

Appendix E. OHNA Engagement Summary



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY: OREGON HOUSING NEEDS ANALYSIS

Department of Land Conservation and Development and Oregon Housing and Community Services

The Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) engaged with a wide range of stakeholders and experts throughout the state over the Oregon Housing Needs Analysis (OHNA) project process. This engagement process was critical in helping inform the final set of legislative policy recommendations for how to implement an OHNA into the statewide planning program.

The engagement process included four different components:

- Consultant led regular facilitated meetings with a large Working Group of practitioners and experts, called the Housing Needs Work Group (HNWG).
- Consultant led focus group discussions with a wide range of stakeholders and experts including market and affordable housing developers, continuums of care and other community-based organizations, and housing and equity advocates.
- DLCD staff led regional forum discussion with land use planning and housing policy staff at local governments across the state.
- Consultant led three follow up engagement sessions to close the loop with all individuals that participated in the focus group and regional forum discussions.

The OHNA engagement process began with the first HNWG held in late October 2021 and continued through September 2022. The following diagram depicts the OHNA project engagement timeline:

	OCT 2021	NOV 2021	DEC 2021	JAN 2022	FEB 2022	MAR 2022	APRIL 2022	MAY 2022	JUNE 2022	JULY 2022	AUG 2022	SEP 2022	OCT 2022	NOV 2022	DEC 2022
HNWG	★		★				★		★		★		★		★
Focus Groups								—————							
Regional Forums								—————							
Follow up Sessions												—————			

Brief summary engagement reports with high level themes from the conversions from each engagement component listed above are attached to this document. Longer, more detailed reports for each component can be found on the OHNA project website: <https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/UP/Pages/OHNA.aspx>

DLCD and OHCS thank all stakeholders for their expertise and time throughout the OHNA project.

Note: In March 2022, the Oregon Legislature directed DLCD staff to “support work on regional housing needs and land supply issues” (HB 5202) by establishing a new Housing Capacity Work Group (HCWG) focused on a specific set of land supply questions. Legislators provided direction that this work should intersect with, but be distinct from, the questions that the Housing Needs Work Group has been grappling with since it was formed in October 2021. The final set of policy recommendations informed by the HCWG can be found in Appendix A.

Work Group Summary Report

Oregon Housing Needs Analysis

Charge of the OHNA Work Group

The project team convened the Housing Needs Work Group to advise on the implementation of an Oregon Housing Needs Analysis into state and local planning programs, as directed by the Legislature under House Bills 5006 (2021) and 2003 (2019). The Work Group was charged with exploring specific aspects of Oregon's Land Use Program, Goal 10 Housing.

The work group was advisory to DLCD and OHCS staff and has worked with staff to develop a set of recommendations for consideration by the Legislature. The goal in convening this set of diverse and experienced stakeholders was to receive guidance on implementable solutions. The Work Group brought knowledge, ideas, insights, and innovative thinking to surface the most promising and feasible policy options that best serve the legislative objectives. While consensus was desirable, it was not the goal of the Work Group.

Work Group purpose was to:

- Review specific implementation issues identified in the assessment report and work with staff to develop and provide feedback on legislative recommendations.
- Help OHCS and DLCD develop legislative recommendations that build toward more affordable, fair, and equitable housing outcomes across the state.
- Aid the development of well-researched and thoughtful legislative recommendations.
- Advise OHCS and DLCD staff on fulfilling the legislative direction, "the incorporation of a RHNA into state and local planning programs." Elements related to land supply will be considered under a separate and related process with the Housing Land Supply Work Group.

The full Work Group charter along with meeting agendas, materials, and summaries are available on the [project webpage](#).

OHNA Work Group Participants

DLCD and OHCS invited a diverse group of stakeholders to advise staff on the implementation of an Oregon Housing Needs Analysis. The work group consists of a variety of perspectives from around the state with experience in development, planning, home building, housing policy, and social equity, in addition to advocacy organizations that work on housing, municipal governance, and planning.

Organization or Occupation	Representative
1000 Friends of Oregon	Mary Kyle McCurdy
Association of Oregon Counties	Mallorie Roberts and Michael Burdick
City of Gresham	Mary Phillips
City of Madras	Nick Snead
City of Medford	Carla Paladino
City of Portland	Dwight Jefferson and Svetha Ambati
City of Wilsonville	Miranda Bateschell
Disability Rights Consultant, unaffiliated	Michael Szporluk
Coos County	Jill Rolfe
Fair Housing Council of Oregon / LCDL Commissioner	Allan Lazo
Home Forward	Taylor Smiley Wolfe
Land Use Attorney, unaffiliated	Al Johnson
League of Oregon Cities	Ariel Nelson
Metro	Ted Reid
Mid-Willamette Valley COG (formerly; now City of Woodburn)	Renata Wakeley
Morrow County	Tamra Mabbott
Oregon Association of Realtors	Jeremy Rogers and Brock Nation
Oregon Home Builders Association	Samantha Bayer
Unite Oregon	Cristina Palacios

