

1 BEFORE THE LAND USE BOARD OF APPEALS

2  
3 OF THE STATE OF OREGON

4  
5 LANDWATCH LANE COUNTY,

6 *Petitioner,*

7  
8 vs.

01/31/19 PM 1:55 LUBA

9  
10 LANE COUNTY,

11 *Respondent,*

12  
13 and

14  
15 ATR SERVICES,

16 *Intervenor-Respondent.*

17  
18 LUBA No. 2018-093

19  
20 FINAL OPINION

21 AND ORDER

22  
23 Appeal from Lane County.

24  
25 Sean T. Malone, Eugene, filed the petition for review and argued on behalf  
26 of petitioner.

27  
28 No appearance by Lane County.

29  
30 Bill Kloos, Eugene represented intervenor-respondent.

31  
32 ZAMUDIO, Board Member; RYAN, Board Chair; BASSHAM, Board  
33 Member, participated in the decision.

34  
35 REMANDED

01/31/2019

36  
37 You are entitled to judicial review of this Order. Judicial review is  
38 governed by the provisions of ORS 197.850.

**NATURE OF THE DECISION**

Petitioner appeals a county ordinance that adopts text amendments to county code provisions governing land use applications and appeals.

**FACTS**

Lane Code (LC) Chapter 14 provides the procedures for county land use applications and appeals. On July 10, 2018, the Board of Commissioners of Lane County enacted Ordinance No. 18-02, revising LC Chapter 14 and related cross-references and definitions in other code chapters.<sup>1</sup> Petitioner challenges some of those amendments in this appeal.

**FIRST ASSIGNMENT OF ERROR**

In the first assignment of error, petitioner argues that the county code is inconsistent with state law because it requires appellants to specify appeal issues as a jurisdictional prerequisite to obtaining an initial evidentiary hearing. We previously summarized the relevant statutory framework in *Bard v. Lane County*, 63 Or LUBA 1, 5, *aff'd*, 243 Or App 245, 256 P3d 205 (2011):

“Under ORS 215.402(4), a ‘permit’ is defined as ‘discretionary approval of a proposed development of land.’ For clarity, in this opinion we generally refer to ‘permits,’ as ORS 215.402(4) defines that term, as ‘statutory permits.’ Except as provided in ORS 215.416(11), when ruling on an application for a statutory permit, the county must ‘hold at least one public hearing.’ ORS 215.416(3).

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<sup>1</sup> All citations to the LC are to the current version that was amended by the challenged Ordinance No. 18-02.

1 The exception in ORS 215.416(11) authorizes the county to make  
2 decisions concerning statutory permits without first providing a  
3 public hearing. However, to take advantage of ORS 215.416(11),  
4 the county must give ‘notice of the [statutory permit] decision and  
5 provide[] an opportunity for any person who is adversely affected or  
6 aggrieved, or who is entitled to notice \* \* \*,’ to file a local appeal.  
7 ORS 215.416(11)(a)(A). Under ORS 215.416(11), ‘the appeal shall  
8 be to a *de novo* hearing.’ ORS 215.416(11)(a)(D). To summarize,  
9 under these statutes, when rendering a statutory permit decision, the  
10 county must provide a prior public hearing on the application, or  
11 provide notice and an opportunity for an appeal that includes a *de*  
12 *novo* public hearing, after the statutory permit is approved without a  
13 prior hearing. Counties are free to adopt their own procedures for  
14 reviewing applications for statutory permits, but those local  
15 procedures must be consistent with the statutory procedures.”

16 LC 14.030(1)(b)(i) governs county decisions, made without a hearing, by  
17 the county planning director, or the director’s designated representative  
18 (collectively, director), for Type II procedures, which include statutory permit  
19 decisions.<sup>2</sup> Those decisions may be appealed, and as explained in *Bard*, the local

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<sup>2</sup> LC 14.030(1)(b)(i) provides:

**“(b) Type II Procedure**

**“(i) Overview.** The Type II procedure involves the Director’s interpretation and exercise of discretion when evaluating approval standards and criteria. Uses or development evaluated through this process are uses that are conditionally permitted or allowed after Director review that may require the imposition of conditions of approval to ensure compliance with development standards and approval criteria. Type II decisions are made by the Director, in some cases after

1 appeal procedures must be consistent with the statutory procedures. LC  
2 14.030(1)(b)(ii)(ee) (“Appeals of Type II decisions may be made in accordance  
3 with the procedures at LC 14.080.”).

