

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Benton County Planning Commission**  
**March 5th, 2024**

Benton County Planning Commission Chair Fowler called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. The meeting was open to the public virtually via a published Zoom link.

**COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Nicholas Fowler, *Chair*  
Greg Hamann, *Vice Chair*  
Catherine Biscoe (*virtual*)  
Elizabeth Irish  
John Wilson  
Evelyn Lee  
Sara Cash  
Andrew Struthers (*virtual*)  
Ed Fulford

**STAFF**

Darren Nichols, *Director*  
Shannon Bush, *Int. Deputy Director*  
Petra Schuetz, *Planning Official*  
Linda Ray, *Assistant*  
Alyssa Thompson, *Recorder*  
Vance Croney, *County Counsel*

**GUESTS**

Ross Williamson, *Local Government Law Group*  
Patrick Wingard, *Department of Land Conservation and Development*

**PUBLIC**

Jay Sexton, *Historic Resource Commission member*

Chair noted **FULL COMMISSION** in attendance.

**WORK SESSION: Planning Commission Training** presented by Ross Williamson and Vance Croney, *see attached Exhibit A for training PowerPoint and Exhibit B for handouts.*

Chair Fowler **ADJOURN WORK SESSION** at 8:30 pm.

Chair Fowler **CALL REGULAR SESSION TO ORDER** at 8:37 pm.

**MINUTES**

Chair Fowler noted one correction: "DISCUSSION OF 2023 PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIVITIES" should read "DISCUSSION OF 2024 PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIVITIES.

Commissioner Irish **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the January 16, 2024, minutes with noted corrections.

Commissioner Fulford: **SECOND**.

**APPROVED WITH CORRECTIONS 9-0.**

## **SUB-COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

Chair Fowler appointed two commissioners to chair two newly formed sub-committees.

- Subcommittee on Housing-Availability and Affordability, Commissioner Fulford appointed as chair.
- Subcommittee on Voluntary Periodic Review of Comprehensive Plan and Code Updates, Vice Chair Hamann appointed as chair.

Commissioner Fulford shared goals and first steps in slideshow with commissioners. *See attached Exhibit C for PowerPoint.*

Vice Chair Hamann shared three goals for Voluntary Periodic Review subcommittee.

- make the Benton County Development Code accessible and searchable.
- update the Development Code to reflect legislative updates.
- Community and public engagement. Addressing interests, concerns, and values of the community with a future focus.

The subcommittee will work with staff to prioritize and assess what changes need to be made, while also engaging the community and their concerns regarding climate issues, wildfire, water, and more. Goal to partner with the Housing Subcommittee on Code changes.

## **COMMENT:**

Director Nichols and Patrick Wingard with Department of Land Conservation and Development shared that Community Development is close to signing paperwork for a \$50,000 grant. The scope of work for the grant is written with flexibility to be able to pivot and focus on the areas that the county needs to focus on. Wingard shared that incorporating community engagement and making it more inclusive is a priority for LCDC commissioners as well.

## **COMMISSIONER QUESTIONS:**

- Where do the funds for the grant come from?
  - Wingard shared that the grant is funded by state general fund tax dollars.

Chair Fowler asked for any final thoughts or topics.

Director Nichols shared staff will support the subcommittees as a team with lead staff assigned as follows:

- Housing: Director Nichols
- Code Update: Planning Director Schuetz
- Community Engagement: Interim Deputy Director Bush

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.

# Planning Commission Legal Issues Training

**Vance Croney**  
**Ross Williamson**  
March 2024

Vance Croney ([Vance.M.Croney@bentoncountyor.gov](mailto:Vance.M.Croney@bentoncountyor.gov))

Ross M. Williamson ([ross@localgovtlaw.com](mailto:ross@localgovtlaw.com))

# Outline

- Public meeting law update
- Conflicts of interest
- Legislative land use
- Quasi-judicial land use
  - Ex-parte contacts and bias
  - Procedures and deliberations
  - CUP procedures
  - Avoiding appeals

# Public Meetings

## House Bill 2805 (2023)

- For years, the term “meeting” has been defined as: “. . . the *convening* of a governing body of a public body for which a quorum is required in order to make a decision or *deliberate* toward a decision on any matter.” ORS 192.610(7)(a) (emphasis added).