Process

In coordination with DLCD and OHCS, Communitas engaged and facilitated work group members in six formal meetings (a seventh meeting will be held in December 2022) and four topic-based technical work sessions. Meeting plans and facilitation were aimed at obtaining a full diversity of opinions and ideas to aid the project team in developing the recommendations. The content of the meetings was designed for Work Group members to surface issues early in the process and help shape the policy recommendations throughout the process, often in real time. Work Group members were encouraged to send comments on interim work products and invited to one-on-one conversations with project team members. Some of the formal Work Group meetings included smaller group discussions to maximize the time afforded to hear from work group members on specific topics, and some were conducted as whole group to ensure there was opportunity to hear the full spectrum of feedback on drafts.

OHNA Work Group Meetings and Key Insights

OHNA Work Group meetings focused on key questions to inform policy approaches. Below is a high level summary of the focused topics and key discussion insights.

October 28, 2021 | Overview and Assessment of Housing Needs Prototype

- **Data Landscape and Policy Direction** – Members noted that in spite of the issues regarding the data landscape that affects any statewide housing analysis, it doesn't change the need to address housing issues through changes to policy. Addressing gaps via qualitative methods, including engagement, will be important for addressing the full scope of need, especially where data is incomplete.
- **Implementation of Goal 10** – While the core text of Goal 10 remains appropriate at the high level, the historic implementation of Goal 10 has overemphasized planning for unit type, mix, and density as well as the capacity of land, while ignoring many other dimensions of housing need, especially for communities that have been historically underserved by government. It will be important that this work result in planning processes that more comprehensively address these dimensions of need.
- **Parameters of the Process** – Working Group members agree that establishing clear parameters of the process and resultant legislative recommendations is critical at this stage of work. Members discussed the merits of highly detailed versus broad statutory language in both achieving the desired outcomes and improving the likelihood of adoption and implementation. DLCDC staff will follow up with members to solicit greater clarity on the project goal and process parameters.

December 9, 2021 | Prioritization of OHNA Issues, Needs, and Concerns

- **Clarifying the “Problem Statement”** – A major challenge during discussion was grappling with the specific implementation issues this process should address when there isn't clarity surrounding the parameters of the process or the major problem it is trying to address. The project team will be developing a problem statement responding to feedback provided in this meeting and share it with the working group.
- **Defining a Shared Responsibility** – A clear priority of this process is defining a system of shared responsibility among state, regional, and local governments in a manner that achieves more affordable, fair, and equitable housing outcomes. While affordability is important, it will be equally important to ensure that the location, characteristics, and ownership of housing are more accessible and responsive to people's needs.
- **Intrinsic Connection Between Responsibility, Accountability, and Resources** – It is becoming increasingly clear that it will be difficult to propose a mechanism that establishes and enforces a shared responsibility among state, regional, and local governments to address housing need and affordability without careful consideration of

the accountability mechanisms and resources and investment required to make implementation successful.

- **Implementation as a Long-Term Commitment** – The legislative recommendations resulting from this process should reflect that achieving better outcomes will be a long-term process and commitment. It is particularly important to ensure that these recommendations do not layer new requirements and timelines on top of existing work, but rather phase in and establish realistic expectations.

April 21, 2022 | Approaches for Transparency, Shared Accountability, and Investment

- **Measuring production and building a realistic and productive accountability framework** – In general, working group members agreed that ongoing measurement of production and assessing the relative production of housing between similar communities (e.g. a “housing report card”) is the right direction, provided that they are considered as one (and not the only) dimension of evaluating performance, and that the realistic constraints of achieving greater housing production in light of aspirational goals are acknowledged and built into the accountability system. They further offered recommendations on how production should be measured, including tracking production and location of units accessible to people with disabilities so that targets may be developed over time. Additionally, financial incentives will be useful in advancing this work overall.
- **Accuracy of housing need data and analysis** – Some members expressed concern on the accuracy of data and analysis that would inform statewide housing needs projections and production goals articulated by the OHNA. On the other hand, some members noted the widely inconsistent methodologies and results used in current localized housing needs projections, suggesting state data and analysis would provide greater consistency. It will be important to articulate a transparent process for conducting and updating the methodology and the ways in which local policy flexibility will be built into recommendations.
- **Aligning production with need** – Most members agree that there is generally a mismatch between housing production and housing need. It will be important to build in systems of engagement and feedback with community members whose needs have been historically under-addressed, including communities of color and people with disabilities, to ensure that local housing planning and production provide more options that better suit their needs.