4 Under LC Chapter 14, local appeals are submitted to the director, who  
5 serves as a gatekeeper and decides whether to accept the local appeal, and thus  
6 allow it to proceed to a hearing. The director must reject an appeal that does not  
7 satisfy LC 14.080(1). LC 14.080(2)(b). In addition, even if the director accepts  
8 an appeal, the hearings official or board of commissioners may dismiss an appeal  
9 that does not comply with LC 14.080(1)(c). LC 14.080(2)(e). As pertinent here,  
10 a notice of local appeal must specify the error in the director’s decision. LC  
11 14.080(1)(c)(vi), (vii).<sup>3</sup>

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notice of application and opportunity to comment.  
Type II decisions may be appealed.

“The Type II procedure applies to a variety of applications including, but not limited to review of applications for: permitted uses subject to standards, conditional use permits, and tentative partition and subdivision applications made pursuant to LC Chapter 13.” (Boldface in original.)

<sup>3</sup> LC 14.080(1)(c) provides, in part:

“**Content of Notice of Appeal.** A notice of appeal must:

“\* \* \* \* \*

“(vi) Include a statement explaining the specific issues being raised on appeal with sufficient specificity to afford the

1 Petitioner argues that LC 14.080(1) and (2) are inconsistent with ORS  
2 215.416(11) because those subsections make raising and identifying appeal  
3 issues prior to an initial hearing a jurisdictional requirement, while ORS 215.416  
4 contains no such limitation.

5 As far as we can tell, petitioner’s argument raises an issue that has not  
6 previously been decided by LUBA or the appellate courts—*viz.*, whether local  
7 legislation that allows a county to dismiss an appeal for failure to submit a

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approval authority the opportunity to resolve each issue raised;

“(vii) Provide an explanation with detailed support specifying one or more of the following as assignments of error or reasons for reconsideration;

“(aa) The Director or Hearings Official exceeded their jurisdiction;

“(bb) The Director or Hearings Official failed to follow the procedure applicable to the matter;

“(cc) The Director or Hearings Official rendered a decision that is unconstitutional;

“(dd) The Director or Hearings Official misinterpreted the Lane Code or Lane Manual, state law or federal law, or other applicable standards and criteria; or

“(ee) Reconsideration of the decision is requested in order to submit additional evidence not available in the record at the hearing and addressing compliance with relevant standards and criteria.” (Boldface in original.)

1 specific appeal statement is inconsistent with ORS 215.416. We recently  
2 identified but did not decide that issue.

3 In *Rogue Advocates v. Josephine County*, \_\_\_ Or LUBA \_\_\_ (LUBA Nos  
4 2017-065/092, Aug 3, 2018), the petitioner argued that the board of county  
5 commissioners “exceeded its jurisdiction” by considering a local appeal of a  
6 planning director’s decision made without a hearing because the local appellant  
7 did not submit an appeal statement specifying the grounds for appeal as required  
8 by the county code, which provides that failure to submit such an appeal  
9 statement “shall be considered a jurisdictional defect, and the appeal shall be  
10 dismissed.” *Rogue Advocates*, \_\_\_ Or LUBA at \_\_\_ (slip op at 5–6). We  
11 remanded the county’s decision for the county to interpret the county code in the  
12 first instance. *Id.* (slip op at 10–11). We observed that ORS 215.416(11)(a)(E)  
13 requires a *de novo* hearing and explained the history of that provision:<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> ORS 215.416(11)(a)(E) provides:

“(E) The *de novo* hearing required by subparagraph (D) of this paragraph shall be the initial evidentiary hearing required under ORS 197.763 as the basis for an appeal to the Land Use Board of Appeals. At the *de novo* hearing:

“(i) The applicant and other parties shall have the same opportunity to present testimony, arguments and evidence as they would have had in a hearing under subsection (3) of this section before the decision;

