

To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, & Water
From: Kevin Teater
Subject: Testimony in Opposed to HB 2659 – Requiring DLCD to update rules adopted in response to the Governor’s executive order (CFEC)
Date: March 27, 2023

My name is Kevin Teater. I am a Beaverton city councilor, but I am here in my personal capacity to Oppose HB 2659, which would eliminate incredibly important Climate Friendly and Equitable Community rules.

I work as a Main Street community development consultant. I have worked with small and rural towns all across Oregon, and I have even been the executive director of Beaverton’s Main Street program. Whether I am in the Portland Metro area, the South Coast, or Eastern Oregon, I keep hearing the same comments from local leaders and community members: “Parking minimums are holding us back.”

Two weeks ago, I was in a rural town in Eastern Oregon, and a property owner lamented to me, “I *want* to build housing and a grocery store here, but parking minimums are making it way too difficult.”

One year ago, I was on Planning Commission when we were trying to reconfigure a development proposal so that a significant tree could be saved. The developer told us that any other site layout results in less parking than the code requires, making saving the tree impossible. “Parking drives development,” the housing developer told us with a twinge of frustration and resignation.

Two years ago, I was in Beaverton when a downtown property owner shared a similar thought, “My long-term hope is to build housing on the other half-block, but parking minimums would make it too expensive as it is.”

In virtually every single Main Street district across the state, the problem is not a lack of land to store private automobiles. Our Main Street communities are fractured by expansive surface parking (on-street and off-street) while at the same time lacking the supply of housing we need.

When CFEC passed, Beaverton immediately began updating our parking codes, and we are well on our way to eliminate parking minimums across the whole city. We are doing this because we see the value in land being used for people, and not forcing an oversupply of land dedicated for parking cars.

CFEC rules were not problematic on their own. The lack of funding associated with it has been challenging, but the CFEC rules are good, and they force individual communities to take steps that will help us all reduce our climate impact.

Please Oppose this bill with me so that we can build downtowns that are people-centered, not driven by archaic and unscientific parking codes.