June 16, 2022 | Approaches for Production Targets and Inclusive Communities

- **Tracking production progress regularly is important** – In general, work group members agreed that requiring progress reports on affordable production, total production, land use efficiency, and equitable and fair housing outcomes, at a minimum is the right direction. Some raised the need for jurisdictions to have the ability to provide a narrative explanation as part of the progress report. There were varying perspectives as to whether production progress should be measured annually vs. once per cycle.
- **Progress evaluation must be a two-way conversation** – Some members shared their desire to contextualize the evaluation of the progress report through discussion between the state and jurisdictions, recognizing that many communities, especially smaller and more rural communities, are making concerted efforts towards housing production while facing capacity and financial constraints. There are multiple nuanced challenges that should be reflected in progress reporting. The progress report should be an opportunity to identify the strategies that are working and acknowledge and reward communities that are making significant production progress.
- **Targeted and flexible investments to support jurisdictions will be key** – Members agreed that investments and resources will be needed to meet the housing need in Oregon. Some suggested investments be focused on infrastructure and land to move housing projects faster to construction point. Members mentioned the need to ensure state funding streams are simple to access and flexible, especially for affordable housing production that is already burdened by many layers of financing.
- **Enforcement should be carefully balanced** – Work group members agreed that an accountability system that includes both rewards/incentives and enforcement is needed. In addition to financial consequences for non-compliance, incentives must be carefully balanced to support communities that need support and are making concerted efforts, and also reward communities making great progress. Some members suggested shifting enforcement action responsibility to a politically insulated organization, like the Land Use Board of Appeals.

August 18, 2022 | Preliminary Recommendations

- **Implementation Mechanics** – Members shared a variety of concerns and questions about the resultant implementation and sequencing of any major changes to the Goal 10 process. Clarifying that sequencing and communicating how the process will play out will be an important component of the final report.
- **Aligning Policy and Outcomes** – While many of the policies are broad and formative, members highlighted the need to ensure that the resultant policy reflects the goal of achieving greater equity in outcomes. Members offered feedback on messaging and framing to better align policy and outcomes.

- **Funding Matters** – Members reiterated the importance of substantial funding to achieve greater production and raised a variety of suggestions and ideas to ensure funding is reaching areas of critical need, including capacity, equity, affordable production, and infrastructure.
- **The Need and Challenges of a Governance Structure** – Members generally agreed that the establishment of a structure that better coordinates between state agencies and local governments to achieve production outcomes. However, it will be challenging to facilitate a broad conversation to establish the best structure before the legislative session. Having an interim plan to make progress will be an important component of the draft.

October 20, 2022 | Final Draft Recommendations

- **Clarifying Accountability** - Ensuring jurisdictions follow through with their housing development commitments is crucial - The accountability and enforcement measures within the recommendations are vague and will need further clarity, detail, and refinement so that there is clear direction on how we ensure cities remain on track with their development of housing. This framework should balance ensuring meaningful action with acknowledgement of the realistic implementation constraints of local communities.
- **Reinforcing Goal 10** - Proposed recommendations are not new policy direction but rather reinforcing of a commitment. It's important to note that the proposed recommendations are not focused on shifting housing policy in a new direction but rather a critical step in addressing the direction articulated in Goal 10. Any additional realignment or considerations should be connected to addressing the historically unmet promise with the aim to refine administration at local levels and provide state support.
- **Funding Housing Production** - Providing the necessary funding for the recommendations to succeed will be critical. The recommendations are a holistic package and will require substantial appropriation of funding to result in housing production on the ground. In order for jurisdictions to address their housing goals, necessary funding, capacity, and resources are needed. This will play an especially integral role for small, rural jurisdictions that have limited capacity to conduct complete analyses. Additionally, this funding should emphasize low-income housing (especially below 30% AMI) that the market cannot build without subsidy as well as offering technical support and "off the shelf" policy options.
- **Removing Regulatory Barriers** - Excessive regulation can often make building affordable housing more challenging. Many private developers are often deterred from building affordable housing or caught in regulative loopholes that make it difficult to do so. Look for ways to remove impediments and find creative ways to incentivize development for private developers, as cities have limited policy levers to influence the market.

Engagement Report

Oregon Housing Needs Analysis Focus Groups and Follow-up Engagement Sessions

Introduction

Under direction from the State Legislature, the Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) Department and the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) are developing a framework to implement an Oregon Housing Needs Analysis (OHNA) program. The OHNA builds on the Regional Housing Needs Analysis work conducted after the passage of House Bill 2003 (2019) and will culminate in a recommendations report to the Legislature in advance of the 2023 session advising on how the state could implement an OHNA into state and local planning programs. The goal of the OHNA process is to ensure that further legislative actions will lead to increased housing production, increased publicly supported affordable housing production, and improved equity in housing outcomes.

