From: CARPENTER Mina * DLCD
To: JININGS Jon * DLCD; MASON Palmer * DLCD; WILLIAMSON Angela * DLCD
Subject: Comment Submission: Housing in Unincorporated Communities
Date: Wednesday, November 18, 2026 6:33:41 AM

To view the PDF of this rulemaking comment, please visit the SharePoint Library here.

Name: Nic Westendorf
Email: NicWestendorf@gmail.com
Rule: Housing in Unincorporated Communities
Organization or affiliation (optional):
Comment: I am writing in opposition to the proposed rules as currently drafted. More consideration needs to be given to the overall strategy, supporting data, and intended outcomes to ensure that these changes do not create unintended long-term consequences for rural communities. There appears to be limited comprehensive information about existing conditions in Oregon's unincorporated communities, including current housing stock, infrastructure capacity, public service needs, and the characteristics of the people who live and work there. Before creating additional opportunities for expansion, we need a clearer understanding of existing needs and whether proposed development will actually serve those communities. I am also concerned that the proposed approach does not sufficiently prioritize the types of housing most needed by local residents and rural workers while protecting surrounding farmland and other working lands. Increasing housing capacity alone does not guarantee that the resulting housing will be affordable or accessible to the people these communities need to support. Additionally, we need to carefully consider the long-term financial and infrastructure implications of expanding development into new areas. Extending and maintaining roads, water, wastewater, and other public infrastructure creates ongoing costs that can ultimately fall on local governments, utility customers, and taxpayers. We should be cautious about creating additional infrastructure obligations in rural areas while many existing communities and cities are already facing challenges maintaining and funding the infrastructure they have. Our focus should be on making better, more efficient use of land that is already developed and infrastructure that is already in place, while identifying genuine housing needs and appropriate opportunities within existing communities. We should not continue to rely on the availability of cheaper rural land as a primary solution to our housing challenges without fully accounting for the long-term costs, impacts on working lands, and needs of existing residents. Oregon should not pursue rural expansion without first demonstrating that it is a better long-term solution than making more effective use of existing developed areas and infrastructure.