as it stands. Three very large trees were just removed one block from my house for a new higher density project. That is not OK. We'll see if they even replant.

Do you remember when it got to 108 degrees in portland? Well trees do things like shade the heat sinks otherwise known as streets. Trees also shade homes and keep them cool and that saves energy and impacts our carbon footprint. If this proposal is allowed to go through it will be cooler in wealthy neighborhoods, read more bearable, and hotter in the soon to be de-treed neighborhoods. This is also an equity issue.

Homes, especially tiny homes, can be built on lots without taking out established trees. Frank Lloyd Wright did that. Yes it might take some creativity and thoughtfulness. But trees are needed just as much as new homes are needed. Build around the trees! It is ok not to maximize every single sq ft of land. I don't think too many people want to live in a concrete jungle.

There is another issue that this would exacerbate, and that is runoff. Building on every square foot of available ground will impact that and could raise the water tables and flood people's basements. We already have significant issues with our sewer systems. I would hope that you would model the worst case scenarios with the water bureau to see how that impacts that.

Trees act as windbreaks which makes a difference in the winter time. They prevent erosion. They clean the air. They provide homes for birds. They make living in the city more comfortable.

Try to come up with a solution that is win win.

Kind regards

Kria Lacher

Oh by the way... If you have a friend or family member that could use any of my services, please give me their name and number, I'll be happy to follow up with them and provide them the service they deserve.

More Realty

My number  
c~ 971-506-4663

**From:** [allene gould](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Robert Gould](#)  
**Subject:** Trees!  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 9:12:06 AM

---

[You don't often get email from [allenegould@hotmail.com](mailto:allenegould@hotmail.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Please DO NOT agree to anything that includes getting rid of more trees for developers; that is not how we became green, healthy Oregon!

Thanks so much, Allene and Rob

Allene Gould  
Lake Oswego, Oregon 97034  
503-697-8458

**From:** [paula.baugher](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Urban Heat Island  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 9:37:45 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from paula.baugher@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello Governor Kotek,

Research has shown (and research I've personally done) that trees are crucial for combating urban heat island effect. Low income neighborhoods are already disproportionately affected by this and a couple neighborhoods in Portland have one of the worst examples in the country of close neighborhoods with significant temperature differences due to tree coverage (Albina and west hills).

Please work with your teams to find a more creative solution that doesn't involve rolling back the significant work that tree planting orgs have done. With the little headway we're making with the climate change fight we really can't afford this.

Thank you  
Paula Baugher, BSc

**From:** [Kristina DiStaso](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Urban Tree Code Testimony  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 8:22:32 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from kristinadistaso@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Housing Production Advisory Council and Governor Kotek,

I writing in opposition of overriding tree code to cur down any size of tree in favor of development. In a time of climate crisis, when summers are getting hotter and people are dying due to heat in this very city, trees are more important than ever. Trees are an essential component of green infrastructure and we will need them to survive increasing temperatures. Not only do we need shade, but they provide mental health benefits, habitat for wildlife, and reduce runoff from increasing rainfall. On an economic front, they can reduce summer energy costs by up to 35%.

Please don't increase urban heat island effect just to develop. The years it will take to grow the trees back are crucial to our survival.

Thank you.



**From:** [Ben Orwoll](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Urban Tree Regulations  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 5:02:19 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from orwollb@ohsu.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello Governor Kotek and to whom it may concern,

I have recently read news of potential new policy related to urban forestry regulations through HPAC that would remove restrictions on removing medium to large urban trees (<48" in diameter). This concerns me for several reasons:

1. Trees are an important part of our urban climate control infrastructure – if the tree canopy is reduced Oregonians will be exposed to increasingly excessive temperatures (especially hot temperatures) that are clearly mitigated by a more robust tree canopy. This is particularly important as we have seen record heat waves repeatedly over recent years, and this pattern is likely to increase.
2. Tree growth represents a balancing effect against our ongoing production of greenhouse gases (especially CO2)
3. Trees are an integral part of Oregon's identity – we should be working to increase their numbers and health rather than allowing widespread removal.

Though there is also an urgent need for housing, we should seek options for meeting that need that also maintain or increase our urban forests. Allowing clear cuts from urban or peri-urban spaces in order to allow for dense housing to be built without requirements for tree replacement do not achieve this.

Thank you for your consideration,

Benjamin Orwoll, MD, MS FAAP FAMIA  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Pediatrics, Division of Pediatric Critical Care  
Information Technology Group  
Department of Medical Informatics and Clinical Epidemiology  
OHSU - [Portland, Oregon](#)  
[orwollb@ohsu.edu](mailto:orwollb@ohsu.edu)

**From:** [RUSSELL ENG](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Urban Trees Are Important  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 1:56:44 PM

---

You don't often get email from engrussb@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Reader,

**—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—**and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

Thanks for your consideration,

Russell Eng

**From:** [Michael Hill](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Urban Trees  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:37:50 PM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from wheat39@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Council members and Governor Kotek,

I can not stress enough the absolute necessity to keep and, in fact, propagate Urban Trees in every city-scape in Oregon. The science is clear that tree cover reduces summer heat, and heat retention in impervious surfaces, as well as evidenced that Urban Trees enhance the livability of cities for every inhabitant.

Do NOT select the short-sighted, developer-focused (read benefiting) stance that Oregon should remove trees in order to develop more-dense housing units. Trees shall be an accompaniment to housing, a benefit to the inhabitants... and existing (sometimes older) trees are an important characteristic for neighborhood distinction and pride.

Look at photos of cities lacking trees versus cities which maintain tree cover... I reckon the feeling each of you experience viewing trees is more comforting than the feeling viewing a concrete jungle.

Oregon doesn't lack trees, but at one time Americans moving Westward believed the Douglas Fir forests and the buffalo would last forever, and we know they were wrong.

I'm a Native Oregonian and I'm not at all approving of the notion of Urban Tree removal for housing unit densification.

Thank you-  
Respectfully,

Michael 'Wheat' Hill

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Jennifer](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Urban trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 12:41:01 AM

---

You don't often get email from stresskitty@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

***At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction***—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. **Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.**

**We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Please do not do away with the regulations and protect our urban trees.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

**From:** [Melanie Kemper](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Urban trees  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 8:07:22 AM

---

[You don't often get email from melanie.kemper@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Of all times to suggest cutting shade trees? Please don't think this is an improvement on anyone's life - the wealth/health from shade only increases yearly.  
Melanie Burns Kemper

**From:** [Taylor Valdes](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** WE NEED ALL THE TREES  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 8:05:45 PM

---

You don't often get email from [taylor@thevenderia.com](mailto:taylor@thevenderia.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

I am a concerned citizen living and working in East Portland, specifically in a pocket of Portland that lacks shade. Global warming is REAL and we need canopy coverage. Urban trees are crucial to the livability of our city. Do not make it easier to cut trees down. We need all the trees we can get!

I'm glad you are making it easy for homeowners to get free trees, but how are you incentivizing landlords to plant trees on their properties? How can you incentivize existing tree owners to KEEP their trees?

Planting is important, but more important is tending and caring for the trees that already exist. Mature trees hold more carbon and provide more shade than newbies.

PLEASE PROTECT OUR URBAN TREES. We need them.

Taylor

--

Vending should not be boring!

**From:** [Kendra Green](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** We need more trees  
**Date:** Thursday, September 28, 2023 7:01:13 AM

---

You don't often get email from kgbrown.123@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

We need trees to fight glacial climate change and to cool out cities. Heat waves kill more people annually than all other natural disasters remarkably. Don't cut down healthy urban trees and don't make policies that limit their proliferation, we need them.

Kendra Green

**From:** [Alicia](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** we need more urban tree canopy, so opposing HPAC recommendation  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:53:33 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from cohenalicia@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of trees and in opposition to the poorly designed HPAC recommendations that include the **overriding of tree codes** for plots smaller than 6,000 square feet. This will allow clear cutting of trees under 48" diameter, which includes the vast majority of urban trees.

This recommendation stands in stark contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to increase tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities.

As always, important issues need deeply, carefully considered design and this aspect of the HPAC recommendations needs to do a better job of explicitly **preserving our urban canopy**.