Previous engagement efforts highlighted the need to deliver more adequate and affordable housing to communities across the state. In 2022, DLCD and Kearns & West (K&W) held a series of focus groups and follow-up engagement sessions in 2022 to continue the engagement process that began with the implementation of House Bills 2001 and 2003 (2019). The goal of this engagement process is to ensure that legislative recommendations are implementable, productive, and more responsive to the entirety of Oregon's housing need than the existing housing planning process.

Additional information on the project is available in the [framework report](#).

OHNA Focus Groups

Process

In coordination with DLCD, K&W engaged participants in a series of six focus groups between March and May 2022. K&W focused on engagement with groups outside of the legislative structure including land use planning and housing policy staff at local governments, market and affordable housing developers, continuums of care and other community-based organizations, and housing and equity advocates. It was essential to identify participants that were representative of various regions throughout the state and that worked with different communities to ensure that diverse perspectives were included in public policy conversations.

Discussion Topics

Focus group engagement focused on key questions to inform policy approaches that advance racial equity and affordable, fair, and equitable housing outcomes. The discussions focused on the following topics. See Appendix A and B for a list of focus group participants and questions.

March 30, 2022 | Housing and Planning Housing Focus Group

- What state, regional, and local government are, can, and should be doing to address unmet housing needs
- Accountability measures to fulfill housing responsibilities

- Support, investments, resources needed to better plan for and develop housing
- Partnership opportunities

April 6 and April 8, 2022 | Market and Affordable Housing Focus Groups

- What state, regional, and local government are, can, and should be doing to address unmet housing needs
- Facilitating a supply of development-ready land served by adequate infrastructure
- Regulatory reform and incentives to support affordability
- Housing location and connecting people to opportunity

April 26 and April 29, 2022 | Continuums of Care and Community-Based Organizations Focus Groups

- Barriers to affordable housing
- Role of state and local governments in addressing housing issues
- Investments that support access to housing
- State and local policies to improve housing issues
- Ongoing engagement opportunities

May 4, 2022 | Housing and Equity Focus Group

- What housing justice and creating equitable and inclusive communities looks like
- Policies or practices that are working
- Risks of working towards more market and affordable housing and mitigation measures
- Role of state and local government in addressing housing issues and accountability measures
- Investments that support access to housing

Summary of Key Themes

Connecting Housing to Opportunity

Access to services – Focus group participants recognized the importance of using a holistic approach to plan for affordable housing. Locating housing near transportation, jobs, and other services provides the stability and resources needed to find and keep a job. A variety of other supports and services are needed, including social services, healthcare, housing navigators, and flexible funds. Participants shared the many ways funding can be used to help people find and keep housing, including car repairs, laundry, and childcare.

A continuum of housing – Participants shared the importance of treating housing as a continuum from homelessness and shelter to renting and home ownership. Creative solutions and partnerships are needed to address housing shortages and connect people to different types of housing and shelter.

Considering barriers – Participants shared the importance of recognizing past harms, lowering barriers to housing, and considering who is disproportionately benefiting from regulatory and land use decisions. Having access to accessible and affordable housing that is in good condition and located near services needs to be a human right. Focus group participants shared that housing availability is particularly challenging for specific groups including communities living in locations with low vacancy rates, people with physical disabilities, and communities with extremely low-incomes or no incomes. Participants highlighted the need to shift from affordable housing systems with strict requirements to systems that are easy to access and understand.

Unique needs – Participants stressed the importance of recognizing the unique needs of communities and individuals. In discussions about opportunity, participants noted that individuals may prefer to stay in existing neighborhoods where they have community support rather than moving to an area that is considered “high opportunity”. Participants recommended local governments and the state engage individuals about their housing preferences and design flexible policies to encourage a range of choices.

Tools and Policies

Using tools and incentives to prioritize affordable housing – Participants shared a variety of tools local jurisdictions use to deliver affordable housing including incentives, taxes, community development block grants (CDBGs), affordable housing requirements, housing bonds, and public-private partnerships. Participants shared the need for creative solutions to leverage opportunities in existing markets. Many local jurisdictions have had success working with developers to understand where flexibility is needed and incentivizing the production of affordable housing by waiving System Development Charges (SDCs), providing subsidies and land donations, waiving commercial ground floor requirements, and utilizing tax deductions.

Participants also discussed creating infrastructure or transportation bonuses at the state level that could be awarded for shortening permitting review timelines, using model codes, or providing less than 80% area median income (AMI) requirements for developers. Participants noted the challenge of incentives not working if a city is not committed to diversifying housing options.

Codes matter – Participants noted several examples where codes create barriers to delivering housing. Open space, Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), and infrastructure requirements often add unnecessary expense to projects and may reduce the development of affordable and middle housing. As housing products are diversified, codes need to be flexible and updated to align with changing needs.

