



Lane County

LAND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
125 EAST 8TH AVENUE
EUGENE, OREGON 97401

PHONE: 541-682-3823

FAX: 541-682-3947

April 15, 2009

Sid Leiken, Mayor City of Springfield
Springfield City Councilors

**Subject: Proposed Metro Plan Safe Harbor Population Forecast
For The Springfield Urban Area**

The Lane County Board of Commissioners received a letter dated March 20, 2009, from Greg Mott, with notice of a City Council public hearing on a proposed Metro Plan amendment scheduled for April 6, 2009. The Metro Plan amendment would include language with a safe harbor population forecast for the City of Springfield urban area. We appreciate the extension of time for comment on the proposal and submit the following for your consideration.

The Board discussed this matter at recent meetings and is concerned that the proposed Safe Harbor Population Forecast for the Springfield urban area may not comply with ORS 195.034 or OAR 660-024 and does not contain the accuracy included within the Lane County Coordinated Population Study conducted by the Portland State University Population Research Center. Most of our concern with your proposal remains the timeliness of the process and the accuracy of the figures used to inform your efforts to address ORS 197.304.

According to ORS 195.036, Lane County is the coordinating body responsible for establishing and maintaining a population forecast for the area within its boundary. The requirements of OAR 660-024-0030 appear to extend that responsibility to include all urban areas within the county, as well. In addition, the Eugene-Springfield Metro Plan, Chapter IV, requires Lane County to co-adopt any Metro Plan text amendment applicable to the urban growth area, before it becomes effective. The proposed Metro Plan Safe Harbor Population Forecast PAPA for separate Eugene and Springfield urban areas was submitted to Lane County on September 5, 2008. The item was discussed and heard by the Lane County Planning Commission on November 6, 2008. Once the City Council has taken action on the item, the issue will be scheduled before the Board of Commissioners. Only when co-adopted by Lane County, do we think you may be able to rely upon the figures under the terms of ORS 195.034, OAR 660-024-0030, and the Metro Plan.

At this time, the Lane County Board of Commissioners respectfully requests the Springfield City Council place the Metro Plan Safe Harbor Population Forecast PAPA on hold, pending the outcome of the Lane County/PSU coordinated population forecast process. If this is not possible, we would request you recalculate the safe harbor projection using the 2009 Lane County population estimate produced by the Oregon Office of Economic Analysis and PSU. According to the most recent data and information from the PSU Population Research Center, the 2030 population forecast for Lane County is 420,481, with 293,391 of that total number appearing within the Eugene/Springfield urban growth boundary area. We think that figure represents a more accurate population projection basis for deriving numbers for the current portion of the Metro Plan urban growth area located east of Interstate 5. Another way to address this concern would be to link the Metro Plan population forecast to the adopted number derived from the final action of the Lane County Board of Commissioners on the PSU project as long as that process becomes final and acknowledged by the end of July, 2009.

The Lane County Board of Commissioners is not interested in delaying the implementation of ORS 197.304 (HB 3337) by either Springfield or Eugene and remains committed to finding an agreeable way that would allow the City of Springfield and the City of Eugene to use the most accurate Safe Harbor figures until the PSU numbers are adopted, final and are acknowledged. At that point, any planning efforts that must rely on population forecasts will be able to proceed based on the adopted countywide population forecasts that utilized the most recent data from the PSU study.

Sincerely,

Peter Sorenson,
Chair, Lane County Board of Commissioners

cc: Springfield City Manager
Eugene Mayor and Councilors
Eugene City Manager