Thank you for all you do to make Oregon better,  
Alicia Cohen  
2415 SE Sherman St.  
Portland  
97214



**From:** [Ginger Edwards](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Why Trees are important  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4:43:26 PM

---

You don't often get email from ginger.edws@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Yes, we need housing, and that housing needs Trees.

I think it takes 18-24 months to build a typical apartment building in Portland - not counting the permitting and development time. Then, people can live there. However, they won't have shade, clean air, or storm water help from trees if they are all gone.

It takes 30-35 years for an average to large tree to reach the age that it provides real shade, filters the air, and helps with storm water run off. And, as the tree ages and continues to grow, all those benefits just get better. These trees can live 50-250 years, serving the community all that time.

Trees typically planted after commercial real estate development are not considered average or large trees. Instead they are small trees with short life spans. They never provide shade, never help clean the air, and don't help with storm water run off. They usually live 8-15 years at most.

I don't want to live in the future featured in WALL-E where all plants on Earth disappear until humans leave. . . .then return to find just one plant left, a new sprout. This plan to suspend the Tree Code and allow large scale removal of trees to speed development reminds me of that movie.

Please don't do it, keep trees. There are many examples in Portland of creative developers building around a large tree that is then loved by residents, and it provides the shade, clean air, and storm water assistance it can naturally.

Thank you,  
Ginger Edwards  
6730 N. Wilbur Ave  
Portland, Oregon  
Arbor Lodge Neighborhood



ZERO Coalition  
151 SW 1st Ave. Suite 300  
Portland, OR 97204  
Point of contact: [ashley@zerocoalitionoregon.org](mailto:ashley@zerocoalitionoregon.org)

Office of Oregon Governor Tina Kotek  
Attn: Housing Production Advisory Council  
900 Court Street, Suite 254  
Salem, OR 97301-4047

## **Fostering Healthy Indoor Air Quality in Multifamily Housing - Integrating Electrification, Mechanical Ventilation, and Cooling Strategies**

Indoor air quality (IAQ) is of paramount concern for occupant health and comfort within multifamily housing. This paper advocates for the Housing Production Advisory Council to play a pivotal role in elevating IAQ standards, focusing on multifaceted strategies encompassing mechanical ventilation with advanced filtration, effective cooling provision, and the transformative potential of beneficial electrification. The significance of IAQ is undeniable, given its profound influence on the well-being of occupants. This exploration underscores the importance of creating healthier and more sustainable living environments by integrating comprehensive measures prioritizing IAQ.

**Mechanical Ventilation and Filtration as Core Strategies:** Mechanical ventilation supplemented by advanced filtration is a cornerstone strategy for enhancing IAQ. Proper air flow rates, coupled with high-efficiency filters, effectively mitigate pollutants from both indoor and outdoor sources. Central ventilation systems, recognized for their maintenance advantages, play a pivotal role in maintaining optimal IAQ levels. Building policies that incorporate resilience planning ensure IAQ continuity even in extreme conditions.

**Cooling for Comfort and Health:** Equally vital is the role of effective cooling in safeguarding occupant health and well-being. Extreme heat not only poses health risks but also limits the use of open windows for ventilation due to outdoor pollutants. Central air



conditioning addresses both these challenges, offering comfort while maintaining IAQ standards. Collaborative efforts with utility regulators ensure equitable access to cooling provisions, especially in energy-efficient housing.

**Electrification for Enhanced Options and IAQ:** Beneficial electrification emerges as a game-changer in pursuing improved IAQ and occupant comfort. By embracing electric heat pump alternatives, multifamily housing can expand options while reducing reliance on gas-based systems. This transition improves IAQ while supporting carbon reduction goals and reducing the load on the grid during heat waves. Additionally, transitioning from gas stoves to induction cooking addresses IAQ challenges, reducing indoor pollutants and aligning with public health recommendations<sup>1</sup> and a broader electrification strategy.

**Holistic Urban Planning and Sustainability:** Integrating IAQ considerations into holistic urban planning augments its potential to create healthier communities. Amenities, transportation choices, and neighborhood pollution sources affect IAQ as well as outdoor air quality. Highlighting the connections between IAQ, energy consumption, and environmental responsibility in planning not only supports health and affordability but also facilitates reaching zero energy and sustainability goals.

The Housing Production Advisory Council's proactive involvement in advocating for comprehensive IAQ measures, emphasizing mechanical ventilation, advanced filtration, cooling strategies, and electrification, is pivotal for creating resilient and healthier multifamily communities. This approach is integral to cultivating environments prioritizing health, sustainability, and occupant comfort. Mechanical ventilation, cooling, and electrification enhance IAQ and safeguard occupants from outdoor pollutants, extreme heat, and indoor pollutants. As housing evolves, the centrality of IAQ to occupant well-being remains paramount for creating healthier and more equitable housing.

---

<sup>1</sup> Multnomah County Health Department report recommends transitioning away from gas stoves over health concerns:

<https://www.multco.us/multnomah-county/news/multnomah-county-health-department-report-recommends-transitioning-away-gas>



September 6, 2023

ZERO Coalition

151 SW 1st Ave. Suite 300

Portland, OR 97204

Point of contact: [ashley@zerocoalitionoregon.org](mailto:ashley@zerocoalitionoregon.org)

Office of Oregon Governor Tina Kotek

Attn: Housing Production Advisory Council

900 Court Street, Suite 254

Salem, OR 97301-4047

## **Lifecycle Costs Show Sustainable Building Investments Pay Off**

Oregon's commitment to increased production of housing must extend beyond mere first cost. The Housing Production Advisory Council's (HPAC) plan presents a unique opportunity to prioritize sustainable building standards, particularly in energy efficiency and public health, that can lead to reduced long-term costs such as lower energy burden. Failure to implement these measures would not only burden the direct beneficiaries of HPAC but also impact all Oregonians in terms of environment, household finances, and health outcomes.

Economic Burdens of Traditional Building Practices: Emphasizing growth without embracing electrification and on-site renewables in the housing sector will lead to economic burdens for residents and utility ratepayers alike. Relying on historical fuel use behaviors to guide future homebuilding will require significant investments in additional capacity build-out (such as costly gas distribution pipelines that are likely to be stranded in the near future), which will be ultimately passed on to utility ratepayers. Additionally, passive strategies like strategic planting of trees can reduce cooling costs and improve



comfort<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, the continued reliance on fossil fuels carries substantial environmental and healthcare costs<sup>2,3</sup>, and hinders Oregon's progress toward emission reduction targets.

The Link Between Building Efficiency and Livability: Affordability, comfort, and health are intricately tied to the efficiency and energy sources of buildings. It is essential for all Oregonians to have access to housing that adheres to these basic needs. Integrating building efficiency and electrification into the housing production plan will ensure that the well-being of residents and the environment is prioritized and that long-term costs for the occupants of these buildings are reduced<sup>4,5</sup>.

Equity and Long-Term Costs: Historically underserved communities have borne the brunt of the long-term costs associated with inadequate housing policies that focus solely on shelter provision. If we neglect sustainability and energy efficiency, we perpetuate disparities in living conditions and health outcomes among different populations across our state. To achieve true equity in housing access and affordability, we must build homes with clean, efficient energy systems in communities that are walkable, bike-friendly, and well-connected to public transit, promoting accessibility and reducing long-term costs for all residents.

Incorporating building efficiency and sustainability measures into HPAC's plan is essential for the long-term prosperity of all Oregonians. While there may be an upfront premium

---

<sup>1</sup> Broberg, Brad. Plant Trees to Save Energy and Grow Value. USDA Forest Service. <https://www.houselogic.com/by-room/yard-patio/plant-trees-save-energy-grow-value/#:~:text=Trees%20properly%20placed%20around%20your,to%20the%20USDA%20Forest%20Service>.