Importance of data – Participants shared that additional data collection is needed to provide jurisdictions with the information they need to make informed planning and policy decisions. This includes more accurately tracking affordability, collecting information on housing stock that is available for people with disabilities, and collecting information on housing habitability to help governments provide housing according to need. In addition, participants noted the need to distribute information on homeownership programs to improve access to opportunity, pathways to ownership, and security of tenure.

State Accountability

Balancing state involvement – Participants acknowledged the importance of having state mandated housing requirements to provide planners with support to pass policies for issues that are difficult to address at the local level. This needs to be balanced with implementation flexibility that allows local governments to respond to local conditions and concerns.

Taking responsibility – Participants noted that the state and public have a role in holding cities accountable for providing housing and meeting State Goal 10. Participants discussed a variety of roles for local governments including funding subsidized affordable housing and regulating market-rate housing.

Addressing Barriers

Barriers to accessing housing – Participants shared the many barriers that communities face in accessing housing including screening requirements and documents for applications, extensive waitlists, limited information in other languages, and housing availability, habitability and affordability. Participants recommended setting limits on screening requirements, creating resources to help people find housing, and providing information in multiple languages to community leaders.

Meeting rural housing needs – Participants highlighted housing challenges unique to many rural areas, including barriers for farmworker and immigrant populations, poor-quality housing, and a lack of affordable housing and land due to wildfire. Legal presence requirements to access federal housing creates a burden on undocumented immigrant populations and many are left with limited, poor-quality affordable housing options. Participants noted that new affordable housing is difficult to produce in rural areas, especially in those impacted by wildfire, due to competition with market rate developers and long wait times for tax credits. Participants also noted the unique challenges for farm and forest workers with limited transportation options to access jobs and services.

Land Supply

Developers need shovel ready land – Participants consistently identified the availability of developable land as a major constraint. 20-year projections do not always accurately prepare jurisdictions to meet future housing needs. Having 20 years of “shovel ready” land available will help decrease the time and resources required before developers can break ground and produce housing. Participants also discussed the value of urban growth boundaries (UGBs) in addressing land supply, noting a need to streamline the process and increase the size of expansions to reduce costs.

Converting existing land – Participants expressed interest in using underutilized land located near infrastructure for new housing. This could include commercially zoned land, surface parking lots, vacant lots, and other underutilized areas.

Community Engagement and Education

Community representation – Participants highlighted the importance of creating pathways for marginalized and underrepresented communities to be involved in government by increasing pay for elected official positions to ensure governments are representative of and responsive to the communities they serve.

Community-driven processes and engagement – Participants consistently noted the need for processes to be community-driven and data-informed. Participants shared the importance of building honest, authentic relationships with the community, listening to what communities need and responding to such needs. Participants also recommended providing stipends and compensation for participation in committees, focus groups, and oversight bodies.

Communicating value – Participants shared difficulties effectively communicating the value of housing capacity analyses (HCAs), housing production strategies (HPSs), and the OHNA to elected officials and the public. Planners require sufficient information, educational materials, and guidance documents to effectively communicate the value of housing requirements with stakeholders, partners, and the public.

Continued engagement – Focus group participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage in housing discussions and highlighted the need for ongoing engagement at different levels.

Funding and Capacity Needs

Spending funds effectively – Participants felt that funds for subsidized housing are not always spent effectively. To address this, jurisdictions need to hire knowledgeable staff to lead the production of subsidized housing, offer trainings to existing staff to improve competencies, and utilize public-private partnerships.

Streamlining processes – Participants noted that processes for applying and receiving local, state, and federal funding for development are inefficient and create challenges to providing housing. Funding applications require substantial resources, time, and staff capacity and there are long wait periods to receive funding. Focus group members advocated for shifting away from an annual competitive funding model and establishing a more streamlined process.

Financial and technical support – Jurisdictions, especially those under 10,000 people, require additional funding and technical assistance to meet state deadlines and requirements. Flexible grant funds and technical assistance in the form of toolkits, templates, geospatial data, shared staffing resources, and guidance addressing unanticipated challenges is especially valuable.

Building capacity and investment for infrastructure – Focus group members consistently noted that providing adequate infrastructure to support housing development is an ongoing challenge and a critical component of affordable housing production. Investing in infrastructure will require both financial resources from the state as well as creative solutions and partnerships, including with market rate and affordable developers, to reduce costs and connect affordable housing to services.

Embracing new types of construction – Participants identified barriers to the construction including high costs, lack of funding, and zoning and code restrictions. They expressed that acquiring existing housing and converting it to affordable housing is too costly, and not supported by the current market without government subsidies. There is a need to embrace new types of construction by removing funding and zoning barriers to meet affordable housing needs.

Partnership opportunities – Participants identified the need to partner at the local, regional, and state level to identify creative solutions to housing challenges. Working in partnership creates opportunities to share data and approaches, distribute resources, and more effectively address regulatory issues. Focus group participants also stressed the need for local jurisdictions to partner with private and affordable housing developers to ensure that funds are spent effectively, projects run smoothly, and housing is produced more quickly.