# Public Meetings

The term “convening” is now defined as:

- “(a) Gathering in a physical location;
- (b) Using electronic, video, or telephonic technology to be able to communicate contemporaneously among participants;
- (c) Using serial electronic written communication among participants; or
- (d) Using an intermediary to communicate among participants.”

# Public Meetings

The term “**deliberation**” is now defined as a:

“ . . . discussion or communication that is part of a decision-making process.”

\* Note that the definition of “meeting” uses the term “deliberate” not “deliberation.”

# Public Meetings

Now expressly excludes communications between or among members of a governing body that are:

- Purely factual or educational in nature and that convey no deliberation or decision on any matter that might reasonably come before the governing body



# Public Meetings

Now expressly excludes communications between or among members of a governing body that are:

- Not related to any matter that, at any time, could be reasonably foreseen to come before the governing body for deliberation and decision

# Public Meetings

Now expressly excludes communications between or among members of a governing body that are:

- Nonsubstantive in nature, such as communication relating to scheduling, leaves of absence and other similar matters

# Public Meetings

HB 2805 requires training for members of governing bodies

- Attend an in-person or virtual public meetings training provided, or approved, by the OGEC
- Training required once per term of office

# Public Meetings

New OGEC public meeting oversight

- Grievances must first be filed with the public body within 30 days of the alleged violation
- Public body must:
  - Acknowledge and respond to grievance within 21 days
  - Send copy of response to OGEC

# Ethics

## “Relative” 244.020(15)

- Spouse
- Children of the PO or of the PO’s spouse
- Brother or stepbrother of the PO or of the PO’s spouse
- Sister or stepsister of the PO or of the PO’s spouse

# Ethics

## “Relative” (cont.)

- Parents or stepparents of the PO or of the PO’s spouse
- Son-in-law or daughter-in-law of the PO or of the PO’s spouse
- Anyone for whom the public official has a legal support obligation or is a beneficiary of the PO’s employment benefits

# Ethics

## “Business with which Person is Associated”

- Any private business in which you or a relative are an owner, director, officer, or employee or in which you or a relative has \$1,000+ worth of interest
- Any publicly held corporation in which you or a relative has \$100,000 of interest or you or a relative is an officer/director

# Ethics

“Business with which Person is Associated”

- OR if you file a Statement of Economic Interest, if more than 10% of your total annual household income comes from the business



# Ethics

“Actual Conflict” (Will Happen)

Vs.

“Potential Conflict” (Could Happen)

# Ethics

## “Actual Conflict” (Will Happen)

- An action, decision, or recommendation
- By a *public official*
- That **will** result in a financial benefit or detriment for P.O. or a relative or business associated with P.O. or relative

# Ethics

## “Potential Conflict” (Could Happen)

- An action, decision, or recommendation
- By a *public official*
- That **could** result in a financial benefit or detriment for P.O. or a relative or business associated with P.O. or relative

# Ethics

## Conflicts of Interest Rules (Both Actual and Potential)

### **Make a record of your conflict:**

- State the nature of your conflict
- Do it before voting or discussing the matter
- Do it on the record
- Do it each meeting issue is discussed