1 “ORS 215.416(11)(a)(E) was adopted as an amendment to ORS  
2 215.416(11)(a) by the legislature in 2001 in order to overturn the  
3 Court of Appeals’ holding in *Johns v. City of Lincoln City*, 146 Or  
4 App 594, 933 P2d 978 (1997). Or Laws 2001, ch 397, §1. *Johns*  
5 concerned a permit decision that had been rendered initially without  
6 a hearing under ORS 227.175(10)(a) (the city counterpart to ORS  
7 215.416(11)(a)), then appealed to the planning commission for a  
8 hearing and ultimately to the city council. Lincoln City Code  
9 provisions required that persons attempting to appeal such a permit  
10 decision specify ‘the basis for the appeal.’ 146 Or App at 596. Based  
11 on that code requirement, the Court of Appeals held that the issues  
12 the local appellant raised before the local appellate body were  
13 limited to the issues specified in appellant’s notice of local appeal.  
14 146 Or App at 602–03. ORS 215.416(11)(a)(E) has the effect of  
15 legislatively overruling the Court of Appeals’ holding in *Johns*, that  
16 the issues the local appellant raised on appeal were limited to the  
17 issues specified in the notice of appeal. Pursuant to ORS  
18 215.416(11)(a)(E), the issues that may be raised at the hearing are  
19 unlimited. \* \* \*” *Rogue Advocates*, \_\_\_ Or LUBA at \_\_\_ (slip op at  
20 8).

21 Here, consistently with ORS 215.416(11)(a)(E), LC 14.080(3)(b) provides  
22 that the county may not limit the scope of the appeal *hearing* to issues raised in  
23 the notice of appeal.<sup>5</sup> However, the question presented is whether LC 14.080,

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“(ii) The presentation of testimony, arguments and evidence shall not be limited to issues raised in a notice of appeal; and

“(iii) The decision maker shall consider all relevant testimony, arguments and evidence that are accepted at the hearing.”

<sup>5</sup> ORS 215.416(11)(E)(ii) provides that “[t]he presentation of testimony, arguments and evidence shall not be limited to issues raised in a notice of appeal.”

1 which makes the failure to submit a statement of appeal that includes the  
2 information in LC 14.080(1)(c)(vi) and (vii) a jurisdictional defect, is  
3 inconsistent with ORS 215.416(11). That question is not answered by the fact  
4 that the code provides for a *de novo* hearing.

5 Under the statutory scheme of which ORS 215.416(11) is a part, the default  
6 process for a permit application is to provide an evidentiary hearing. ORS  
7 215.416(3).<sup>6</sup> ORS 215.416(11) provides for an alternative process for making an  
8 initial decision without a hearing, subject to providing notice of the decision and  
9 an opportunity to request an initial *de novo* evidentiary hearing that would  
10 otherwise have been required under ORS 215.416(3). *See Johns*, 146 Or App at

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LC 14.080(3)(b) provides:

**“De Novo Hearing.** Appeal of a Type II decision made by the Director will result in a *de novo* hearing before the Hearings Official. A hearing on an appeal of Type II decision will follow the same procedure used for a hearing on a Type III review in accordance with the applicable procedures at LC 14.070 with notice in accordance with the Type III hearing notice requirements of LC 14.060. The Hearings Official’s review will not be limited to the application materials, evidence and other documentation, and specific issues raised in the review leading up to the Type II Decision. The Hearings Official’s review may include consideration of additional evidence, testimony or argument concerning any relevant standard, criterion, condition, or issue submitted or raised during the open record period.” (Boldface in original.)

<sup>6</sup> ORS 215.416(3) provides that “[e]xcept as provided in subsection (11) of this section, the hearings officer shall hold at least one public hearing on the application.”



1 599 (concluding that the term “*de novo*” and the overall statutory scheme require  
2 the local government to provide a plenary hearing). Under that scheme, any  
3 jurisdictional barriers a local government places on an appellant’s right to obtain  
4 that initial evidentiary hearing must be consistent with the text and purpose of  
5 that statutory scheme.

6 In our view, the statutory rights to obtain an initial evidentiary hearing, and  
7 to present a potentially unlimited array of issues at that initial evidentiary hearing,  
8 are considerably undermined if the request for an initial evidentiary hearing can  
9 be rejected at the outset for what is deemed a jurisdictional failure to present  
10 issues in the notice of appeal, as required by LC 14.080(1). LC 14.080(1) and (2)  
11 do more than simply require an appellant to specify one or more issues and,  
12 instead, make the specification of at least one issue jurisdictional.<sup>7</sup> The appellant

