



March 8, 2021

To: Chair Harrington  
Commissioner Treece  
Commissioner Willey  
Commissioner Rogers  
Commissioner Fai

RE: **Support for LUT Current Planning and Building Services FY 2021-2022 budget strategy**

Chair Harrington & Commissioners,

Thanks to you and your staff members for meeting with us to discuss our concerns regarding the Land Use and Transportation (“LUT”) budget shortfalls, as outlined on the Memo from LUT Director Stephen Roberts dated March 2, 2021. Our organizations’ members rely heavily on LUT services, in order to provide housing for the communities within your county. We understand you have difficult choices to make that will require potential service reductions in all departments in Washington County.

HBA and PMAR strongly support the Director’s proposed budget strategy to bridge anticipated gaps between revenues and expenditures in Current Planning and Building Services. Having a robust construction industry and supply of housing is crucial as the region begins its economic recovery post Covid-19, and strives to make up for the perpetual underproduction we have seen since the Great Recession through today. As such, the County should prioritize its funds to maintain full capacity for planning, review and inspection of needed housing.

Looking back over the past decade, you can see the Total Assessed Value increases year over year in the county’s unincorporated areas. After subtracting the annual built-in 3% increases, the numbers below reflect the real net growth attributed to LUT’s capacity to approve housing projects.

2019-2020 Total Assessed Value:	\$23,077,690,170	Change from prior year:	+5%
2018-2019 Total Assessed Value:	\$21,985,190,113	Change from prior year:	+5%
2017-2018 Total Assessed Value:	\$20,960,301,770	Change from prior year:	+10%
2016-2017 Total Assessed Value:	\$19,058,965,935	Change from prior year:	+5%
2015-2016 Total Assessed Value:	\$18,181,492,232	Change from prior year:	+6%
2014-2015 Total Assessed Value:	\$17,249,879,456	Change from prior year:	+4%
2013-2014 Total Assessed Value:	\$16,623,673,898	Change from prior year:	+4%
2012-2013 Total Assessed Value:	\$16,046,578,758	Change from prior year:	+3%
2011-2012 Total Assessed Value:	\$15,541,527,231	Change from prior year:	+3%
2010-2011 Total Assessed Value:	\$15,089,340,172	Change from prior year:	+3%
2009-2010 Total Assessed Value:	\$14,710,215,018	Change from prior year:	+4%

Director Robert’s balanced approach factors in changes to the human resources very carefully, while also working to streamline services. Continuity in permitting processes and approval times will allow for consistent housing production and an increased supply of skilled labor. As seen in the added value to the County’s tax base, a healthy housing industry is a community-wide benefit. With some limited increased fees and general fund subsidy, the County can close the gap, ensuring that it delivers quality development services and housing for its residents.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Portland Metropolitan Association of Realtors®

Roseann Johnson, Assistant Director of Government Affairs  
Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Portland