# Ethics

## Actual Conflict **Only**

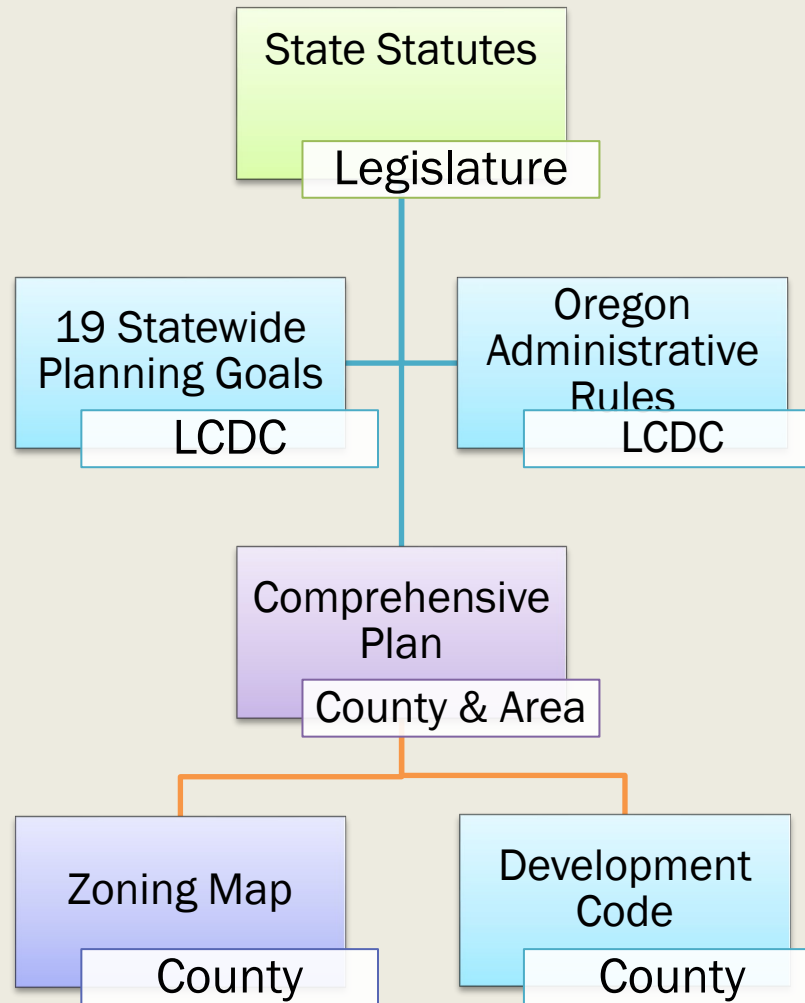
- State your conflict ... and then no participation.
- Same rules as Potential Conflict, but **no** talking and **no** voting.
- Unless Commission cannot act without you (but still no talking)

# Ethics

It is **not** a conflict if the financial benefit happens because of:

- Membership in a class (any large, distinguishable group of citizens that the Commission determines is a class)
- Membership in a non-profit (501(c) status)

# Oregon Land Use



# Oregon Land Use

Land use at the local level

Legislative land use matters (policy making)

Vs.

Quasi-judicial land use matters (judging)



# Legislative Land Use

## Characteristics:

- Making policy decisions that apply to many
- Generally not started with an “application”
- Discretionary within limits of state law
- Planning Commission recommends – Board acts

## Examples:

- Amendments to Development Code
- Broad or large-scale map changes

# Legislative Land Use

## Basic process:

- Notice to public
- Notice to DLCD
- Planning Commission recommendation
- Board hearing and decision
- Record and findings
  - Authority for action
  - Procedures followed
  - Consistent with requirements in state statutes, statewide planning goals, and OARs

# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

## Characteristics:

- Deciding (Judging) a specific land use proposal that will apply to one or a few
- Must apply criteria in Code – limited discretion
- Testimony and evidence directed towards applicable criteria
- Includes Planning Commission acting as appeal body, reconsidering a staff decision

# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

## Basic process:

- Applicant-initiated application
- Staff completeness review
- Notice to neighbors
- Public evidentiary hearing (the record)
- Written findings and decision
- 120-day or 150-day deadline from date of completeness (ORS 215.427)

# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

Impartial decision-making (Judging)

- No bias – must be able to be fair and impartial
- No ex-parte contacts – decision must be based on information in record
- Address conflicts of interest

# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

## Bias

- Incapable of basing decision on evidence and argument presented
- Prior statements may be used as evidence of prejudgment bias
- Rehabilitation is possible if decision-maker can make a fair and impartial decision based solely on the record

# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

## Ex-parte

- Verbal, written, visual contact not in record
- Examples: Newspaper articles, site visits, conversations with neighbors, prior knowledge, independent research
- Avoid and keep track
- Disclose at meeting when public may respond, before record is closed
- Extra caution during closed-record period

# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

## Procedures – Staff report

- Available to public before hearing
- Sets out applicable criteria
- Sets out all / only applicable material (the record)
- Provides proposed decision with supporting findings and conditions



# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

## Procedures – Hearing

- Chair follows script
- Ensures PC discloses bias, ex-parte contacts and conflicts
- Statutory notifications
- Ensures fair, equal process for applicant and interested parties
- Focus on applicable criteria

# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

## Procedures – Record

- Closed universe
- Foundation for decision
- Available to public
- Staff maintains
- Make requests to staff for items to include
- Developed pre-hearing and during hearing

# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

## Procedures – Deliberations

- Decisions must be made based on approval criteria
- Planning Commission may not consider factors outside of approval criteria
- Findings show why approval criteria are met or not met
- Questions to staff and counsel

# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

## Procedures – Deliberations (cntd)

- Address every argument made by participants
- Interpret any ambiguous criteria / terms
- Choose between conflicting evidence (“substantial evidence” / “reasonable decision maker”)

# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

## Procedures – Deliberations (cntd)

For each criterion:

- List relevant facts (in the record)
- Apply facts to criterion
- Determine whether criterion is satisfied or can be satisfied with a clear condition of approval

# Quasi-Judicial Land Use

## Top Tips for Avoiding Appeal

- Timing (120/150 day timeline)
- Comprehensive record
- Interpret terms
- Weigh evidence and experts
- Thorough and consistent findings
- Clear and non-discretionary conditions



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

## Government Ethics Commission

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Salem, OR 97302-1544

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April 26, 2019

Kristina Schmunk Kraaz  
Assistant City Attorney  
City of Springfield  
225 Fifth Street  
Springfield, Oregon 97477

Re: Advice Number 19-0551

Dear Ms. Kraaz:

This letter of advice is provided in response to your request received on March 29, 2019, which present questions regarding how Oregon Government Ethics laws would apply to actual and potential conflicts of interest that might arise during the City of Springfield's pending Development Code Update Project. The analysis and advice that follows is offered under the authority provided in ORS 244.284 as guidance on how the current provisions of Oregon Government Ethics law may apply to the specific circumstances presented.

### Background

According to the information provided, the City of Springfield has recently begun the process to revise and readopt its land use regulations through a Development Code Update Project (the "Project"). Phase I of the Project will update regulations relating to housing and residential land use. It will include new residential development standards for all types of housing and may expand the uses allowed in residential zones. Phase I is anticipated to culminate in the adoption of a single ordinance adopting the new housing-related code. Phase II (addressing commercial and industrial uses) and Phase III (addressing miscellaneous code sections) will also culminate in the adoption of additional ordinances.

In the initial advice and input stages of Phase I, a community Technical Advisory Committee, with members appointed by the Springfield Planning Commission, will provide analysis of the existing code and new code concepts and technical advice on proposed changes, but will not provide formal recommendations. There will also be a Governance Committee, comprised of two City Councilors and two Planning Commissioners, which will identify key issues and provide direction on areas of focus and opportunities at a policy level. City staff will also hold quarterly meetings with the Planning Commission and City Council to discuss topics and proposed changes; these discussions will initially be broad but eventually will include discussion of specific proposed changes.

Amendments to land use regulations require a public hearing and formal recommendation by the Planning Commission, followed by another public hearing and adoption by the City Council. Following the advice and input phase, the formal package of proposed code amendments for public hearing will be presented to the Planning Commission and City staff will send the required notice to the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) as required by OAR 660-018-0020. The Planning Commission's recommendation, in the form of a final order, will then be forwarded to the City Council, which will hold its own public hearing(s) on the proposed code amendments. Finally, the City Council will vote to adopt/not adopt the final ordinance.

All members of the City Council and most members of the Planning Commission own residential property in Springfield. It is likely that the Project will change development standards for all residential properties in Springfield, though the extent of those changes is not yet known. The changes may expand allowable uses within residential zones or increase buildable areas of residential lots, which could have an impact on property values, affect the ability of property owners to partition their property, or allow construction of improvements not previously allowed.

#### Conflicts of Interest

ORS 244.020(1) defines an actual conflict of interest and ORS 244.020(13) defines a potential conflict of interest. A public official is met with either an actual or a potential conflict of interest when participating in an official capacity in any action, decision, or recommendation, if the effect would or could be to the private pecuniary benefit or detriment of the public official, the public official's relative, or any business with which either is associated. An actual conflict of interest occurs when a public official participates in an official action that would have a direct financial impact on that official, the official's relative or any business with which either is associated. A potential conflict of interest occurs when a public official's action, decision or recommendation could have a financial impact on the official, the official's relative or any business with which either is associated.