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<sup>7</sup> The presumed purpose of requiring an appellant to specify issues in the notice of appeal is to give the county and other participants advance notice of the issues that will be presented at the initial evidentiary hearing. *See Johns*, 146 Or App at 602 (“[R]equiring issues to be defined in advance would serve no clear purpose if the issues that may later be considered were not correspondingly limited, such a requirement without such a limitation would *disserve* the objective of providing the other parties to the proceeding with notice of the issues that they must *actually* be prepared to meet.” (Emphases in original.)). But that purpose is poorly served by a code provision that is satisfied even if only a single issue is specified in the notice of appeal. Because the initial evidentiary hearing is *de novo* and, pursuant to ORS 215.416(11)(a)(E)(ii), open to an unlimited array of new issues that may be raised at the hearing, a requirement to specify issues in the notice of appeal that can be nominally satisfied by listing a single issue does little to give advance notice of the issues that the decision-maker will have to address. Under that scheme, there is nothing that would prevent an appellant from

1 must specify issues from an exclusive list of five types of issues. LC  
2 14.080(1)(c)(vii). Further, the appellant must explain “the specific issues being  
3 raised on appeal with sufficient specificity to afford the approval authority the  
4 opportunity to resolve each issue raised,” and provide an “explanation with  
5 detailed support[.]” LC 14.080(1)(c)(vi), (vii). Moreover, the code empowers the  
6 director, and later the hearings official and county commissioners, to dismiss a  
7 local appeal based on a subjective, qualitative assessment of how well the  
8 appellant has explained and supported the issues raised.

9 A local government may require the appellant to specify issues in the  
10 notice of appeal to flush out issues early in the process. *See Johns*, 146 Or App  
11 at 600 (“the statute does not proscribe local legislation requiring a notice of  
12 appeal that sets forth with reasonable particularity the issues that the appealing  
13 party will raise at the hearing”). However, a local government cannot make that  
14 requirement a *jurisdictional* bar to obtaining the initial evidentiary hearing  
15 required by ORS 215.416(3) and (11). Similarly, we do not believe it can,  
16 consistent with the statute, limit the issues specified to five types of issues, or  
17 approve or reject requests for an initial evidentiary hearing based on a qualitative  
18 assessment of how well the appellant has explained the issues specified. Thus,

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specifying a single issue in the notice of appeal, then abandoning that nominal  
issue at the hearing and instead raising a host of new issues that the decision-  
maker must resolve.

1 we agree with petitioner that LC 14.080 is inconsistent with ORS 215.416(3) and  
2 (11).

3 Petitioner also argues, obliquely, that LC 14.080(1)(c)(vi) and (vii)  
4 impermissibly require an appellant to have participated in the proceeding before  
5 the director. Petition for Review 8–9. Petitioner’s argument is not developed  
6 sufficiently for our review and we do not understand LC 14.080 to require a party  
7 to participate in the director’s decision in order to appeal that decision.

8 The first assignment of error is sustained, in part.

9 **SECOND ASSIGNMENT OF ERROR**

10 In the second assignment of error, petitioner argues that the county code is  
11 inconsistent with state law because it requires applicants and appellants to submit  
12 electronic copies of materials that were submitted to the county in hard copy. LC  
13 14.020(3).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> LC 14.020(3) provides:

**“Submission of Materials**

**“(a) General.** The submission of any materials by any party including application materials, supplemental information, written comments, testimony, evidence, exhibits, or other documents that are entered into the record of any land use application must be submitted either at the offices of the Director or at a public hearing, unless specified otherwise by the hearing notice or hearing authority prior to the close of the record. Materials are considered submitted when

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received, or in the case of materials submitted at a public hearing, placed before the hearing authority.

**“(b) Electronic Materials.**

**“(i)** When application or appeal materials submitted in hard copy format are over five pages in length, an applicant or appellant must provide an identical electronic version of the submitted materials in addition to a hard copy. Any other party submitting written materials into the record that are over five pages is also encouraged to submit an identical electronic copy. Any electronic materials must be in a format acceptable to the Director. This provision should not be interpreted to prohibit electronic submittals of materials less than five pages in length. The County will scan submitted materials upon request for [a] fee. The County cannot be held responsible for electronic submittals that are not received by the Director or not confirmed by the Director to have been received.

**“(ii)** When electronic materials over five pages in length are submitted by any party for inclusion in an application record, an identical hard copy of the materials must also be submitted unless this requirement is waived by the Director.

