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DATE: May 7, 2015
TO: Joint Ways and Means sub-committee on Capital Construction
RE: Lane County Courthouse project funding

Co-Chairs Representative Read and Senator Girod:

Lane County has initiated the planning phase of our courthouse replacement project. We anticipate that the total costs for the project will be \$2.8M and we are formally seeking \$1.4M from Oregon under the authority granted by HB 5005.

Improving county courthouses in Oregon must be accomplished strategically, and we appreciated being part of an interim process managed by the Association of Oregon Counties and the Oregon Judicial Department. At the conclusion of that process, those who participated felt secure in recommending to the Chief Justice that Lane County's proposal was sound, and should be among the projects selected for funding from the Courthouse Capital Construction Improvement Fund (OCCCIF) during the 15-17 biennium.

During that process Lane County summarized three independent studies from 1997, 2005, and 2008 all of which concluded that the 50 year old local courthouse should be replaced. Cited reasons for this conclusion include ADA accessibility issues, structural deficiencies, and the presence of hazardous construction materials.

Prior to the issuance of a specific bond, the Chief Justice must make three findings with respect to the courthouse project.

- 1.) The courthouse has significant structural defects, including seismic defects.
The 1997 study concluded "The courthouse structure is weak and brittle and is very vulnerable under seismic load." This study has been submitted to OJD as part of Lane County's application.
- 2.) Replacing the courthouse is more cost effective than remodeling or repairing the courthouse
The 2008 Oregon Court Facilities Assessment predicted replacement at \$77M and the 2005 study (adjusted for inflation) pegged a remodel at \$55M. OJD has asked Lane County to provide additional analysis with respect to replacement versus remodel, and that will be provided over the course of the planning phase.
- 3.) Replacing the courthouse creates an opportunity for the colocation of state offices.
Lane County has had nascent conversations with the OR Department of Justice, who currently lease private offices in Eugene for over twenty attorneys employed by the Division of Child Support. Formal agreements will be produced over the planning phase,

The County is currently collaborating with Circuit Court staff and has engaged the National Center for the State Courts (NCSC) to assist in assessing the future needs of the court and other state agencies. NCSC has provided us with a preliminary report which includes a long-term court development profile and formulation of functional space standards. This will serve as a baseline for the design and construction of a new courthouse, and development of a building space requirements program with estimates for occupant, functional and ancillary needs.

The County's intent is that the NCSC study will provide a basis for a detailed request for proposals (RFP) for design services. Once an architectural design firm is competitively selected through the RFP process, the County will work to complete a detailed programming effort and commence design development work for the new Courthouse. As part of this work, the County will likely engage the services of a Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) to provide guidance with regard to the cost impacts of design elements and help develop a detailed project cost estimate. It is anticipated that these efforts will result in a courthouse design and construction budget in sufficient detail to make a formal request for assistance with construction funding in the 2017-19 budget cycle.

The funding we hope to secure for the 15-17 biennium from the OCCIF is pivotal for Lane County's project. We believe it could serve as a model for phasing a project consistent with Chief Justice Balmer's vision for a structured evolution of efficient and safe courthouses across Oregon.

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