OHNA Follow-up Engagement

Process

K&W and DLCDC held three follow-up engagement sessions to close the loop with individuals that participated in OHNA engagement opportunities, including focus groups and regional forums. Over 50 participants attended sessions on September 7, 9, and 12. Each session included a report-out on focus groups and regional forums engagement, opportunities for ongoing engagement, and a discuss of the OHNA Draft Recommendations. See Appendix C and D for a list of participants and discussion questions.

Summary of Key Themes

Communications Support at the Local Level – Participants stressed the need for communications and messaging support at the local level. Many small and/or rural jurisdictions shared difficulties successfully conveying the need for housing policy to the public and local officials. These jurisdictions require communications assistance building support for projects and policies.

Aligning statewide policies – Participants expressed interest in aligning housing policy with other statewide policy efforts, including climate, land use, and equity work. Participants emphasized the importance of organizing and working together at the state level to improve housing outcomes.

Funding and resources – Jurisdictions noted appreciation for the inclusion of funding and resource recommendations, including investments in infrastructure. Participants discussed the need for long- and short-term investments from the state and preparing to invest during times of economic recession.

Sharing responsibility – Participants recognized that it will take all levels of government and the public to address statewide housing needs. Building capacity at the local level and providing direction at the state level remains important.

Planning for accessibility – Participants continued to discuss the need to better plan for accessible housing. This includes incorporating accessibility features into the design phase and collecting data to better understand needs.

Barriers to development – Participants noted several barriers to housing production including the lack of surveyors, the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) expansion process, and capacity issues at the local level. Participants shared that resources and a strong regulatory framework are critical for small and rural jurisdictions trying to plan for housing needs.

Recommendations

- 1) Improving coordination between agencies – Coordination is needed between agencies that help produce housing and agencies that provide supportive housing services to ensure that individuals have successful housing outcomes. This may include improving the flexibility of housing grants to allow for supportive services, sharing data, building staff capacity, and coordinating the distribution of materials in different languages about how and where to access housing.
- 2) Building public-private partnerships – Partnerships are needed between local jurisdictions and market and affordable housing developers to better understand tools and resources needed to produce homes and meet housing needs. Partnerships help ensure processes move forward smoothly and efficiently.
- 3) Focusing on Equitable Processes and Outcomes – Recognizing past harms and working with priority groups to reduce barriers and design community-driven processes is critical to improving Oregon’s housing system. Ongoing meaningful and compensated engagement is needed with marginalized and underrepresented groups including those with low or no-incomes, people experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, domestic violence

survivors, farm and forest workers, immigrants and refugees, and other priority populations to understand and respond to their unique housing needs.

- 4) State support is needed for all jurisdictions, especially those under 10,000 people, including:
 - Guidance on appropriate incentives for affordable housing development
 - Statewide data sets, including geospatial data, to support decision-making at the local level
 - Communications materials to illustrate the value of HCAs, HPSs, and the OHNA to elected officials and the public
 - Flexible funding to support local implementation of state mandates
 - Technical assistance to meet state deadlines and requirements including toolkits, templates, shared staffing resources, and guidance addressing unanticipated challenges
 - Bonuses for improving permitting processes, using model codes, and more
 - Mandates that allow for flexible, outcomes-based implementation at the local level
 - Instilling urgency at every level of public sector

- 5) Increasing the supply of shovel-ready land – State and local governments should be coordinating and investing to increase the supply of land that ready for development. This includes streamlining state (e.g. UGB adjustments) and local (e.g. annexation, zone change, subdivision) review processes to reduce the time required to prepare land for development. It also includes making investments in infrastructure and site preparation necessary to support housing development. Shovel-ready land needs to be planned for in advance to ensure there is a steady supply of land for future development.

- 6) Opportunities for underutilized land – The state can encourage local jurisdictions to identify underutilized land that may be suitable for housing, including commercial land, surface parking lots, brownfields, and vacant lots. These areas are often served by infrastructure and may be a cost-effective way to increase the production of housing. Local jurisdictions will need to determine if the sites are appropriate for development and determine the appropriate policy changes and site preparation needed to support future development.

- 7) Streamlining state funding for affordable housing – State affordable housing applications require substantial resources, time, and capacity from affordable housing developers. There are often long wait times following the application process and coordination of multiple funding streams can take years. Shifting away from an annual competitive funding model to a more streamlined model, and or aligning/timing different funding applications may increase efficiencies for affordable housing developers. There is a need for funding that allows for creative housing projects such as new types of housing or converting existing structures into affordable housing. Any incentives or funding sources resulting from this process should emphasize flexibility in its use, while simultaneously ensuring adequate oversight to ensure it is used appropriately.

