



CITY OF ASTORIA

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February 23, 2015

The Honorable Elizabeth Johnson  
State of Oregon Senator  
900 Court St. NE, S-209  
Salem OR 97301

RE: VOTE YES ON THE REVITALIZE MAIN STREET ACT (SB 565)

Dear Senator Johnson:

Our historic downtown is the cultural and economic core of the community and members of our downtown business association and city government are working hard to bring the district back to life. But the cost of much-needed building restoration, code compliance, and seismic retrofitting remains financially out of reach in many cases.

The derelict Flavel commercial properties in downtown Astoria are an example.

We urge you to support and advocate for **The Revitalize Main Street Act (SB 565)** as a modest, cost-effective investment that will help revitalize our downtown and pay dividends for decades to come in the form of new jobs, income and property taxes, cultural heritage and tourism, business incubation, seismic safety, and the reuse of existing infrastructure.

The Revitalize Main Street Act creates a State **Historic Rehabilitation Fund** to provide a 25% rebate for the certified rehabilitation of historic commercial buildings – stores, hotels, theaters, apartments, factories, mills, etc. It would be funded by the public auction of State income tax credits (similar to the Oregon Film Production Credit) at a capped amount of \$12M per year. The money stays here in Oregon and we end up with long term, tangible assets.

An economic impact study conducted by EcoNorthwest states that **Oregon would be economically better off with this incentive**. In 2018 with a state investment of just \$10.6M we would see:

- 4X more buildings restored than without the state incentive.
- 1,369 jobs per year generating income of \$25.5M.
- \$2.3M net increase in property taxes per year to pay for schools and services.
- \$13.3M new federal Historic Tax Credit dollars invested in Oregon per year.
- \$35.8M net annual increase in direct development spending.

Historic rehabilitation incentives have been **proven effective in 35 other states** as a targeted means to **attract private investment** and **capture more federal tax credit dollars**. This is particularly important in smaller towns.

It's time for the State to invest in Oregon's Main Streets and pass the Revitalize Main Street Act in 2015.

Sincerely,

THE CITY OF ASTORIA

*Arline LaMear*

Arline LaMear  
Mayor