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October 25, 2016

Planning & Sustainability Commission
Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
1900 SW 4th Ave., Ste. 7100, Portland, OR 97201

RE: Inclusionary Zoning Code Project

1000 Friends of Oregon supports the inclusionary housing proposal before you in its current form, and we urge the Planning and Sustainability Commission to recommend its adoption to the Portland City Council. We have joined in this request with the Inclusionary Zoning Coalition, of which we are a member.

1000 Friends of Oregon has been engaged in affordable housing issues since the beginning of the land use planning program, over 40 years ago, and with inclusionary zoning since the late 1990s. We have advocated lifting the pre-emption on inclusionary zoning and returning that tool to local governments.

The 2016 Oregon Legislature opened up a narrow opportunity for inclusionary zoning, structured and calibrated with the understanding that Portland might be the only jurisdiction in the state that would use the IZ tool as structured in the legislation. Other cities and counties are looking to Portland to lead this effort, anticipating that they will return to the legislature in a future year to more fully lift the current pre-emption.

Inclusionary zoning is a well-tested housing tool, in use in over 500 communities and states across the country, for decades in some cases. It is effective in providing affordable housing integrated into mixed-income developments, helping to make neighborhoods less racially segregated and more economically diverse. Inclusionary zoning, combined with the Residential Infill Project, comprehensive plan changes, investment strategies, and other actions the city is taking, is part of the continuum of actions Portland must make to provide housing for all, in all its neighborhoods.

Portland has proceeded in a very thoughtful manner in translating this legislation into a tool that can be implemented, including the creation of the panel of experts and extensive technical and economic analyses. From this, Commissioner Saltzman and the Portland Housing Bureau have developed the inclusionary housing recommendation before you. It has been calibrated to ensure it is feasible to developers. It provides options for developers to pay a fee or build units off-site for those who decline to include units on site. Recalibration of the policy to adjust to changing market conditions will ensure it remains a flexible and attractive program for the development community.

The 2016 legislation was already a compromise. There is no justification to weaken it further. We urge the Planning & Sustainability Commission to recommend that the City Council adopt the inclusionary zoning proposal before you.

Thank you for consideration of our comments.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Kyle McCurdy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Kyle McCurdy
Deputy Director