A business with which one is associated includes any private business or closely held corporation of which the person or their relative is a director, officer, owner or employee, or agent, or in which the person or their relative currently owns or has owned stock, another form of equity interest, stock options or debt instruments worth \$1,000 or more at any point in the preceding year. [ORS 244.020(3)(a)]. For public officials required to file a statement of economic interest under ORS 244.050, any business listed as a source of income under ORS 244.060(3) (a source producing ten percent or more of the total annual household income) is a business with which the official is associated. [ORS 244.020(3)(d)]. City Councilors and Planning Commissioners are public officials required to file statements of economic interest. [ORS 244.050(j) and 244.050(k)].



Elected officials or those appointed to a board or commission, when met with a conflict of interest, whether it is an actual or a potential conflict of interest, must on each occasion where the issue arises, publicly announce the nature of their conflict. Then, if the conflict is actual, they must also refrain from any discussion, debate or vote on the issue giving rise to the conflict. If the conflict is potential, they may participate in official actions following their public disclosure. [ORS 244.120(2)]. If the public official has an actual conflict of interest, but the public official's vote is necessary to meet quorum requirements, then the public official is eligible to vote, but must not participate in any discussion or debate on the issue from which the conflict of interest arises. [ORS 244.120(2)(b)(B)].

There is a class exception to the conflict of interest provisions which applies to any action a public official may take in their official capacity that would affect to the same degree a class consisting of all inhabitants of the state, or a smaller class consisting of an industry, occupation, or other group which includes the public official, their relative, or a business with which either is associated. [ORS 244.020(1) and (13)(b)]. Only the Oregon Government Ethics Commission may make the determination of whether a class exists.

**Question 1:** Would members of the Governance Committee have only potential conflicts of interest, even though the Governance Committee includes City Councilors who will eventually make final decisions?

You have indicated that the Governance Committee, comprised of two Planning Commission members and two City Councilors, will identify key issues and provide direction in the advice and input phases, but will not be making any final decisions regarding code amendments. When at a Governance Committee meeting, a Planning Commissioner or City Councilor would be acting as a Governance Committee member and not as a Planning Commissioner or City Councilor.

Because the Governance Committee is an advisory committee and not the ultimate decision maker on the Project, when the City Councilors and Planning Commissioners sit as Governance Committee members, they would only be met with potential conflicts of interest. When met with a potential conflict of interest, a Governance Committee member must publicly announce the nature of the member's conflict of interest prior to participating in taking any action on the matter giving rise to the conflict. The official must make the public announcement once on each occasion that the matter arises.

For the City Councilors, the conflicts of interest could ripen to actual conflicts of interest when they sit as the City Council to make final decisions and act upon the recommendations of the Planning Commission. Public officials are individually responsible for exercising their own good judgment in determining whether or not an

action, decision or recommendation presents an actual or potential conflict of interest. If a City Councilor determines that the City Council's actions would have a direct and specific financial benefit or detriment on the City Councilor, a relative or a business with which either is associated, the City Councilor must make a public announcement of the nature of the conflict and refrain from further participation in the matter giving rise to that conflict. If the conflict of interest remains potential, meaning that the City Council's actions could possibly have a financial impact on the City Councilor, a relative or a business with which either is associated, then the City Councilor must once again make a public announcement of the nature of the conflict, but may continue to participate on the matter.

**Question 2:** Does the fact that a City Councilor owns residential property in Springfield, by itself, constitute an actual conflict of interest if the code changes would affect all property owners' abilities to further build onto existing dwellings or establish new uses on existing properties? Does it matter whether a specific City Councilor has current plans to further develop their property in the future?

The fact that a City Councilor owns residential property in Springfield means that the City Councilor would have at least a potential conflict of interest and quite possibly an actual conflict of interest in the code amendments when they come before the City Council. Based on the facts as presented, it is not clear whether or not for any particular property the financial impact of the proposed amendments would be certain and specific, meaning that it gives rise to an actual, rather than a potential, conflict of interest. That determination must be made by each City Councilor, and may depend in whole or in part on the specific code amendments, the type of property, the property location, and the use of the property.

If a City Councilor has current plans to develop their property in the future, and the specific code amendments being considered would impact that future development, the City Councilor would have an actual conflict of interest. The City Councilor may have an actual conflict of interest even without any current development plans if it can be determined, at the time the matter is before the City Council, that the specific code amendments would affect the value of the City Councilor's property. If the City Councilor cannot determine whether the specific code amendments would have a certain financial impact, however, then the conflict of interest would remain potential. As owners of property within the City, each City Councilor must make a careful consideration of whether the specific code amendments being considered would or could have a financial impact on their own property or the properties of their relatives or businesses with which they are associated.