**“(c) Deadline.** Where any materials including both hard and electronic copies are submitted to the offices of the Director and are subject to a date-certain deadline, the materials must be received by the Director by the end of business.” (Boldface in original.)

1 As discussed above, prior to issuing a final decision on an application for  
2 a statutory permit, the county must provide a public hearing. That hearing must  
3 be conducted in accordance with the provisions of ORS 197.763, including  
4 requirements for submission of “written evidence, arguments or testimony.” ORS  
5 197.763(6); ORS 215.416(5); ORS 215.416(11)(a)(E). According to petitioner,  
6 the electronic submission requirement is inconsistent with ORS 197.763, which  
7 does not expressly mention electronic materials.

8 We disagree with petitioner’s premise that the term “written” in ORS  
9 197.763 imposes a limitation on local proceedings such that the county can only  
10 require submission of paper materials and cannot require submission of  
11 electronic materials. To be sure, as petitioner emphasizes, ORS 197.763 was  
12 enacted in 1989 and last amended in 1999, before electronic communication was  
13 commonplace. However, nothing in the text of ORS 197.763 limits the county’s  
14 authority to require electronic submission of “written evidence, arguments or  
15 testimony.”

16 Petitioner next argues that the county code impermissibly *requires*  
17 applicants and appellants to submit electronic materials, while other parties are  
18 merely *encouraged* to submit electronic materials. Petitioner relies on ORS  
19 215.416(11)(a)(E)(i), which provides, in part: “At the de novo hearing[, t]he  
20 applicant and other parties shall have the same opportunity to present testimony,  
21 arguments and evidence as they would have had in a hearing under subsection  
22 (3) of this section before the decision[.]” ORS 215.416(11)(a)(E)(i) requires

1 parties be provided the same opportunity to present as they would have had at an  
2 initial evidentiary hearing. ORS 215.416 and ORS 197.763 do not require that all  
3 parties be treated exactly the same.<sup>9</sup>

4       ORS 215.416 and ORS 197.763 do not prohibit a county from requiring  
5 certain parties to submit electronic copies of submitted hard-copy materials, so  
6 long as all parties are provided an opportunity to present testimony, arguments,  
7 and evidence consistently with those statutes. We note that LC 14.020(3) does  
8 not specify any consequences for a violation, for example, if an appellant submits  
9 10 pages of hard copy but fails to also provide an electronic copy of those same  
10 10 pages, or a party submits electronic materials but fails to also provide a hard  
11 copy. Nothing in LC 14.020(3), or elsewhere cited to our attention, authorizes the  
12 county to ignore or reject properly submitted written or electronic materials  
13 simply because the submitting party failed to also submit *copies* of that material  
14 in a different format. If the county ignored or rejected otherwise properly  
15 submitted testimony or evidence, it is arguable that such conduct, or a code  
16 provision authorizing such conduct, would not be consistent with ORS 197.763.  
17 However, because LC 14.020(3) does not specify any consequences for violation  
18 of the requirement to submit copies in a different format, we need not resolve that  
19 question.

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<sup>9</sup> For example, an applicant has a unique opportunity to submit final argument.  
ORS 197.763(6)(e).

1 In sum, petitioner has not persuaded us that the electronic materials  
2 submission requirements are inconsistent with state law.

3 The second assignment of error is denied.

4 **THIRD ASSIGNMENT OF ERROR**

5 In the third assignment of error, petitioner argues that the county code  
6 impermissibly allows unlimited, successive one-year extensions of permits for  
7 residential development on resource land in violation of state law, which provides  
8 that such permits “shall be valid for four years” and “[a]n extension” of such  
9 permits “shall be valid for two years.” ORS 215.417; OAR 660-033-0140.

10 LC 14.090 provides, in part:

11 **“(6) Expiration of Approvals**

12 **“(a)** A permit for a discretionary approval is valid for two  
13 years from the date of the final decision, unless  
14 otherwise specified in the approval or by other  
15 provisions of Lane Code, and except as provided for in  
16 subsection (7) below.

17 **“(b)** A permit for a discretionary approval of residential  
18 development on agricultural or forest zoned land is  
19 valid for four years, unless otherwise specified in the  
20 approval of an application or by another provision of  
21 Lane Code, and except as provided in subsection (7)  
22 below. For the purpose of this section ‘residential  
23 development’ only includes the dwellings provided for  
24 under ORS 215.213(3) and (4), 215.284, 215.705(1) to  
25 (3), 215.720, 215.740, 215.750, and 215.755(1) and (3)  
26 as implemented through Lane Code Chapter 16.

