

OREGON'S STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM

Introduction

The Statewide Planning Goals

Since 1973, Oregon has maintained a strong statewide program for land use planning. The foundation of that program is a set of 19 statewide planning goals. The goals express the state's policies on land use and related topics, such as citizen involvement, housing, and natural resources.

Most of the goals are accompanied by "guidelines," which are suggestions about how a goal may be applied. As noted in Goal 2, guidelines are not mandatory. The goals are, however, adopted as administrative rules (Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 660, Division 015).

City and County Planning

Oregon's statewide goals are achieved through local comprehensive planning. State law requires each city and county to have a comprehensive plan and the zoning and land-division ordinances needed to put the plan into effect.

The local comprehensive plans must be consistent with the statewide planning goals. Plans are reviewed for such consistency by the state's Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC). When LCDC officially approves a local government's plan, the plan is said to be "acknowledged." It then becomes the controlling document for land use in the area covered by that plan.

Oregon's planning laws apply not only to local governments but also to special districts and state agencies. The laws strongly emphasize coordination —

keeping plans and programs consistent with each other, with the goals, and with acknowledged local plans.

A Partnership

Oregon's planning program is a partnership between state and local governments. The state requires cities and counties to plan, and it sets the standards for such planning. Local governments do the planning and administer most of the land-use regulations. The resulting mosaic of state-approved local comprehensive plans covers the entire state.

The state does not write comprehensive plans. It doesn't zone land or administer permits for local planning actions such as variances and conditional uses. And unlike some other states, Oregon does not require environmental impact statements.

The Land Conservation and Development Commission

Oregon's statewide planning program is directed by the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC). The commission's seven members are unsalaried volunteers, appointed by the governor, and confirmed by the state senate. The term of appointment is four years.

The Department of Land Conservation and Development

LCDC's administrative arm is the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD). DLCD is a small state agency with its main office in Salem. The department has regional

offices in Portland, Springfield, Newport, Central Point Bend and La Grande.

The Land Use Board of Appeals

The state has a special “court” — the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA). LUBA has three members, known as “referees,” which review appeals of land use decisions. LUBA is based in Salem.

Citizen Involvement

It’s no coincidence that *Citizen Involvement* is the first among Oregon’s 19 statewide planning goals. Extensive citizen participation has been the hallmark of the state’s planning program from the outset. Every city and county has a Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI) to monitor and encourage active citizen participation. The state’s Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee (CIAC) also encourages such participation in all aspects of planning.

The Local Comprehensive Plan

The local comprehensive plan guides a community’s land use, conservation of natural resources, economic development, and public facilities. Each plan has two main parts. One is a body of data and information called the inventory, background report, or factual base. It describes a community’s resources and features. It must address all of the topics specified in the applicable statewide planning goals. The other part is the policy element. That part of the plan sets forth the community’s long-range objectives and the policies by which it intends to achieve them. The policy element of each community’s plan is adopted by ordinance and has the force of law.

Local plans may be changed through *plan amendments* or *periodic*

review. Plan amendments are smaller, unscheduled adjustments to a plan. Periodic reviews are broad evaluations of an entire plan that occur every four to 10 years. A plan may be modified extensively after such a review.

Each plan is accompanied by a set of *implementing measures*. There are many different kinds. The two most common measures are zoning and land-division ordinances. Every city and county in Oregon has adopted such land-use controls.

Need More Information?

If you need information about a certain community’s comprehensive plan or its zoning and land-division ordinances, please contact the appropriate city or county planning department.

If you would like more information about Oregon’s statewide planning program, please contact DLCD.