<sup>2</sup> Hackenmiller-Paradis and Bernell. The price of pollution: costs estimates of environmentally related disease in Oregon. The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability. March 12, 2010. <https://www.nrdc.org/press-releases/report-health-costs-climate-change-and-fossil-fuel-pollution-to-ps-820-billion-year>

<sup>3</sup> Report: Health Costs from Climate Change and Fossil Fuel Pollution Tops \$820 Billion a Year. NRDC. May 20, 2021. <https://www.nrdc.org/press-releases/report-health-costs-climate-change-and-fossil-fuel-pollution-to-ps-820-billion-year>

<sup>4</sup> Denniston, et. al., Cost Study of the Building Decarbonization Code: An Analysis of the incremental first cost and life cycle cost of two common building types. New Buildings Institute and NRDC. April 2022. <https://newbuildings.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/BuildingDecarbCostStudy.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Tan, et. al., The Economics of Electrifying Buildings: Residential New Construction. RMI. 2022. <https://rmi.org/insight/the-economics-of-electrifying-buildings-residential-new-construction/>



associated with constructing high-efficiency on-site solar-ready buildings, these costs are offset in the long term by avoiding unnecessary gas distribution systems and reducing energy costs for residents. The long-term benefits of safe, healthy, comfortable housing with low ongoing energy bills, are worth planning for. By prioritizing energy efficiency and public health, Oregon can build a sustainable future, fostering thriving communities that prioritize the well-being of residents and the environment alike.



September 6, 2023

ZERO Coalition

151 SW 1st Ave. Suite 300

Portland, OR 97204

Point of contact: [ashley@zerocoalitionoregon.org](mailto:ashley@zerocoalitionoregon.org)

Office of Oregon Governor Tina Kotek

Attn: Housing Production Advisory Council

900 Court Street, Suite 254

Salem, OR 97301-4047

## **Housing Resiliency for Safety and Health**

Oregon's commitment to expanding quality, efficient, and affordable housing necessitates looking past first costs to a resilience lens. The Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) must consider passive envelope and survivability, along with land use and holistic energy delivery considerations in order for the housing built today to meet residents' needs throughout its lifespan. In addition, future-proofing for Oregon's climate goals and new technology is part of building science best practices.

**Extreme weather and survivability:** Whether considering risk from heat, smoke, or extreme winter weather, high insulation values and airtightness are key, and offer life safety protection even in the event of a power outage<sup>1</sup>. Insulation and air sealing also offer affordability and utility resilience by mitigating energy demand, especially in times of peak use. These issues are also of utmost importance to Oregon communities. Consider the information shared through the engagement work of community groups like Build/Shift who created [Climate and Health Standards for Existing Buildings \(HEART Standards\)](#).

---

<sup>1</sup> Rempel, et. al. Improving the passive survivability of residential buildings during extreme heat events in the Pacific Northwest. Applied Energy. September 1, 2022.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0306261922006729>



**Pro-active affordability:** The 2021 heat dome made it clear that access to mechanical cooling is no longer optional in much of Oregon, especially for older adults and families with children. For this reason, rather than analyzing whether including cooling would reduce affordability by increasing building costs, it is incumbent on HPAC to explore incentives to make life-saving, efficient heating and cooling affordable such as the 45L tax credit incentives available through the Inflation Reduction Act<sup>2</sup>. Heat pumps in new construction offer an easy pathway to increase affordability of utility bills while also providing life-saving cooling since they provide heating and cooling. Consider Multnomah County's heat vulnerability index<sup>3</sup> to understand that the geographies that are in need of increased housing also often suffer from the highest summer temperatures.

**Future-proofing:** Whether to cope with planned power shut-offs or simply to support grid electricity needs, we need to build today with readiness for electrification, solar, and storage, including grid responsiveness and vehicle to building charging. Fire and seismic resilience is key not only for new buildings, but needs to be addressed in existing buildings as well to ensure all Oregonians live in safe buildings that can withstand natural and manmade disasters. Resilience hubs and community spaces should be included in larger developments and added to support existing communities.

**Representation:** It is essential to modernize the state's Building Codes Boards and Advisory Boards to state agencies who address land use and housing to include building scientists, sustainability experts, and tenants rights stakeholders. These voices are crucial in ensuring that long-term resiliency, health, safety, and affordability to all who are impacted by the costs and inequities of current housing access are included in the planning and policies that inform how our housing is built.

It is necessary that resiliency is considered as an essential component of the state's housing production goals. With resilient planning, the housing we develop now can still

---

<sup>2</sup> What the IRA Means for Contractors and Electrification. Rewiring America.  
[https://assets.ctfassets.net/v4qx5q5o44nj/3ehL1r7UVhxxBemwYE6IE/292037a110809204ce3fd22b3c94c140/factsheet\\_Contractors.pdf](https://assets.ctfassets.net/v4qx5q5o44nj/3ehL1r7UVhxxBemwYE6IE/292037a110809204ce3fd22b3c94c140/factsheet_Contractors.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Heat Vulnerability Index. Multnomah County Health Department. May 10, 2023.  
<https://www.multco.us/sustainability/news/heat-vulnerability-index-released-multnomah-county-health-department>





provide healthy, safe, and affordable homes when our great-grandchildren are adults. Without it, we risk a new housing crisis and unnecessary loss of lives and homes in the near and long term.



September 6, 2023

ZERO Coalition

151 SW 1st Ave. Suite 300

Portland, OR 97204

Point of contact: [ashley@zerocoalitionoregon.org](mailto:ashley@zerocoalitionoregon.org)

Office of Oregon Governor Tina Kotek

Attn: Housing Production Advisory Council

900 Court Street, Suite 254

Salem, OR 97301-4047

## **Workforce Development Needed to Achieve Housing Development Goals**

Oregon's commitment to expanding quality, efficient, affordable housing requires a skilled and motivated construction workforce. The Housing Production Advisory Council Position (HPAC) must consider bridging the gaps in workforce training, benefits, and best practices for achieving a resilient and efficient construction sector that aligns with Oregon's climate goals.

### **1. Supporting Training Programs and Bridging Gaps**

- a. Connecting with Existing Programs: Strengthening partnerships with organizations like EnerCity Collaborative, Constructing Hope, and Self Enhancement, Inc. (SEI) will supplement their training efforts and provide additional resources to the communities they serve. Collaboration with local NGOs will ensure that workforce development aligns with community needs.
- b. Scholarships and Childcare Support: To attract and retain a diverse workforce, offering scholarships and childcare support to trainees and laborers will break down financial barriers and create a more inclusive industry than is found today.
- c. Addressing Healthcare and Retirement Concerns: Focusing on improved healthcare benefits and retirement plans will enhance workforce retention, ensuring that skilled workers stay in the industry for the long term.



- d. Climate-Focused Training: The construction workforce must adapt to a changing climate, translating to specialized training in climate-focused technologies. The next generation of electricians, HVAC technicians, and plumbers require specialized training and education on renewables, batteries, heat pumps, etc.

## **2. Leveraging New Projects for On-the-Job Training**

- a. On-the-Job Training: Encouraging on-the-job training, apprenticeship, and mentorship during the implementation of new projects will provide hands-on experience and foster a high-quality construction workforce. Contractors can use these opportunities to train new employees on best practices and integrate sustainable building practices effectively.

## **3. Supporting Building Departments and Third-Party Reviewers**

- a. Aligning with Energy Efficiency Goals: Collaboration with organizations like USGBC and the International Living Future Institute (ILFI) can help shift code reviews earlier in the process, ensuring alignment with energy efficiency goals and promoting green building practices.
- b. Incentives for Code Examiners: Offering incentives for people to become code examiners will increase the industry's capacity to address energy efficiency and carbon concerns in new and existing buildings.
- c. Resilient and Efficient Code Grants: Encouraging local jurisdictions to participate in grants such as Resilient and Efficient Code (RECI) from the DOE will enhance their capacity to implement and enforce energy-efficient building codes.

Oregon can empower its construction workforce by prioritizing training, support, initiatives, and partnerships to create and enjoy a sustainable future. The proposed measures will create a resilient industry that embraces high-performance buildings, aligns with climate goals, and ensures the well-being of its workers. Embracing a holistic approach to workforce development will pave the way for a thriving, sustainable, and equitable construction sector in Oregon.



September 7, 2023

ZERO Coalition

151 SW 1st Ave. Suite 300

Portland, OR 97204

Point of contact: [ashley@zerocoalitionoregon.org](mailto:ashley@zerocoalitionoregon.org)

Office of Oregon Governor Tina Kotek

Attn: Housing Production Advisory Council

900 Court Street, Suite 254

Salem, OR 97301-4047

## **Maintaining High Quality of Life in Housing Through Codes and Permitting**

Zoning, building codes, permitting, and entitlement processes are critical to ensuring housing in Oregon is built to a high standard of safety. This includes ensuring the building stands during a fire or natural disaster, protection from smoke and extreme heat or cold, reducing climate impacts while reducing utility costs for owners and renters, contributing toward a vibrant community through urban design and planning, protecting Oregon's natural lands, and ensuring everyone in Oregon has equitable access to the same high quality of housing. Often cited as a barrier to housing production due to increased time and cost, these standards need not be sacrificed in Oregon's response to ramp up housing production. This paper identifies six opportunities to reach the quality of life goals above while also reducing time and cost impact.

