



Home Builders Association  
of Metropolitan Portland

June 14, 2020

Tim Knapp, Mayor  
Wilsonville City Council  
29799 SW Town Center Loop E  
Wilsonville, OR 97070

**Subject: Resolution No. 2820, Equitable Housing Strategic Plan (Public Hearing Item A)**

Dear Mayor Knapp and Councilors:

The Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Portland (“HBA”) represents over 800 companies and tens of thousands of women and men who work in the residential building and remodeling industries throughout the greater Portland area. We work to promote housing affordability and are dedicated to maximizing housing choice for all who reside in the region.

Recent national events and ongoing protests are a manifestation of historic racial inequities. We must acknowledge that in Oregon – too long a state with exclusionary laws, policies, and attitudes – this systemic discrimination severely limited access to housing and other basic human needs for Black and other marginalized communities. As a trade association whose members build housing, HBA recognizes that while we have achieved needed reform, exclusion in the housing sector has impacts that last for generations.

With this in mind, HBA commends the City of Wilsonville (the “City”) for endeavoring to bridge the equity divides within the community. As a task force member for the City’s Equitable Housing Strategic Plan (the “Plan”), **HBA encourages the City to swiftly implement the Plan’s high-priority action item 1D and create a Homebuyer Opportunity Limited Tax Exemption Program (the “HOLTE Program”).**

Wilsonville’s population is projected to grow by 14% over 20 years, with about half of the new households expected to earn less than 80% of the Area Median Income (“AMI”). At the same time, Black households experience significantly lower rates of home ownership than other demographic groups across the state. To address this, the City should create a HOLTE Program, specifically designed to foster home ownership for households at or below AMI. Doing so will help these households build intergenerational wealth and open opportunities for increased access to capital. The HOLTE Program will help the City achieve its priorities for increased housing affordability and greater diversity in homeownership.

**HBA also stresses the need for action on Plan priorities 1B and 1C.** The City should leverage staff and community input toward sensible middle housing opportunities in both established and urban growth areas. In doing so, HBA requests that the City maintain a variety of lot sizes while planning for duplexes, triplexes, quads, cottage clusters, and townhomes in areas currently zoned exclusively for single-family dwellings. The City should legalize diverse housing types to serve all levels of the economic ladder, so that households will have more flexibility to purchase homes that align with their budget, relieving pressure on lower-income households.

To further promote housing affordability, **the City must implement Plan item 2C, which will reduce the real cost of System Development Charges (“SDCs”) on Affordable Housing.** SDCs have grown significantly as a percentage of housing costs; and, the City should vest SDC rates earlier in the development process and collect them later in the construction process. Doing so will increase predictability while ensuring the City does not lose needed infrastructure funding. Bringing housing to market faster, with more certainty, and with fewer costs stands to benefit families in search of all types of housing.

Finally, **HBA along with the Wilsonville Alliance for Inclusive Communities, supports the Planning Commission’s recommendation to stand up a separate equity body charged with reviewing City policies and regulations.** Our nation needs systemic justice reform and this group would offer invaluable insight and perspective to the City leaders.

Respectfully,



Roseann Johnson  
Assistant Director of Government Affairs

Cc: Kristin Akervall, Council President  
Charlotte Lehan, Councilor  
Joann Linville, Councilor  
Ben West, Councilor