27 **“(c)** A land division decision is valid subject to Lane Code  
28 Chapter 13 except as provided in subsection (7) below.

1           “(7) **Extension of Approval Period.** Unless otherwise specified in  
2           the approval or by other provisions of Lane Code the Director  
3           may grant an extension subject to the following requirements:

4           “\* \* \* \* \*

5           “(d) An initial one year extension period will be granted  
6           unless otherwise provided in the decision and except as  
7           provided in (7)(e) below;

8           “(e) An initial extension of a permit described in subsection  
9           (6)(b) above is valid for two years;

10          “(f) Except as limited below, additional one year  
11          extensions, beyond the initial extension, will be  
12          authorized by the Director;

13          “(g) Additional one year extensions, beyond the initial  
14          extension, will be authorized where applicable criteria  
15          for the decision have not changed[.]” (Boldface in  
16          original.)

17          Petitioner first argues that applicable state law limits extension of a permit  
18          for residential development on resource land to a single two-year extension.  
19          Petitioner argues that the singular “[a]n extension” in ORS 215.417(2) and OAR  
20          660-033-0140(5)(b) means that only a single extension of two years is permitted.  
21          Petitioner argues that the county code impermissibly allows unlimited successive  
22          one-year extensions for permits for residential development on resource land.

23          Petitioner’s argument requires us to interpret OAR 660-033-0140 and ORS  
24          215.417. In interpreting statutes and administrative rules, our objective is to  
25          determine the intent of the body that promulgated the rule. We examine text,  
26          context, and legislative history with the goal of discerning the intent of the  
27          governing body that enacted the law. *State v. Gaines*, 346 Or 160, 171–72, 206



1 P3d 1042 (2009); *PGE v. Bureau of Labor and Industries*, 317 Or 606, 859 P2d  
2 1143 (1993). “Context includes other provisions of the same rule, other related  
3 rules, the statute pursuant to which the rule was created, and other related  
4 statutes.” *Abu-Adas v. Employment Dept.*, 325 Or 480, 485, 940 P2d 1219  
5 (1997). We are mindful that, in construing a statute, we are responsible for  
6 identifying the correct interpretation, “whether or not asserted by the parties.”  
7 *Stull v. Hoke*, 326 Or 72, 77, 948 P2d 722 (1997).

8 We start with text. ORS 215.417 provides:

9 “(1) If a permit is approved under ORS 215.416 for a proposed  
10 residential development on agricultural or forest land outside  
11 of an urban growth boundary under ORS 215.010 to 215.293  
12 or 215.317 to 215.438 or under county legislation or  
13 regulation, the permit shall be valid for four years.

14 “(2) An extension of a permit described in subsection (1) of this  
15 section shall be valid for two years.

16 “(3) For the purposes of this section, ‘residential development’  
17 only includes the dwellings provided for under ORS 215.213  
18 (3) and (4), 215.284, 215.317, 215.705 (1) to (3), 215.720,  
19 215.740, 215.750 and 215.755 (1) and (3).”

20 OAR 660-033-0140 implements and incorporates ORS 215.417 and provides:

21 “(1) Except as provided for in section (5) of this rule, a  
22 discretionary decision, except for a land division, made after  
23 the effective date of this division approving a proposed  
24 development on agricultural or forest land outside an urban  
25 growth boundary under ORS 215.010 to 215.293 and 215.317  
26 to 215.438 or under county legislation or regulation adopted  
27 pursuant thereto is void two years from the date of the final  
28 decision if the development action is not initiated in that

1 period.

2 “(2) A county may grant one extension period of up to 12 months  
3 if:

4 “(a) An applicant makes a written request for an extension  
5 of the development approval period;

6 “(b) The request is submitted to the county prior to the  
7 expiration of the approval period;

8 “(c) The applicant states reasons that prevented the  
9 applicant from beginning or continuing development  
10 within the approval period; and

11 “(d) The county determines that the applicant was unable to  
12 begin or continue development during the approval  
13 period for reasons for which the applicant was not  
14 responsible.

15 “(3) Approval of an extension granted under this rule is an  
16 administrative decision, is not a land use decision as  
17 described in ORS 197.015 and is not subject to appeal as a  
18 land use decision.