Reduce permitting process timeline to help save soft costs. In alignment with the HPAC framework to make it easier to get variances/adjustments to some land use criteria that affect density and reduce complexity and uncertainty in the permitting process, develop a model code that protects sustainability and resilience while enabling streamlined and expedited code review. Require fast-track permitting services for housing developments that meet minimum climate and equity standards and develop a framework that enables this. One example is the [Sustainable Buildings for All framework](#). Additionally, local



governments should be further enabled to contract with third-party reviewers to alleviate staffing shortages.

Maintain the same energy code for new smaller housing developments. The HPAC framework identifies permit-ready plans for smaller-scale, fee-simple “starter homes”. These homes should be required to meet the same standards that provide safe and healthy housing while also reducing occupants’ energy burden. The buyers and renters of these new homes will likely have lower incomes and be most impacted by higher energy costs if the same energy standards are not maintained. As of 2020, 23% of Oregon households are energy burdened, spending over 6% of their income on home energy costs, and those families spend a combined \$289 million per year on the energy affordability gap that exists.<sup>1</sup>

Promote prescriptive paths that exceed the building code to create high-performance buildings. A prescriptive path reduces uncertainty for developers such as time and soft costs, while lowering utility bills benefits the buyer or renter, and furthers the state in meeting climate goals.

Densify housing within urban growth boundaries (UGB) before expanding them. This can include rezoning to allow for more low-rise, wood-framed walk-up buildings and incentivizing multiple units in single-family zones (building on [HB 2001, 2019](#)). For example, in the first year after Portland’s new zoning went into effect, following the Residential Infill Project, 73% (271) of new units permitted were middle housing. And 86% of those middle housing units were built within a quarter mile of an amenity-rich neighborhood center or corridor<sup>2</sup>. This example shows this type of planning for affordable home ownership can be very effective at delivering results within an already-developed geography without greater expansions of UGBs.

Limit overreach of local design review boards. Design review boards are important to ensure a positive urban design experience in our cities and towns, however, there are

---

<sup>1</sup> 2022 Biennial Energy Report. Oregon Department of Energy. November 2022.

<https://www.oregon.gov/energy/data-and-reports/pages/biennial-energy-report.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Residential Infill Project: Year-One Report. Cascadia Partners. June 26, 2023.

<https://www.portland.gov/bps/planning/rip/documents/residential-infill-project-rip-year-one-report-full-report-june-2023/download>



cases where the boards can overreach this mandate and, in turn, add costly redesign and schedule delays to projects. Developing clarity around the mandate of a design review board will help to counteract this issue.

Update funding and financing to support near- and long-term needs. Create a revolving loan fund modeled on the pilot Middle Housing Revolving Loan Fund created by the City of Tigard. This fund requires minimum affordability thresholds and energy efficiency to qualify for construction lending for middle housing developments. Alternatively, provide flexible funding to cities to enact local programs that incentivize middle housing. Extend the lifetime of affordable housing by increasing funding covenants by limiting or eliminating the ability or incentive to exit affordability after 30 years by for-profit owners or establish a statewide fund to purchase these properties upon exit through a right-of-first-refusal. Permanent affordability reduces the profit motive in affordable housing projects, which is often the force behind under-investment in upgraded building systems that lower occupants' energy burden and utilize healthier materials and other sustainability features.

**From:** [Steph Kawachi](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Do not change the tree codes!  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 1:58:34 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from skawachi@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To the Housing Production Advisory Council & Governor Kotek,

I strongly urge you not to allow changes to the tree codes which would allow developers to remove trees less than 48" diameter on lots of under 6,000 sf, and also not require them to provide a fee-in-lieu for removal. I am disappointed that this is even being considered. Please consider the following points:

—*At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction*—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

—**Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. **Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more *affordable* housing.**

—**We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

—**We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

—**Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

Thank you for your time,

Steph Kawachi, RLA

**From:** [GC MacCrone](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Housing vs. Trees: The Fallacy of False Alternatives  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 12:45:52 PM

---

You don't often get email from gmaccrone@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello, HPAC Members:

Heat domes or heat waves, whatever you want to call it, our planet—our Oregon!—is changing and in peril. Climate crisis is real and defenestrating tree-related policies and codes is the wrong way to go. The deaths speak for themselves.

I am a member of the Arbor Lodge Tree Team, a part of our neighborhood association. We work to plant, preserve, and promote trees in our neighborhood and beyond. We do so with PPR's Urban Forestry, with a women-owned native plant-selling start-up, and our own initiatives. Mainly, though, we are just people who like trees—infrastructure that strengthens the relationships and resilience of our neighborhoods.

We can all agree the unaffordability of housing and related home/houselessness merits our deep concern, thought, and action. Trees are part of this issue, however, not the cause of it. Eviscerating tree codes to speed development is a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their planned climate and urban canopy goals. More deaths and civic discomfort will result; this is not hyperbole; this is science. These are facts:

- *No Proof.* Doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that housing developers will create more *affordable* housing.
- *Existing Policy.* We have a heavily socialized policy-making process in Portland and the current Tree Code reflects this in its being strongly influenced and easily overridden by developers. Now is *not* the time to make it weaker still.
- *Building in wetlands is shortsighted.* Shifting foundations, increased erosion, increased damp basements and mold, increased downstream flooding are only some of the negatives. In so developing, we eliminate the sponge-like quality of wetlands to affirmatively control erosion, direct water to aquifers, enrich habitat (including for humans), replenish our fresh water sources, preserve recreation and education opportunities, and abate flooding. Do we really need more sewage flowing into the Willamette?



- *Your committee is poorly constituted.* Where are the water and land and wetland and neighborhood and community partners? This seems more a development committee than a housing-environmental one. Nobody argues that we need more affordable housing, but forsaking the latter and compromising its values and perspectives for the former prevents a thoughtful, holistic solution to these issues. Let's not make Oregon's cities "unlovable and unlivable."

Tom McCall is rolling over in his grave. In the recently decided *Held v. State*, the Montana court ruled that "young people have a fundamental right to a climate system that is safe and stable for their lives." McCall would have approved, and he would likely be shoulder-to-shoulder with us on this.

As McCall said of himself, I paraphrase now for all of us who decry your false dichotomy of housing *or* trees: "We activists love Oregon more than we love life." In the name of Oregon and its beauty and its livability, we're watching you, and we're not going anywhere.

Do the right thing.

Sincerely yours,

Gregory & Stacey MacCrone  
7225 North Atlantic Avenue  
Portland, Ore. 97217

**From:** [Aaron Krenkel](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC and tree codes  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 3:10:48 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from akrenkel@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi there,

I'm writing about the proposal to override tree codes in urban settings. We need more affordable housing. We need a robust urban canopy to make neighborhoods livable for the people in those houses, especially in the climate-change era. How about a compromise with a kind of sliding scale of compensation? For small/young trees, developers would pay \$500/tree removal toward a tree-planting fund (either within the city or with a non-profit like Friends of Trees) AND replant the tree prior to completion of the project, if the tree is removed from a space that won't have a housing unit on it, such as a courtyard or planting strip. For each semi-mature tree removed (say over 20' in height or 4" in trunk diameter), developers should be required to pay \$2,000 toward the tree fund, and replant. More mature trees (say over 40' in height or 12" in trunk diameter) would require a \$5,000 contribution, and replant. Anything larger than 60' and 18" diameter would require a \$10,000 contribution, and replant... just by way of proposing an example.

Kind regards,

Aaron Krenkel,  
SE Portland resident

29 September 2023

Housing Production Advisory Council

Via email: [hpac.gov@oregon.gov](mailto:hpac.gov@oregon.gov)

Dear Councilors:

I'm a resident of Southeast Portland, writing to comment on HPAC's recommendation to modify allowable standards for local tree codes. I work in affordable housing development, but I am submitting these comments as a private citizen.

