

City of Roseburg

Community Development Department

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March 28, 2025

Oregon House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon State Capitol

RE: **HB 3921, City of Roseburg Urban Growth Boundary Exchange (Testimony in Support)**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express strong support for HB 3921, which would approve the City of Roseburg's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) Exchange to add new residential land in Charter Oaks.

Having worked as a planner and preservationist in Oregon since getting my first job in Oregon at the Portland Planning Bureau in 1992, I would like to offer a few personal and professional observations on this bill. These are informed by a personal struggle finding both rental and for-sale housing in Roseburg after moving here from my beloved hometown of Portland in March, 2022.

To keep things brief, I will use three bullet points:

- There is a **severe shortage of rental housing** here, with extreme competition for every habitable rental that comes available. Landlords have open houses and take stacks of applications, and many never even respond to tenant inquiries. I got lucky at the last minute by being a pest with good income & references, plus offers to do free painting and faucet upgrades at my own expense. It felt dirty but the only other option at the time was moving into a motel;
- Having owned three prior homes, I'm used to a house search taking 2-4 months. In Roseburg it took 16 months to find a home spending 2-3 hours each day looking on Zillow and driving around. Standard starter homes in good condition typically last less than 2 weeks on the market. I have heard many stories of teachers, doctors and other professionals declining job offers in Roseburg or moving away after facing the **extremely limited for-sale housing supply** here, including one Planner I worked with who eventually moved to Salem in 2023 after struggles with finding a decent rental. Everybody who lives here has heard these and other housing horror stories – it's a Roseburg thing; and
- The legislature has taken bold steps to modify statewide zoning to support housing in recent years, but there has been no comparable effort to do a comprehensive update of our **1970s-1980s-era statewide land use laws**. In Roseburg, unlike in Portland where the regulations have metastasized since the early 2000s, there is ZERO constraint on housing supply in terms of complex regulations or the time it takes to get housing projects approved: we issue permits for new homes typically in less than one month. The constraint on housing supply in Roseburg has to do with steep slopes, extensive unbuildable wetland and floodplain areas, and a dramatic shortage of buildable lots. More importantly in the case of Charter Oaks, which was almost added to the original UGB back in the early 1980s, the constraint to adding viable residential land is the minutiae of antique statewide planning rules, expressed through litigation from a very small number of individuals who inhabit a midcentury suburban neighborhood immediately adjacent to the city limits.

Thank you for your attention to removing this decades-long obstacle to supporting new housing supply, family formation and economic growth in this beautiful place we are privileged to call home.

Respectfully,



Mark Moffett, Senior City Planner