19 “(4) Additional one-year extensions may be authorized where  
20 applicable criteria for the decision have not changed.

21 “(5)(a) If a permit is approved for a proposed residential  
22 development on agricultural or forest land outside of an urban  
23 growth boundary, the permit shall be valid for four years.

24 “(b) An extension of a permit described in subsection (5)(a)  
25 of this rule shall be valid for two years.

26 “(6) For the purposes of section (5) of this rule, ‘residential  
27 development’ only includes the dwellings provided for under  
28 ORS 215.213(3) and (4), 215.284, 215.705(1) to (3), 215.720,  
29 215.740, 215.750 and 215.755(1) and (3).”

1           Petitioner emphasizes that the use of the singular “an extension” in ORS  
2 215.417 and OAR 660-033-0140 means that permits for residential development  
3 in resource zones are limited to a single permit extension of two years. We agree  
4 with petitioner that use of the singular, as opposed to plural, is significant  
5 evidence of intent. *Schuette v. Dept. of Revenue*, 326 Or 213, 217–18, 951 P2d  
6 690 (1997); *State v. Molver*, 233 Or App 239, 245, 225 P3d 136, *rev den*, 348 Or  
7 291 (2010). We conclude that, based on text and context, ORS 215.417 and OAR  
8 660-033-0140 limit discretionary permits approving residential development on  
9 resource land to one, two-year extension.

10           That conclusion is supported by legislative history. *See Cassidy v. City of*  
11 *Glendale*, 66 Or LUBA 314, 320 (2012) (LUBA is free to consider any legislative  
12 history that it considers useful). The Land Conservation and Development  
13 Commission (LCDC) adopted OAR 660-033-0140 in 1993 as part of the  
14 administrative rule implementing Statewide Planning Goal 3 (Agricultural Land).  
15 *See Jones v. Douglas County*, 63 Or LUBA 261, 266, *rem’d*, 247 Or App 56, 270  
16 P3d 264, *and aff’d*, 247 Or App 81, 270 P3d 278 (2011) (so stating). We  
17 explained the relationship between ORS 215.417 and OAR 660-033-0140 in  
18 *Butori v. Clatsop County*, 45 Or LUBA 553, 556–57 (2003):

19           “ORS 215.417 (Senate Bill (SB) 724) was adopted by the legislature  
20 in 2001. It was adopted in response to legislative concerns that the  
21 two-year term for permits for residential development on farm and  
22 forest lands, which was required under LCDC rules at that time, was  
23 too short. As originally introduced, SB 724 provided that such  
24 residential development permits would be effective for eight years

1 and the eight-year term could be extended for an additional four  
2 years. \* \* \* After concerns were expressed by the Department of  
3 Land Conservation and Development regarding the length of time  
4 such permits would remain valid and the application of SB 724  
5 retroactively to revive expired permits, SB 724 was amended to  
6 shorten the time such permits would remain valid to four years with  
7 a possible extension of two years and to eliminate the section of SB  
8 724 that would have revived permits that had already expired.” *Id.*

9 LCDC adopted OAR 660-033-0140(5) to implement ORS 215.417, and  
10 essentially duplicated the statutory language in the administrative rule. Based on  
11 the legislative history, it appears that ORS 215.417 was the product of a  
12 compromise that resulted in permits for residential development on resource land  
13 that expire after four years with a possible two-year extension. Nothing in the  
14 legislative history suggests an intent to allow more than one extension. We agree  
15 with petitioner that state law allows the county to issue a single, two-year  
16 extension of a permit for residential development on resource land. We also agree  
17 that LC 14.090(7) impermissibly allows unlimited one-year extensions for such  
18 permits.

19 The third assignment of error is sustained.

## 20 **DISPOSITION**

21 Petitioner requests that “LUBA reverse or remand” the county’s decision  
22 if we agree that the challenged legislative amendments are inconsistent with state  
23 law. Petition for Review 17. While we have concluded above that the challenged  
24 decision violates certain provisions of applicable state law, the code amendments  
25 are not prohibited as a matter of law because petitioner’s assignment of error and

1 our conclusions are limited to hearing procedures for statutory permits and  
2 discretionary approval of residential development on agricultural or forest zoned  
3 land, as provided in state law. Accordingly, the proper disposition is remand.

4 The county's decision is remanded.