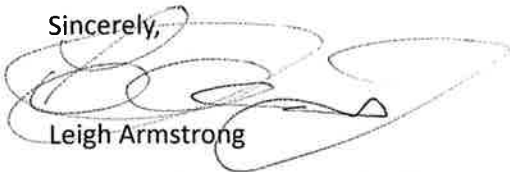
Many homeowners and developers in the Metro region have stories of the absurdities inflicted upon them by restrictive and frequently arbitrary tree codes. The current tree codes in Portland and the surrounding areas have tilted too far toward tree preservation, and are responsible for contributing to the current housing emergency. Current tree codes also provide cover to those who oppose any new development, no matter how badly needed it may be.

However, HPAC's proposed solution is a chainsaw, and pruning shears are what is needed. Granting developers the blanket right to clear-cut urban tree canopy without mitigation measures will intensify the effects of our current climate emergency, especially in East Portland where low-income communities are already disproportionately affected by higher summer temperatures and limited tree canopy. HPAC's one-size-fits-all proposal is also fundamentally undemocratic, overriding the will of local communities and their elected leaders. Lastly, the recommendation as written does not seem to be supported by any significant data. One would expect a change of this magnitude to undergo thorough analysis and vetting. At a minimum, this analysis should project how many additional housing units will be produced vs. how many trees are projected to be lost based on this recommendation.

A balanced approach to prioritizing both housing production and urban canopy preservation is needed. 10 years of unrestricted deforestation in our cities will do damage that could take 100 years or more to repair. Mitigating the excesses of tree codes to reduce development costs and complexity is a worthy goal, but must be carefully weighed against the costs to our communities, especially those who are most vulnerable to the long-term effects of urban canopy loss.

I urge you to set aside this recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leigh Armstrong", written over a light blue circular stamp.

Leigh Armstrong

5635 SE Lafayette St., Portland

CC: Governor Tina Kotek

Via email: [governor.kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:governor.kotek@oregon.gov)

**From:** [Allen Maberry](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** HPAC proposed plan  
**Date:** Monday, October 2, 2023 1:20:06 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from maberry@uw.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern:

In looking over this proposal, it seems to me to have been written by property "developers" and is entirely in their own interest and it looks suspiciously like "the camel's nose" proverb. This is a matter of concern for several reasons:

- 1) in saying that one is free to remove trees under 48 inches in diameter (not circumference, mind you) are fair game for removal is absurd. There are exceptionally few, if any trees in Portland, or even in Multnomah county that are over 48 inches in diameter. It sounds vaguely reasonable, but only to people who do not know how large 48 inches, or 4 feet, is.
- 2) the stated goal is to allow for more low cost housing and alter zoning laws. Zoning density laws have already been modified to a great extent. Our neighborhood in Rose City was originally zoned single family per 50 by 100 lot. Now it is zoned "high density", which allows for apartments and other large housing structures. The same is true of a great deal of Portland.
- 3) this whole plan reeks of shunting off the poor to some sort of climate desert. When I grew up here in Portland during the 1950s through 1970s we lived in Irvington, and later in 1968 relocated to Laurelhurst. Both neighborhoods had a profusion of large, old trees. But when one looks at neighborhoods like north Cully, and parts of east Portland and east county, and some other parts of the city, there were virtually no older substantial trees. I am neither a botanist nor an urban ecologist, but there has been sufficient reporting, both here and in other cities where I have lived such as Washington, DC, that the lack of mature trees leads to climate deserts which are significantly hotter than well-treed areas where I lived,
- 4) I realize that there is a need for more housing, especially affordable housing. However, it should be in a livable neighborhood. Also, there is no reason why builders cannot accommodate existing trees, as I believe they should be forced to do under existing building regulations. In fact, they should be required to plant more of them. The developers should not be given carte blanche to remove whatever they think is in their own, but not necessarily the public's, best interest.

Thank you.

allen maberry  
6102 NE Clackamas St  
Portland, OR 97213  
(202) 460-3396  
maberry@uw.edu

September 29, 2023

Dear Housing Production Advisory Council:

My name is Dr. Brooke Bachelor, and I am a Family Physician in Portland and Beaverton. I have dedicated my life's work to protecting the health of our communities, and I am concerned about the health of our communities after reading the proposed changes to tree codes. I come to you today to share some information and with some key requests today.

This is not just an afterthought. This is a priority topic that deserves each committee member's full attention, care and effort to make sure we do the best for our communities.

As a physician, I feel obligated to lift up the health benefits of trees. There is emerging evidence that trees improve air quality and reduce stress, anxiety, depression and prevalence of violence in communities (not to mention their innumerable benefits on our physical health from alleviating other detrimental effects of climate change).

**My priority proposed changes to the current recommendations include:**

1. Consider using parameters other than diameter to determine tree protections. If you do use diameter, decrease the threshold diameter of trees that will be protected to 12 inches.
2. Consider blanket protections for unincorporated areas of the state that do not have many tree protections
3. Do not allow developers to pay to take down trees or simply plant young trees to replace old trees they take down
4. Better tree code enforcement
5. Better advertisement/accessibility of public comment before trees come down

---

**I. Decrease threshold diameter of trees to be protected (or remove this as the determining factor for tree protections)**

**It's currently proposed that only trees that meet a 48-inch diameter threshold should be protected. The big problem is that this would eliminate protections for nearly ALL trees.** Trees approaching this size can be more than 300 years old. For reference, federal guidelines appear to promote tree protections for trees that are 21 inches or more in diameter, and other codes have named 12 inches as a protection

threshold. This proposed 48-inch diameter appears to be very arbitrary and clearly prioritizes the interests of the developers over the numerous community benefits that trees offer. Also, of note, **some important native trees grow very slowly** like our native Oregon oak that provides significant environmental benefits. Please consider that **diameter alone may not be the best way to differentiate between what trees should stay and go. However, if you do move forward with a recommendation for a diameter threshold for tree protections, I recommend protecting trees 12 inches or more in diameter (and definitely 21 inches or more in diameter)**

## **II. Don't forget protections for urban unincorporated areas (such as those in Washington County)**

**I live in urban unincorporated Washington County, and there are almost no tree protections for my area, even with other tree codes in many of the surrounding neighborhoods and the Portland city limit just a few blocks away from me. I am seeing very old, large trees come down for development within a few blocks of my home at an alarming rate, and there is limited ability for the working public to comment and weigh in before they are taken down. We also can decrease the need for so much new construction if we instead explore the option of repurposing the many vacant buildings and parking lots that already exist and for which innumerable trees have already given their lives.**

## **III. Young trees ≠ old trees**

Old trees are an invaluable, irreplaceable resource. We know that young trees sequester significantly less carbon than their older counterparts. **Consider adding some incentives for developers to protect trees, not just pay a fee to take them down. Many just consider this to be part of the cost of a project, and it shouldn't be that way. This doesn't count as actual protections.**

## **IV. Better tree code enforcement**

If we are going to talk about tree codes, we need to make sure we include funding for strict enforcement of them with high-stakes penalties

## **V. Better public comment accessibility**

**We also need better, more accessible opportunities for the working public to engage in these decisions surrounding the fate of our neighborhood trees.**

In closing, we need solutions that both advance housing and create healthier, more climate- resilient urban landscapes. **There are many ways to build that are inclusive of tree protections, and I propose inviting arborists (like Rick Till whose**

comments we heard) and/or architects to collaborate with HPAC who have successfully utilized alternative construction techniques to address the more granular details that we need to answer specific policy considerations. As part of formal recommendations to the Governor, you have an obligation to legitimately explore how this could be done, and we need this perspective represented as part of HPAC. I also share the concern that others have raised of the lack of local environmental group voices on the HPAC.

**Many of these current tree code recommendations would clearly cause harm to our local communities** including growing children, the people of Oregon, and our global community. What we do now (and always) has a profound impact on those around us and beyond. **Many of these current recommendations feel to prioritize profit, which is unethical and should never supersede the essential human rights that tree protections provide.**

I want my kids to know and experience the wondrous call of the Barred Owls perched in our nearby old-growth Douglas Fir trees, and for this to happen, we need to act now to protect their disappearing canopy.

So I urge us to choose a different path together; one that provides better protections for trees and Oregonians at this critical climate juncture.

Thank you for your consideration and for the work you do.

**Brooke Bachelor, DO**  
**Resident of Portland & unincorporated Washington County**

September 29, 2023

Re: Opposing HPAC recommendations that loosen environmental restrictions (regarding trees, wetlands, etc.)

