

## Climate Friendly Communities

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To:Derek Severson <derek.severson@ashland.or.us>

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Dear Mr. Severson,

It just came to my attention that the city is moving forward with a preliminary plan to identify sections of Ashland that could be developed with much increased density. I am certainly in favor of doing what we can to reduce emissions. I don't know that increased building density will help, but I understand that the city is required to comply.

My concern is that, according to the preliminary map, my neighborhood will be completely surrounded by increased density. We just found out that a second homeless shelter will be opened just down the street from us, and now this. It looks like we are at risk of becoming the "bad" part of town. It seems to me like the effects of all this should be shared between all neighborhoods, not concentrated here.

The newspaper article predicted that most of the increased development would take place in the Crowson Mill area. That makes sense, except that project has been talked about for a very long time, and nothing seems to happen.

What do you recommend we do to help ensure that our neighborhood will remain a place we will want to live?

Sincerely,

Wendy Adler

721 Glendale Ave, Ashland

541-631-1823

September 19, 2023

Mayor Tonya Graham & Council  
City of Ashland  
20 East Main Street  
Ashland, OR. 97520

**RE: Agenda Item XII.3: Climate Friendly Area (CFA) Study Adoption**

Mayor & Councilors:

In June, I provided testimony to the Planning Commission encouraging the city to study additional Climate Friendly Areas (CFAs) in order to meet targets set in LCDCs Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) rules that call for 30% of all housing to be located in CFAs. I'm writing now to encourage you to take that action and respond to comments from DLCD about the 30% requirement.

A key premise of the CFEC rules and the state's overall strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions is that we change land use plans so that we get 30% of all housing in walkable, mixed use "Climate Friendly Areas" (CFAs) - the kind of neighborhoods that significantly reduce the amount of driving we need to do.

For Ashland, achieving the 30% target means that the city should have roughly 3500 housing units in CFAs by 2041. However, since the three proposed CFAs are largely undeveloped and the city expects only about 900 new housing units to be built in the next 18 years, the city would be about 2600 units short of meeting the 30% target, even if every new housing unit built in Ashland were located in a CFA. The point of this analysis is that the city should, if it wants to actually meet the 30% target, designate additional CFAs to make up the difference.

DLCD staff have not disputed this analysis but have advised that the city can comply with the CFEC rules if it simply designates CFAs that have enough "zoned capacity" to accommodate 30% of the city's housing needs. While DLCD may be technically correct about what the CFEC rules require, what they are really telling you - and other cities - is that the rules don't work to achieve their stated objective: i. e. that it's OK to adopt CFAs that have no chance of meeting the 30%

goal because they lack enough existing housing and future housing growth to meet the 30% target.

DLCD also suggests that the city might fill this gap and meet the 30% goal "over time" as it updates the city's housing plans. However, because the underlying problem is that the three CFAs contain too little existing housing and the city is expecting a only a modest amount of growth, it is completely unclear how the city can meet the 30% goal without doing what it should do now, which is to study and designate additional areas as CFAs.

The bottom line is this: while providing "zoned capacity" may technically meet DLCDs rule, it will leave the city well short of meeting the rule's stated objective of actually getting 30% of all housing in CFAs. If your interest is limited to complying with the letter of CFEC rules - rules that clearly fall short of their stated objective - then DLCDs advice may be helpful. However, if you want to position Ashland to actually meet the 30% goal, you should direct staff and the planning commission to propose one or more additional CFAs. This should include a downtown CFA which can, consistent with CFEC rules, be tailored to exclude or protect historic properties and structures.

For decades, Ashland has served as a powerful example for other Oregon communities of effective ways to plan and achieve compact, walkable mixed use development. By designating CFAs that can actually accommodate 30% of its housing, Ashland would continue to provide this kind of needed leadership.

Bob Cortright<sup>1</sup>

373 Suncrest Avenue NW  
Salem Oregon

cc: Kevin Young, DLCD

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<sup>1</sup> I am a retired urban planner. For 25 years, I served as DLCDs lead staff on transportation planning issues, including 6 years as the agency's lead planner for reducing GHG emissions. I currently work with several climate and environmental groups that are advocating for strong, clear rules and effective state and local plans to carry out the Oregon Climate Action Plan (OCAP).