



We build strength, stability, self-reliance and shelter.

Support for OAR Chapter 600, Division 46 and 47 proposed rules

Dear Chair Lazo,

On behalf of Habitat for Humanity of Oregon and the 23 local Habitat for Humanity affiliates building and repairing homes across the state, I am writing to express strong support for the OAR Chapter 600, Division 46 and 47 proposed rules.

The Oregon Homes legislation (HB 2258 passed in 2025) was designed to expedite the production of new homes by streamlining approvals for a variety of housing types: single-family homes, accessory dwelling units (ADU's), duplexes, triplexes, quads, townhomes, and cottage clusters. Importantly, HB 2258 specifies that the resulting middle housing units may be either attached or detached. In addition, this bill explicitly applies to prefabricated and modular housing.

The Oregon Homes strategy for developing pre-approved residential plans for a variety of housing types, is primed to pair with recent housing innovations, to scale up the supply of entry-level homes for sale and rent across the state.

Currently, Habitat for Humanity of Oregon is collaborating with Gust Tsiatsos of GCT Land Management in La Grande, who is a modular home builder. Together with our state's one remaining, volunteer-run affiliate, we are working to develop 14 homes within 30 months on an infill site less than two miles from the high school. Using Habitat's traditional approach of raising the funds, organizing community volunteers and building homes, it has typically taken this affiliate two to three years to build and sell a single house.

With LIFT Homeownership funding secured to support this work, site predevelopment is underway. Three homes on this site will be 1,316 square feet, with an extremely livable floor plan. The 1-bedroom, permanently affordable cottages will provide energy-efficient opportunities to age in place. All 14 of these homes will be single-story and fully accessible. The city of La Grande is committed to meeting their housing supply deficit, to the benefit of local community members, and has been an amazing partner. ***Habitat for Humanity of Oregon and GCT Land Management view this collaboration as a pilot we are eager to deliver and replicate—especially in other rural Oregon communities.***

This type of exponential increase in affordable homeownership production was literally unthinkable a few years ago. While it has taken some time for new, middle housing land use regulations to hit the ground locally, these opportunities are opening up daily. Our state's growing acumen in the areas of manufactured, modular, and mass timber construction have tremendous promise.

At a recent tour of Blazer Industries' modular factory, I was excited to learn that Age+ has taken a very proactive approach to siting replicable, modular developments to expand housing options affordable to seniors throughout the state.

While Leigh Armstrong accurately reported that 23 independent Habitat for Humanity affiliates build homes across the state, most Habitat affiliates build in multiple communities—sometimes even in numerous counties. Both Division 46 and 47 of the proposed rules will help these locally-based organizations to better serve their communities. We're also excited to see the Master Plan program take shape, and see numerous near-term applications to expedite our homebuilding efforts in Oregon communities of all sizes.

Regarding national Habitat for Humanity building and design standards, to my knowledge, these are most rigid for affiliates who access SHOP, the Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program administered by HUD.

Two updates we're especially pleased to see come out of the rulemaking process include: (1) specifying that Cottage Clusters can include homes up to 1,400 square feet, and (2) updating the Middle City definition.

The proposed rules included in OAR Chapter 600, Division 46 and 47 will further expedite the ability of Habitat for Humanity affiliates, housing authorities, municipalities, and other nonprofit and for-profit developers to scale up new home production—especially in rural Oregon communities. We urge your strong support.

Thank you for your leadership and service,



Shannon M. Tennant, Executive Director