Governor Tina Kotek [Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov](mailto:Governor.Kotek@oregon.gov)

Housing Production Advisory Council [HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov](mailto:HPAC.GOV@oregon.gov)

Dear Governor Kotek:

This is not a time for short-sighted compromises.

You state that to build more housing, all potential solutions should be on the table – including loosening laws/regulations that protect trees, wetlands, and other green infrastructure in order to do that. I full-heartedly disagree, these are not true solutions.

If we continue to sacrifice the natural aspects of our communities, our communities will begin to look like prisons. When this happens, studies have shown that many other ills follow – higher rates of sickness, mental anguish/drug use, crime, etc. Our natural environment is crucial to the state's livability and to our long-term survival – providing myriad ecosystem services (environmental and social).

We are all very concerned about the houseless and drug crises that plague our communities. I too want the government to quit sitting on its hands, spending frivolously, caving to profit-driven entities, etc., and get to work to solve these problems in a way that benefits the community. But exacerbating other problems that will take **centuries to undo** – I am not okay with that. It's also not okay to think that cutting a large tree and simply re-planting it with another tree is a solution. **Large trees take TIME to grow** – hundreds of years - more than your lifetime, more than most of our lifetimes!

Zoning and permitting need to be reworked so that profit isn't the primary driver. Government exists for the people, and for the common good – not the dollar, and not just the loudest or most wealthy people. Currently, Zoning codes allowing larger homes on smaller lots provide less space for trees that grow large enough at maturity to provide many health, climate, and environmental benefits. Most housing designs for developed sites leave only enough space for upright, narrow trees that provide much less cooling shade and other health and environmental benefits than large-form trees do. We need to go the other direction entirely – more, smaller, affordable homes, built AROUND trees, and on some of the MANY vacant/dilapidated lots within our cities.

We also need to rethink the property rental situation. There are three vacant homes on my block because the housing market is down and people don't want to sell, but also because they are too afraid to rent the property. We need to fix this problem so that people have homes to rent and property owners don't feel like they are going lose their homes to people who can't pay rent, squatting rights, drug cooking, etc.. We need solutions that benefit renters AND landowners.



Oregon needs housing that is healthy, equitable, and climate-resilient. That won't be possible without intact trees and other green infrastructure such as wetlands and environmental zones. Our communities need smart design that leaves room for both housing and large trees. I urge the council to focus on solutions that advance housing equity and do not exacerbate climate change and other problems that are even bigger than our current housing crisis.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

Sincerely,

Kathy Shearin  
Portland, Oregon

Cc:

Representative Tawna Sanchez, [Rep.TawnaSanchez@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Rep.TawnaSanchez@oregonlegislature.gov)

Senator Lew Frederick, [Sen.LewFrederick@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Sen.LewFrederick@oregonlegislature.gov)



September 19, 2023

Re: Opposing HPAC recommendations regarding trees

Dear Governor Kotek:

We are facing multiple crises in our state. One is housing, but another is climate equity. We cannot sacrifice one for the other. People in our state are dying from the heat due to increased summer temperatures and drought. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

As an edible landscaper, I help homeowners create spaces that are functional, beautiful and welcoming to people, pets, wildlife and the planet. Trees are the primary landscape element to help shape a space. Placed appropriately, trees can help cool a home in the summer or provide an evergreen barrier to protect a home from cold winter winds. Zoning codes allowing larger homes on smaller lots provide less space for trees that grow large enough at maturity to provide many health, climate and environmental benefits. Most housing designs for developed sites leave only enough space for upright, narrow trees that provide much less cooling shade and other health and environmental benefits than large-form trees do.

The value of an existing healthy large-form tree along a street or in a yard is irreplaceable. It helps reduce stormwater runoff by absorbing winter rains in its canopy and through its roots; It is a place of shelter for birds and other wildlife; It adds financial value to the property on which it sits; Studies have shown that trees reduce blood pressure, stress, depression, anxiety and can improve concentration levels of children with ADHD; Trees filter and purify the air and the water; They reduce the excessive heat island affect of urban streets, sidewalks and rooftops; Studies show that neighborhoods with trees are safer than those without trees. Trees are the answer, not the problem.

Oregon needs housing that is healthy, equitable and climate resilient, that won't be possible without intact trees and other green infrastructure such as wetlands and environmental zones. With smart design that leaves room for both housing and large trees, we can have healthier residents while growing our climate resilience. I urge the council to focus on solutions that advance housing equity and do not destroy the environment in doing so.

Sincerely,

**Ian Wilson**  
**Portland Edible Gardens**  
**Portland, OR**

Cc:

Housing Production Advisory Council

Taylor Smiley Wolfe, Housing and Homelessness Initiative Director, Governor's Office

Karin Power, Natural Resource and Climate Policy Advisor, Governor's Office

Matt Tschabold, Sr. Housing Policy Advisor, Governor's Office

Geoff Huntington, Sr. Natural Resources Advisor, Governor's Office  
Dan Ryan, Portland City Commissioner  
Carmen Rubio, Portland City Commissioner  
Rep. Rob Nosse  
Senator Kathleen Taylor  
Jenn Cairo, Portland City Forester  
Brian Landoe, Portland Parks & Recreation/Urban Forestry  
Donald Oliverira, Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability  
Adena Long, Portland Parks & Recreation  
Rebecca Esau, Portland Bureau of Development Services

**From:** [Hava Dennenberg](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** IMMEDIATE NO to tree rollback  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 5:30:26 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from havalee18@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

i must say, I am extremely disappointed and disgusted with your leadership so far. I am embarrassed by the simplistic way with which you are attempting to resolve the homelessness problem —seeming to believe that it needs to be at the expense of our precarious environment. Really?

If you do not change your stance on these issues and show some real leadership, my vote will go elsewhere the next time around. You have my word.

I am aghast that as a member of the LGBTQ community you are completely blind to the Intersectionality of the social issues and the impact that this will have directly on marginalized populations. Quite frankly, you should be ashamed of yourself.

How is it possible that the **Housing Production Advisory Council** is currently planning to bring forward recommendations that include the ***overriding of tree codes***, recommendations that stand in STARK contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to increase tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities.

As a member of this community, I recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, HOWEVER, housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive. Friends of Trees, the Shade Equity Coalition (we're a member!), and many other environmental organizations around the state believe the proposal is unnecessarily pitting the housing and climate emergencies against one another.

Unfortunately, this advisory body in question does not have a representative from the environmental justice sector to speak to shade equity, climate change, and the myriad of benefits urban trees provide to Oregonians.

### ***Additionally....***

**—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own**

planned climate and canopy goals.

**Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

**—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

I expect a response to this.

Hava Dennenberg

**From:** [Betsy Wosko](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in opposition to idea of invalidating tree codes  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 12:49:31 PM

---

You don't often get email from b.wosko@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Housing Production Advisory Committee members:

Please do not shred the mere thread of tree protection we have left in the name of purportedly trying to solve the housing issue! There are options, such as converting existing commercial space, unused or underutilized since the pandemic, to housing.

Please remember Gov. McCall, when he ushered through the Comp Plan in 1973. And why he did that. Everyone in government talks about the Comp Plan, but no one seems to understand it! Gov. McCall anticipated this kind of special interest money grab, at the cost of our precious environment.

One can build without killing so many trees. Developers like to remove trees because then they can operate their heavy equipment around without worrying about roots, which means they can complete the job in less time and for more profit.

If you allow even more trees to be felled for development, you will be turning parts of the State into a concrete, noisy, unproductive, crime-ridden wasteland. All for short-term profits for itinerant developers.

Please do not recommend to the Governor to invalidate local tree codes. Please do tell the Governor this is shortsighted, unnecessary, and irresponsible.

Betsy Wosko  
320 Durham St  
Lake Oswego, OR 97034  
503-952-6722

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Bob Walker](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Date:** Saturday, September 30, 2023 7:59:19 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [crwalkerpe@gmail.com](mailto:crwalkerpe@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

Thank you,  
Charles R Walker  
5333 N Syracuse St, Portland, OR 97203  
[crwalkerpe@gmail.com](mailto:crwalkerpe@gmail.com)

**From:** [Mary Hewitt](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 11:19:41 AM

---

You don't often get email from marylouisehewitt540@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

This is to support urban trees in Portland which are greatly needed. Even though there are needs to build "affordable" housing, increasing Portland's urban canopy will increase livability and health safety for Portland residents and visitors.