**Question 3:** If owning residential property in Springfield gives rise to an actual conflict of interest, does it qualify for a class exemption under ORS 244.020(13)(b)? Because not all properties are identical within the City, the development code would not cause the exact same effect on each owner of residential property, although all similarly situated property owners would be affected the same way.

ORS 244.020(13)(b) provides an exception to compliance with the conflict of interest provisions of ORS 244.120 if an official action would financially impact the public official, a relative, or any business with which either is associated to the same degree as a broader class of individuals. If a significant number of other persons or entities are also "affected to the same degree" by the action, then the public official may be exempt from conflict of interest provisions on the basis of a class exception. Only the Commission may determine what groups constitute such a class.

Whether a class exists depends on the number of property owners affected and if the code amendments would affect those property owners to the same degree. Because of the variations in property size, type, location, and usage, the code amendments may not affect all property owners to the same degree. For the Commission to determine whether the class exception in ORS 244.020(13)(b) applied to an action by the City Councilors, it would need to know the specific code amendments at issue, and the number and type of properties affected by those specific code amendments. Such a determination cannot be made without that information at this stage in the process.

**Question 4:** The City Council will be engaged in a long process of providing direction and guidance to City staff on proposed code amendments, long before the City submits its formal 35-day notice to DLCD. At what point in the process would a City Councilor have an actual as opposed to a potential conflict of interest? For example, during the first phases of quarterly check-in meetings where the Council provides direction and guidance as to high-level topics but not specific code language? Only when the Council is providing specific input on the language of proposed code changes? Only after the City submits the formal 35-day notice of post-acknowledgement plan to DLCD?

According to the information provided, the City Council cannot take any formal action on the Code Amendments until the City submits its notice to the DLCD; thus any discussions by the City Council before that DLCD notice take the form of recommendations to City staff for the Project, rather than formal, binding decisions. The DLCD notice is submitted prior to the Planning Commission's public hearing; once the DLCD notice is submitted, a City Councilor would not participate any further in the process until the Planning Commission submits its recommendation and final order to the City Council.

As explained above, a City Councilor would have a potential conflict of interest when sitting as a Governance Committee member because the nature of that role is preliminary and advisory in nature. Similarly, a City Councilor participating in a discussion or making a recommendation during the advice and input stages, in the quarterly check-in meetings, or in other forums before the formal DLCD notice would also have a potential conflict of interest, even if the discussion or recommendation were on specific code language, because the code amendments are still preliminary and have not been integrated into a final order for the City Council to review and act upon.

The nature of the conflicts of interest could change once the DLCD notice is submitted and the Planning Commission's recommendations and final order are presented to the City Council. At that point, the City Councilors sit as members of the City Council to hold a formal public hearing on the code amendments and vote to adopt or not adopt the code amendments. The City Councilors' conflicts of interest, which were only potential during the preliminary, informal stages, could ripen to become actual conflicts of interest.

**Question 5:** If a quorum of Councilors have an actual conflict of interest in the final housing ordinance, does ORS 244.120(2)(B) require the affected City Councilors to abstain from *all* discussion on the proposed housing ordinance, or only from discussing the aspects of the ordinance for which they have an actual conflict? For example, if a Councilor has no actual conflict of interest with multifamily housing standards, could they participate in deliberations on that aspect of the ordinance?

A City Councilor may have an actual conflict of interest arising from some sections of the final code amendments, but have no conflict of interest in other sections. In that case, if the final code amendments are presented to the City Council in sections for the formal public hearing and vote, the City Councilor may participate in deliberations and vote on those sections of the code amendments that do not give rise to an actual conflict of interest for the City Councilor. For those sections that do give rise to an actual conflict of interest, the City Councilor would need to make a public announcement of the nature of the conflict and refrain from further participation in those sections.

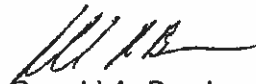
If the City Council is required to vote on the entirety of the code amendments or final ordinance, City Councilors with actual conflicts of interest would be required to publicly announce their conflicts and refrain from further participation. If a quorum of the City Councilors have actual conflicts of interest, ORS 244.120(2)(b)(B) provides that if their votes are necessary for a quorum, they would be eligible to vote, but would still need to refrain from any discussion or debate on the matters giving rise to their conflicts.