Issues outside the scope of this process:

Considering houseless populations and the provision on shelter. While houselessness and shelter were outside of the OHNA scope, additional conversations are needed to coordinate and improve outcomes

for houseless populations. Recommendations should highlight the need for follow-up work at the state level and coordination with the Interagency Council on Homelessness

Increasing equitable representation in government. It is important to create pathways for marginalized and underrepresented communities to be involved in government to better meet their needs. Recommendations should highlight the need for follow-up work on state and local processes to increase equitable representation, especially for communities that have been historically underrepresented, including communities of color, people with disabilities, and federal and state protected classes.

Reducing barriers in accessing housing with pro-tenant policies. Screening and income requirements, poor housing quality, lack of reasonable accommodations enforcement, and navigating eviction courts creates barriers for communities to access and maintain housing. Statewide policies that provide more options, especially to renters and households at risk of displacement, are needed to reduce these barriers.

Connecting housing to climate planning and other statewide policies. Coordinating statewide housing with climate processes and other statewide policies may improve efficiencies over time and ensure the production of housing that is long-lasting and resilient. Housing-related recommendations should work in tandem with climate policy to build more housing in climate-friendly areas and increase the resilience of communities against future risks, such as wildfire and flooding.

OHNA Local Government Forums

Meeting Summary

May 9, 2022 – August 9, 2022
(Published Aug 8, 2022)



Process

DLCD housing staff coordinated with DLCD Regional Representatives to engage land use planners and housing policy staff in local governments across the state in a series of fourteen (14) focus group discussions between May and August 2022. These focus group discussions were added to supplement the robust [OHNA engagement program](#) recognizing a need for deeper discussion and feedback from local land use planners and housing policy staff on the Statewide Planning Goal 10 Housing Program. It is important to note that one of the focus group discussions focused specifically on Tribal housing needs with participants from Tribal nations, leadership, and housing/planning staff to ensure their housing needs could be lifted to the Legislature as part of this process too.

Each forum discussion focused on three general key questions including how to better address underproduction, understanding the specific investments the state should focus on to support production (including infrastructure planning and finance), and how to adjust the housing capacity analysis and housing production strategy efforts to better plan and support communities in their housing production goals. Participants were also asked additional questions related to housing production and challenges specific to their region.

In all, DLCD staff engaged a wide swath of planners, developers, elected officials, housing policy staff, and advocacy groups throughout the state via local government forums. See Appendix A & B to review forum meeting dates and for a complete list of questions by region.

Summary of Key Themes

Discussion generally centered around three major themes: **partnership, accountability, and investment.**

Partnership

Capacity building support – Many local jurisdictions are already pursuing action to increase production but face capacity challenges.

- Small and rural communities tend to have fewer staff to support general city work. Staff typically do not have housing planning expertise which hinders good housing planning efforts and work.
- Many communities under 10,000 in population would like to opt-in and participate in the goal 10 housing planning program even though they are not required due to population threshold requirements. Those that do want to participate will require funding and technical assistance to fulfill statutory requirements.

- Communities with population thresholds above 10,000 with dedicated planning department and housing planner experts also face capacity constraints in advancing housing work. Some participants noted that funding applications require substantial resources, time, and staff capacity and there are long wait periods to receive funding. Many jurisdictions lack planners with in-depth housing planning experience and need support and guidance to advance meaningful policies and investments that increase production.
- Most communities are facing high levels of staff turnover making it difficult to advance housing planning projects generally and in a timely manner.
- Many participants expressed value for regional Council of Governments (COG) and circuit writers in providing housing and planning support generally, but reiterated the importance of direct grant and consultant support.

County involvement – There is a need for better partnership with counties and regional entities to ensure coordinated approaches to challenges associated with housing planning and other related intersecting disciplines (i.e., transportation, climate, etc.).

- Participants engaged in the Metro forums generally agree that urban, unincorporated areas in the tri-county metro area should participate in Goal 10 planning, especially if those lands will eventually be annexed into Metro cities.
- Participants engaged in the Metro Neighboring Cities forums would like stronger connections to their county planning department staff so that assumptions crafted by Counties for their cities are reported to Metro as accurately as possible.

Regional and state support – Participants would like to see better coordination between local, regional, and state planning departments to ensure better housing outcomes over time.

- Many participants felt regional coordination could reduce inefficiencies by sharing data, strategies, capacity, and resources.
- Other suggested a regional lens allows for better transportation connectivity and workhouse planning between nearby communities.
- Participants engaged in the South Coast forums expressed a major frustration for the historic lack of representation from the South Coast and rural communities more generally in housing policy. They suggested state agencies should be more closely coordinated and create partnerships with local communities to encourage housing production and affordability, and state policies should reflect rural contexts and needs.