We are able to solve situations and provide housing and increase the urban tree canopy. Please find a way to do this and set an example of solid leadership.

Thank you for listening.

Mary Hewitt  
Hillsboro



**From:** [Jackie Hammond-Williams](#)  
**To:** [governor.koteck@oregon.gov](mailto:governor.koteck@oregon.gov); [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Over-riding tree codes is ridiculous!!  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 10:55:30 AM

---

You don't often get email from jackiespins@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction**

**As a citizen very involved in development in my home town in Oregon this is the most ridiculous proposal in a time of DRASTIC climate change.**

**Trees can be built around, what we need instead of this proposal is forward-thinking development not business as usual.**

**I STRONGLY urge you to drop this proposal and do better!**

**Jackie Hammond-Williams  
16303, Wayne Dr Oregon City  
503 753-5321**

**From:** [Mighty Epiphyte Consulting](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Please don't over run tree codes for HPAC  
**Date:** Saturday, September 30, 2023 1:39:33 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mightyepiphyte@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Governor Kotek,

The need for housing is understood. That said, there are ways to build and preserve trees, add trees, maintain trees and greenery. It's imperative for everyone's health! People have already died in heat domes due to lack of shade trees, and relying on AC is ont a panacea.

**—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—**and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

**—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.** Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. **Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.**

**—We oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place.** Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

**—We oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections.** Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**—Governor Kotek's HPAC is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years.** When selecting HPAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

With Respect and Gratitude from your Mighty Advocate,  
Kim Allchurch-Flick MIM

**Connector, Collaborator, Catalyst/ Serving to Advance Social, Environmental, Human Impacts to the Deepest Level. Impacts with Equity**

[Let's connect here](#)

**Impacts & Certification Support and Advocacy**

[MightyEpiphyte.com](http://MightyEpiphyte.com)

"Improving life outcomes for people. Anything that doesn't include this is negligent!" Trudi Lebron



**From:** [Claudia](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Recommendation squanders the legacy that defines Oregon  
**Date:** Sunday, October 1, 2023 7:05:56 PM

---

[You don't often get email from sanzoneclaudia@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

After reviewing the proposed recommendations (Recommendations) from HPAC, we are exceedingly concerned about their adverse effects on climate change and urban heat island effects. We think in particular that these Recommendations will adversely affect cities east of the Cascades if these policies are adopted. Developers will be allowed to clear-cut their land leaving few if any large Ponderosa pines, our iconic species. Trees are one of the major players in solving society's climate problems.

Housing affordability is a complex problem with many contributing factors, but trees impeding residential development is not one of the primary causes. Short-term rentals (STRs), the trend towards second and third-home ownership, fewer people living in a house and co-ownership groups such as Pacaso all reduce available housing. State and federal tax policies are at odds with getting residents into houses, instead, investors are encouraged to bid up housing prices.

Lack of affordable housing is a problem but it pales in comparison to the looming threat of a warming planet. Trees are a major solution to this looming global problem. There are numerous studies that show the urban tree canopy is a factor in mitigating heat island effects, provides an escape to nature for historically marginalized communities, and helps sequester carbon and absorb CO2. Large trees are exponentially more effective than smaller trees at sequestering carbon and absorbing CO2. Planting numbers of smaller trees with much greater irrigation requirements does little to replace the effectiveness of the larger tree that has been removed.

There are solutions to gaining more available buildable land than a War on Trees which would be unleashed by these Recommendations. Neighborhood street rights of way could be reduced, more creative site planning for buildings and more imaginative architectural design are a few. We can build more housing for our communities without rolling back vital environmental policies that are foundational to livability, climate and human health. Oregon can do better than this for its citizens and wildlife.

This Recommendation squanders the legacy that defines Oregon, its trees.

Happy Trails

Claudia Sanzone  
3149 NW Miller Rd  
Portland, OR 97229

**From:** [watershipsounds](#)  
**To:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#); [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** speaking for generations to come  
**Date:** Sunday, October 1, 2023 3:43:39 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from watershipsounds@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello policymakers,

I am deeply disappointed in HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. I recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, however this proposal is unnecessarily pitting the housing and climate emergencies against one another. Both of these issues need to be addressed in an integrated way. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code has already been strongly influenced by developers and is weak as is. Doing away with further tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing and even if it did save the developer a few extra dollars or a couple days of work- is it *really* worth it in the long run? The proposal stands in stark contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to *increase* tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities. We need our tree canopy. Future generations will most certainly need our tree canopy. Please do not do away with the small amount of protections still in place to save our existing trees from destruction. I believe that the majority of Oregonians want to preserve our state's beautiful urban tree canopy. I do not believe this proposal offers a solution to our affordable housing crisis.

Thank you for your time,  
Matthew Cooper

**From:** [jeannie paske](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Speaking For The Trees  
**Date:** Sunday, October 1, 2023 2:51:02 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jeannielpaske@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear policymakers,

I am deeply disappointed in HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. I recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, however this proposal is unnecessarily pitting the housing and climate emergencies against one another. Both of these issues need to be addressed in an integrated way. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code has already been strongly influenced by developers and is weak as is. Doing away with further tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing and even if it did save the developer a few extra dollars or a couple days of work- is it *really* worth it in the long run? The proposal stands in stark contrast to work taking place throughout the state and nation to *increase* tree cover as a key tool for growing climate-resilient cities. We need our tree canopy. Future generations will most certainly need our tree canopy. Please do not do away with the small amount of protections still in place to save our existing trees from destruction. I believe that the majority of Oregonians want to preserve our state's beautiful urban tree canopy. I do not believe this proposal offers a solution to our affordable housing crisis.

Thank you for your time,  
Jeannie L Paske

**From:** [Paula Wiiken](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Support for the Portland Tree code  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 11:22:50 AM

---

You don't often get email from [pjwiiken@icloud.com](mailto:pjwiiken@icloud.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

The Portland tree code states, “An applicant shall preserve and protect at least 1/3 of the non-exempt trees 12 inches and larger in diameter located completely or partially on the development site, unless mitigation occurs. I support this code while agreeing that we need to build more housing, especially affordable housing. I am against the Housing Production Advisory Council proposal to override the tree code for ten years. We have to prioritize the tree canopy and other measures to combat climate change. I propose a compromise that allows building and preserves the tree code. Developers can pay the fines, leave the trees standing or replace removed trees with native species.

And the developers can build more affordable housing so we can safely house the homeless people of Portland.

Thank you,  
Paula J Wiiken, Portland resident

Please believe that, against all odds, we can win out, because if you don't believe that, you will lose hope, sink into apathy and despair—and do nothing. Jane Goodall

**From:** [Karen Polinsky](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#); [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Tree Code Rollback  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 12:14:39 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from karenpolinsky@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear HPAC and Governor Kotek -

First, let me express thanks for the Climate bill passed yesterday by the Portland City Council. This is an accomplishment.

In order to keep us all moving forward on the critical fight to save the planet, we strongly urge you NOT to undo the protections for trees in our city. We all know the benefits of trees: freshening the air, reducing crime, and creating a sense of place and well being. A lot of money and time and effort has been committed to a policy of safeguarding our small and large trees, adding to the greater peace of one and all. Please honor this history and preserve our landscape.

Affordable housing needs to be increased, but not hastily. There's no need to sacrifice the peace, health, and beauty of our city. Keep our trees, and don't reduce the regulation.

Keep up the good work! Karen Polinsky and Michael, 1014 NE Wygant St., Portland



**From:** [Planet Glassberg](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Trees For Life  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 12:07:55 PM

---

You don't often get email from [butoh@efn.org](mailto:butoh@efn.org). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Members of the Housing Production Advisory Council and Governor Kotek,

The reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

Simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

Urban trees need to stay in the earth and this is absolutely essential for all of us to continue to thrive in our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,  
Planet Glassberg

Box 12162  
Eugene 97440  
Email: [butoh@efn.org](mailto:butoh@efn.org)

**From:** [Sarah Barrett](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** TREES!  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 4:32:34 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sarahpatriciabarrett@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

For the love of God, please don't have our state fall down on trees. We can support trees AND people. We can do BOTH.