Kristina Schmunk Kraaz  
April 26, 2019  
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This general advice is limited to the application of ORS 244.020 and 244.120 to the situations presented in your request. As the Project continues and more specific information becomes available, we encourage the City Councilors and any other public officials involved in the Project to call the Commission.

If you have any additional questions regarding the application of Oregon Government Ethics law, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



Ronald A. Bersin  
Executive Director

RAB/svm

**\*\*Disclaimer\*\***

This staff advice is provided under the authority given in ORS 244.284(1). This opinion offers guidance on how Oregon Government Ethics law may apply to the specific facts described in your request. This opinion is based on my understanding and analysis of the specific circumstances you described and should not be applied to circumstances that differ from those discussed in this request.



An abstract graphic consisting of several thin, black, overlapping lines that form various geometric shapes and polygons, primarily located in the upper left and center of the page.

# REGIONAL AFFORDABLE WORKFORCE HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE CHARTER

MAR 2024

# AGENDA

- Goal – Purpose Statement
- Background Information
- Regional Housing Benefits & Risks
- Next Steps – Work Plan



## GOAL – PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Benton County Planning Commission recognizes an opportunity to help convene the **regional community** to **explore opportunities to meet short- & long-term housing needs**, and to build a more resilient and responsible community.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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Benton County, like much of the Willamette Valley and Western Oregon, faces **increasing price pressure on housing at all levels**. A lack of housing, including housing that is attainable by the workforce, has raised concerns from the region's employers small and large.

**Employees** who work in or near Corvallis but are **unable to find or afford housing live in the surrounding communities** from Sweet Home to Lincoln City, from Dallas to Springfield. The resulting commutes generate more vehicle traffic on crowded roads, generate GHG emissions, separate parents from school children during the day, add hours to the workday for commuters, and deprive Corvallis from important perspectives in the community, including firefighters, teachers, service workers, utility technicians, children, and others.

These inequities **divide the community between “haves” and “have nots”** in ways that threaten community stability and weaken community resilience over time.

# BUSINESS CASE

Benton County is the **second most-rent-burdened county** in Oregon and has a **severe deficit of workforce housing**. This deficit makes it very difficult to hire doctors and other highly paid professionals, as well as teachers, nurses, firemen, policemen and retail staff.

Current market conditions mean it is **not financially motivating for developers** to focus on homes for households earning 80% to 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

For example, in Benton County a small family the AMI is \$68k, at 80% the family can afford a \$148k home, at 120% they can afford a \$274k home. Again, limited motivation for developers.

Oregon 2022 AMI: [01-12-2022-Area-Median-Income-Chart.pdf](#)  
([oregon.gov](#))