Accountability

Strategic State-lead guidance and direction– Participants generally support policies that address challenges related to the implementation of the Goal 10 housing planning program. Policies must be paired with flexibility to allow local governments to apply a local lens to ensure consideration for local context in the housing planning process.

- Central Oregon and Coastal planners support safe harbors that could consider second and vacation home realities as part of their housing capacity analysis. This would allow better accuracy in terms of housing need and as a result better planning solutions for those communities facing these additional housing realities. There is tension about the appropriate level of state involvement with second and vacation homes – while some think greater

intervention would help local communities manage housing issues affected by second and vacation homes, others feel state involvement would complicate issues and local jurisdictions should be provided more tools to address them according to local policy priorities.

- Metro and Neighboring Cities liked the idea of enabling the application of safe harbor “market factors” as part of the housing capacity analysis to better reflect the actual developability of lands in the buildable land inventory. The idea here would be a market factor reduction for underutilized land or land that has never or will never develop based on state requirements and/or circumstances.
- Communities in the Willamette Valley and Southern Oregon would like increased state acknowledgment of the severe levels of wildfire risks in communities and the associated added layer of complexity to housing planning for the areas.
- Some planners raised the need for more policy attention to consider state regulations on nonsignificant wetlands in a buildable lands inventory that is part of the housing capacity analysis.
- Smaller and more rural communities expressed the need for the state to explore adding flexibility to many of the tools available for cities to pursue to promote housing development that is not a “one size fits all” approach and instead tools that enable and incentivize better housing development use. This includes financial incentives as well as land use planning processes, including the Goal 10 and refinement to the Urban Growth Boundary expansion process.

Tools and resources matter – Participants strongly agreed that state resources must be made available to raise awareness on recent housing planning requirements to elected officials, the public, and housing staff generally. The framing of the resources must be carefully crafted to ensure the new requirements are communicated in a way that underscores the value of the need for increased housing production.

- Small and rural community planners want the state to produce resources like FAQs, model codes, factsheets, research papers, etc., that local planners can use as guidance in housing planning work with community members and elected officials.
- Most participants suggest better messaging to communicate recent state level reforms to Goal 10 (i.e., middle housing and HPS) to reduce resistance to increase housing development at all levels – with elected officials, planning managers and staff, local leaders, and community members.
- Participants discussed the need for DLCD department staff support in various areas of housing planning: housing capacity analysis and housing production strategy, community education, and any way to take on certain work (i.e., technical assistance application, mapping, general data streamlining, etc.) that would allow planning staff more time to focus on housing projects.

Investment

Flexible funding is important – Participants need funding to support housing planning and housing production. While DLCD is equipped to provide the former, the latter is a type of funding support that does not currently exist in the statewide system.

- Participants raised the need for flexible funding to support the infrastructure and land costs associated with housing development, especially in greenfield areas.

- Participants generally like the idea of state provided funding for infrastructure contingent on affordable housing production and to backfill System Development Charges for affordable housing developments.
- Participants raised concern for the need for ongoing funding support for maintenance costs (i.e., sewer, water) and other associated housing development costs like schools, hospitals, and parks to ensure long-term sustainability.
- Some participants raised the need for state investment to increase the supply of land that is ready for development. This also includes site preparation necessary to support housing development.
- South Coast participants underscored major challenges of housing development for the area to step from scarcity of resources to prepare land for development. This includes resources to do housing planning work at the local level and resources to enable the development of housing, including site preparation and provision of public services. These are areas where state investment could greatly enhance communities' ability to produce more housing.

Key Themes from the conversation with Tribal Nations and their members

- Participants expressed need for better recognition between the important distinction between the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon and culturally specific organizations that support native peoples. The major distinction is that the nine federally recognized tribes are eligible for tribal housing funding directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- In many ways, the goal 10 housing program doesn't make sense for tribal nations. Participants recommend moving away from population dynamics towards a focus on actions that tribes can and want to pursue to address housing needs specially focused on tribal people. Tribes should have the decision-making authority for housing planning specific to tribal nations.
- Participants appreciate HUD's block grant program set aside option for funding as it removes the competitive and time-consuming pressures and barriers associated with state and federal funding. Participants would like to see more of this kind of flexibility with housing funds.
- Participants suggested all pots of funding available for housing specifically for federally recognized tribal nations to be consolidated and allocated based on a formula.
- It's important to recognize that native peoples are reluctant to providing proprietary type data due to harmful past experiences from government. Careful thought in this data area is needed relative to native peoples.
- Many tribes have their own land use and zoning laws; more consideration should be given to tribal law.
- One size doesn't fit all – many individual differences among the nine tribes. Funding should be flexible enough to be nimble to the various housing needs by tribes.
- Recommend grounding in housing planning. The housing system tribes inherited from HUD is punitive and doesn't address tribal nation's core values in terms of housing support and planning.