**—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—**and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

-Sarah Barrett  
611 SW Cheltenham St  
Portland, OR 97239

**From:** [Lois MacKenzie](#)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Cc:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Trees  
**Date:** Saturday, September 30, 2023 8:08:38 AM

---

You don't often get email from lois.mackenzie@me.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

hello,

Please know I believe in the statements below...

Thank you, Lois

—At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction—and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals.

—Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them. Portland's tree code gives developers the option of paying fees to remove trees in lieu of preserving them. Builders have been paying these fees as they do other business expenses, deeming them worth it in order to build more revenue-generating units or a larger single home whose price will more than cover any tree-removal fees they might have paid. Moreover, simply doing away with tree protections will not guarantee that builders will create more affordable housing.

—I oppose HPAC's proposal to essentially override municipal tree codes like Portland's that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in. The Portland tree code, for one, was in the end strongly influenced by developers and is already weak as is.

—I oppose HPAC's recommendations to erode state and local wetland and environmental zone protections. Such changes will certainly impact trees.

**From:** [Michaela Blackham](#)  
**To:** [Governor Kotek \\* GOV](#); [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** Urban Forestry is about more than just trees  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 2:51:46 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from michaela12391@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Governor Kotek & HPAC members,

I recognize the urgent need for affordable housing, but housing and trees should not be mutually exclusive. Trees are what make our cities livable. They provide so much more than their aesthetic value.

Did you know that heat related deaths are one of the deadliest weather-related health outcomes in the United States (CDC)?

At a time of climate crisis, throwing climate- and tree-related regulations out the window is a misguided, short-sighted way to speed up housing construction -and a sure way to guarantee that the state and its cities and towns will be unable to meet their own planned climate and canopy goals. Many factors affect developers' ability to build more affordable housing faster. Tree protections are hardly key among them.

I oppose HPAC's proposal to override municipal tree codes that took many people many years and much effort to put into place. Tree codes were created to ensure Oregon remains a livable place we can all be proud to live in.

I am disappointed that your team is proposing to do away with environment regulations that developers have wanted to eliminate for years. When selecting HAC's members Governor Kotek did not include broader voices that would reflect the reality that we are facing both a housing and a climate crisis, and that both need to be addressed in an integrated way.

The answer is not one or the other, the answer is trees and development. There are ways to retain trees and to unscrews housing. Please consider the numerous health benefits trees provide our community.

Thank you,

Michaela Blackham



**WEST MULTNOMAH**  
Soil & Water Conservation District

The Honorable Governor Tina Kotek  
Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC)

Re: Public Testimony Opposing Governor Kotek's Tree Code & Wetland and Environmental Overlays  
Plan

September 29, 2023

Dear Governor Kotek and Members of the Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC):

We are writing in opposition to HPAC's proposal to override tree code, wetland, and environmental overlay zone protections allowing for cutting the vast majority of urban trees and degradation to habitat critically important to the health of our waters, our wildlife, and our urban communities.

The West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District is a public service district dedicated to the conservation of soil and water resources for people, wildlife and the environment. We provide resources, information, and expertise to inspire people to actively improve air and water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and soil health. Our service territory includes Multnomah County west of the Willamette River, Sauvie Island, and a portion of the Tualatin Mountains known as Bonny Slope. One of our priority conservation goals is promoting resilient environments and communities in the face of climate change. The proposed plan directly and negatively impacts this goal.

All of the HPAC proposals listed furthers tree and natural area inequities, and decreases climate resiliency in front line communities that are most vulnerable. Removal of these protections have long-lasting degrading impacts including increasing the intensity of lethal urban heat island impacts and decreased watershed health and stormwater systems. We are in a climate crisis and must ensure that needed housing comes within livable and thriving cities.

Sincerely,

Terri Preeg Riggsby,  
Chair and Zone 5 Director  
West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District

cc: West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Directors

**From:** [lynn.spitaleri.handlin](mailto:lynn.spitaleri.handlin)  
**To:** [GOV Hpac \\* GOV](#)  
**Subject:** written testimony Trees and land use design & development  
**Date:** Friday, September 29, 2023 2:12:48 PM

---

Here is my written testimony regarding the gutting of local tree codes and

[Require approval of certain land use design and development adjustments for residential developments](#)

My name is Lynn Handlin, from outer SE Portland and Happy Valley

[Require approval of certain land use design and development adjustments for residential developments](#)

There is a housing crisis in Oregon, there is also a climate crisis in Oregon and everywhere else on the planet. And they are related. We must and can deal with both together. Unfortunately so far this board and the Governor are demonstrating little or no interest or concern regarding the climate crisis, with no recognition of the fact that they are related.

At the last meeting someone on the council objected to those saying that this council is all developers, and that there were actually only 3 who were. This was disingenuous, there may only be 3 for profit, market rate developers on the council but most, not all, of those on the board (other than legislative appointments) make money on housing development, whether market rate, or low income housing, or providing financing or engineering etc. What is missing are those who understand climate issues including prevention and mitigation, also missing are environmental justice advocates, and it shows.

When all you have is a hammer everything is a nail, so get some non-hammer people on board and see what happens.

Gutting land use laws in the name of the housing crisis is a false choice. We need healthy affordable housing. Healthy affordable housing must include consideration for current and future climate impacts and have mitigation built in, this means more trees not less, more green spaces not less, more wetlands, not less.

The recommendation to force cities to give developers of all housing, not just low income housing, up to 10 variances to deviate by up to 20% from land use regulations is a huge

giveaway to developers and the rest who make money on housing. With this in place, it would seriously weaken all environmental protections around land use. Including 20% encroachment on greenways, that is huge. The greenway protections are in place for good reasons, and we need to expand them in this state especially in low income areas, not reduce them. Do you not believe that those in low income housing deserve access to greenspaces? This is a human health concern as well as wildlife and more. Encroachment on the Willamette River Greenway for example would harm the health of the river as well as the well being of those living in the area and wildlife.

And according to this recommendation a single project could get 10 separate variances, so gut any remaining tree code on site by 20%, greenways can be expanded into by 20%, wetlands can be encroached by 20%, and on and on. You get the point, and it is not good.

There are all kinds of studies out there showing that the land for low income housing is there in metro areas, and can be used without gutting our land use laws. So maybe, try that, even if it means bringing in people that you don't have here yet.

## TREES

We need more healthy, affordable housing, not hot boxes in increased heat islands, which is where some of these tree related rules are heading. Also, this gutting of our rules that protect wetlands, flood plains, urban tree canopy, greenspaces and more, is not for low income housing, it is for any housing, how much life saving tree canopy will be lost to build housing in areas already losing canopy with deadly consequences?

People who live in low income housing need shade, this need is becoming increasingly important with rising temperatures. There need to be creative solutions to create more low and middle income housing that integrates climate resilience into the housing projects. If and when this increases costs for the low income housing, then the state can and should help with funding, but not for high end projects. Planting new trees is great, but it takes decades to replace the shade and water absorption qualities of mature trees, we do not have decades. The climate crisis is here. People died in Portland and other parts of Oregon during the heat dome due to lack of shade. Where I work in outer SE Portland I have experienced this impact directly. I had to have an emergency dental procedure at my dentist's office on outer SE

Division St in Portland during the heat dome. I was fine at home, but when I had to walk a block on SE Division, no trees in site, I became quite ill from the heat. I am lucky, I could get out of it and was ok. Low income people who had to be on the street, waiting for buses or walking suffered greatly. People died here because of this, the lack of tree canopy with life saving shade. Our shade trees have been going fast, on private property and public lands.

Last time I was here, one of the people on this council said we can have trees, or we can have housing but we cant have both. This demonstrates loud and clear that this board needs people on it who understand that this is not true. There are many ways of increasing housing without removing trees. Especially large form mature trees. These rules do not even consider that different locations need different tree rules, and not all trees are the same. It is possible to build close to mature trees if done correctly.

In addition to life saving shade, trees, particularly mature trees, help mitigate urban flooding. This is going to become ever more important as our planet heats up, causing more extreme weather and more dangerous flooding. This is especially problematic in low income areas.

It may take some different kind of thinking, and possibly increase costs at times. If the project is for low income housing and saving the trees increases costs perhaps that state can help out with that. But not for luxury condos and high end homes. NO.

Please do not gut our tree codes, it is a false solution and will harm Oregonians with low income the most.