



# Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

**Commenter name (if provided):**

Shawn Irvine

**Date comment received:**

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**Commenter email (if provided):**

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**Location (if provided):** Independence, OR

**Public comment:**

Hi,

I wanted to offer my support for formalizing the Oregon Main Street program within OPRD. My community has an organization in the network and we have benefitted significantly from the technical assistance, mentorship from other communities and the relatively recently-created grant program. I greatly appreciate that this program is not a prescriptive set of "must do's" and instead provides a framework with assistance that lets communities pursue downtown revitalization in the way that is most appropriate for them. I wasn't able to find any language to be able to comment on the actual rulemaking being proposed but I assume you are simply formalizing the existing system for how communities can participate in and benefit from the Oregon Main Street network. If you do plan to make substantive changes to existing OMS processes, I encourage you to give them a thorough vetting with OMS communities. Most of these organizations operate on an entirely volunteer basis, or with a single (usually part-time) staff person. The flexibility of the program is a critical component that allows communities to make progress at their own (sometimes very slow) pace. If you begin adding in additional prescriptive measures and requirements, it will create new time burdens on the communities that many will not be able to accommodate.

Sheri has been an incredible ambassador for OMS and everything I could hope for in a partner organization. The grant program that was created a few years ago has also been a game-changer. We have utilized it 3 times to enhance key historic buildings in our downtown and I know there are many other communities who have been able to create catalytic change using OMS grants. I am encouraged that you are formalizing OMS within the OARs because I think that will make it harder for future administrations to make a precipitous choice to close this important program. With all the long-term good OMS has created in some of Oregon's smallest communities, I hope this program doesn't just continue to exist but is expanded.

Shawn Irvine