# REGIONAL HOUSING BENEFITS & RISKS

## Benefits

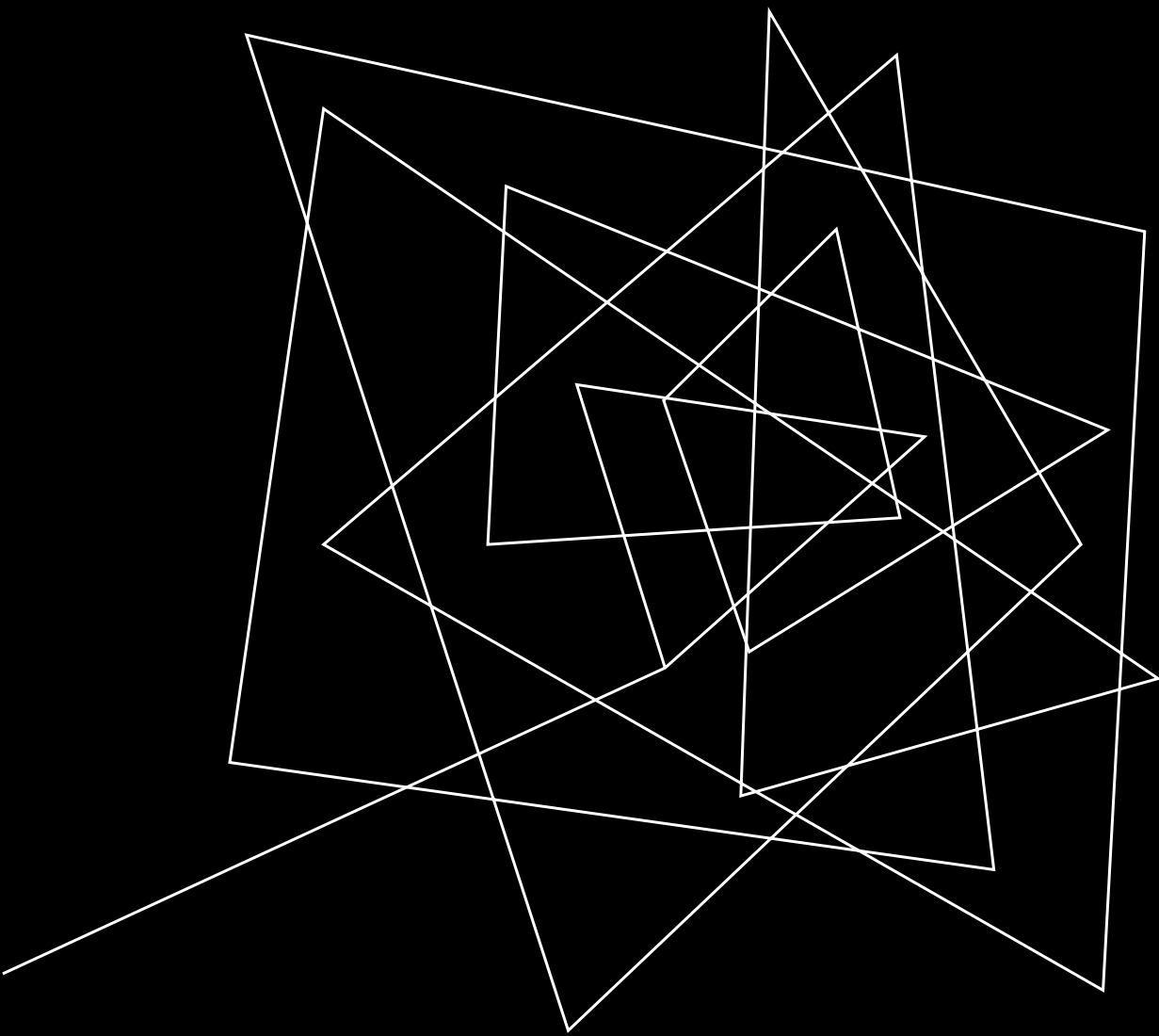
- **Broader issue** that a single community, this sub-committee's benefit can address issues at the **regional level**.
- More housing options, **wider price points**.
- **Leverage existing investment** and community wiliness.
- Working together communities can **share efforts, costs and solutions**.
- Larger cooperative regional effort likely to **invite larger investment**.
- Regional planning can **strengthen conservation efforts** between communities.

## Risks

- Workforce challenges of **attracting and retaining skilled/service workers** due to housing limits, price points and/or commute times.
- Economic disparities **reducing local spending impacting services and businesses** within the community.
- Social Inequity, certain demographics are priced out of the community **strains social cohesion and inclusivity**.
- Infrastructure straining such as increasing commute times and traffic congestion adding **pressure on transportation infrastructure and impacting environment**.
- Quality of life, decline in overall community well-being, **strain on social services and health problems**.

# REGIONAL HOUSING NEXT STEPS – WORK PLAN

- **Step 1:** Identify planning commissioners and community partners to be included in the work of the subcommittee.
  - Reach out to potential partners, let them know about the subcommittee, invite participation.
  - Secure soft commitments to participate and/or support the work.
- **Step 2:** Develop a communications content/strategy with: purpose, principles, partners.
  - Stand up a Benton County web page for the project.
- **Step 3:** Appoint subcommittee - community members and adopt charge.
- **Step 4:** Set agendas for meetings 1, 2, 3 . . .
  - Introductory kickoff meeting: scope, goals, tasks
  - First deliverables – common information base, invite input.
  - Inventory of opportunities and challenges, revised partner list, collective resources
  - Incorporate subcommittee charge into community engagement for periodic review.
- **Step 5:** Report back to Planning Commission, Board of Commissioners, Community, Partners
- **Step 6:** If appropriate, incorporate into comprehensive plan work plan with LCDC, DLCD



Q&A