



## La Grande Main Street Downtown

**Mission:** To create an inviting, sustainable downtown rooted in La Grande's history and culture, providing a vital center for commercial and community activities.

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Honorable Representative Kotek  
HB 5005, HB 3526

La Grande Main Street Downtown, a 501c3 non-profit organization leading the effort to revitalize downtown La Grande, strongly urges the funding of HB 5005 relating to the lottery bond funding of HB 3526. We are part of the Oregon Main Street Program at the Transforming Downtown level, following the Main Street 4-point approach. We are working hard, collaborating with the City of La Grande, local business owners, and residents to bring life back to our downtown. We have had great success since our inception through the façade improvement program, downtown beautification projects, lively events, capital improvement projects, and marketing our local businesses and La Grande as a whole. However, we could use help from this grant to fulfill our goal of creating a destination community that has an economically and socially healthy downtown.

La Grande is a small community with a population of 13,000 in Northeast Oregon. Our community is suffering from the depressed economy due to the cyclical nature of the timber industry, and big box stores that have located in adjacent neighborhoods. The result is La Grande has a high unemployment rate and minimal population growth.

Our biggest challenge for the renewal and revitalization of our Main Street and downtown addresses derelict and vacant commercial buildings. The City of La Grande and our Main Street Organization do not have adequate funds to address problem buildings. Several examples of buildings located in the central part of Main Street include:

The Liberty Theater – Although the Liberty Theater organization is making progress on this building, this grant would provide much needed assistance in making the dream a reality. We would like to see this building return to its historic character and become a performing arts center. This could serve as a major social hub, catalyst for future downtown investment and a sense of pride for the community.

The Renegade Building which has seen many uses. The building is currently for sale, and is a major blight issue in our community. Located directly next to the Liberty Theater building, we would love to see the Renegade as a historic downtown boutique hotel to improve downtown tourism, and create an inviting space for tourists.

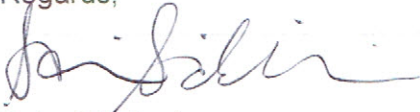
The Lottes Building is currently one of the biggest eye sores in the community. It takes up nearly half a block, and needs major exterior and interior improvements. Addressing

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these needs has been a major struggle and a hindrance of bringing in new business to our downtown core.

The above brick and mortar projects are examples of grant applications that could really improve the appearance and economics of our Main Street in La Grande.

Regards,



Saira Siddiqui  
Executive Director, La Grande Main Street Downtown

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