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**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Sarah Selden, Neighborhood Planner  
Planning and Building Services Department

**SUBJECT:** Update on Clear & Objective Housing Standards Project

**DATE:** June 4, 2013

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#### **ACTION**

Receive an update from staff on the Clear and Objective Housing Standards project, including the status of this work and next steps.

#### **BACKGROUND**

As part of its Periodic Review requirements, the City must demonstrate compliance with applicable statewide planning goals, rules and statutes. One of these requirements is the Housing goal (Goal 10), which is implemented in part by Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 660-007-0015: Clear and Objective Approval Standards Required. Compliance with this rule means the City needs to provide a non-discretionary review option for all housing, and must update current discretionary standards that apply to the city's design districts with regard to multi-family housing, and to attached housing of three or more units (currently applications for these housing types are reviewed by the Development Review Commission at a public hearing).

The City received a grant from the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development to develop clear and objective housing standards in order to comply with this State rule. Grant funds were used to contract with a planning and urban design consultant from SERA Architects, who completed two main tasks related to this project:

1. Development of code concepts, which described alternatives for translating the discretionary code language into clear and objective language; and
2. Drafting and revising clear and objective code amendments.

The code concepts and draft code amendments were presented to the Planning Commission for feedback in January and March. They were also presented to an advisory committee whose charge further included reviewing the commercial code amendments (barriers to mixed use and code streamlining), a separate project.

Following the Planning Commission and advisory committee meetings to review the draft code amendments, the consultant conducted a code testing exercise. The purpose of this exercise was to take existing projects of high-quality design, which were approved by the Development Review Commission, and test them against the draft code amendments to determine whether or not they would comply with the clear and objective standards. Following the code testing exercise, additional revisions were made to the draft code standards. The consultant tasks have recently been completed to fulfill the terms of the grant. Staff will continue to refine and format the amendments before bringing them back to the Planning Commission for a final work session.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

The companion piece of this project is to develop the procedural standards necessary to support the code amendments. As discussed at previous Planning Commission meetings, as long as the City offers an *opportunity* for housing to be developed through a clear and objective process, it may also provide a discretionary review process for proposed development that does not meet the clear and objective standards. This two option system is referred to as a “two-track process.” Staff have been identifying questions, researching processes used by other cities, and exploring approaches to respond to Lake Oswego’s emphasis on high-quality, compatible design.

Staff will be continuing this effort, and anticipates a work session with the Commission in late summer or fall. Once the procedural standards are ready, they will be forwarded to the Commission for final review and a public hearing along with the clear and objective housing standards. Staff hopes to complete this work by the end of 2013; it must be complete by April 15, 2014 to meet the City’s Periodic Review deadline.