



February 1, 2016

Honorable Phil Barnhart, Chair

House Committee on Revenue
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: House Bill 4084 Brownfields Tax Exemption

Dear Chair Barnhart and Members of the Revenue Committee:

Addressing brownfields is an important part of the future of economic development in Oregon, and specifically for the City of Beaverton. House Bill 4084 is an important tool that will encourage the rehabilitation of properties in Beaverton.

The City of Beaverton was awarded a \$400,000 Brownfields Assessment Grant by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2013 to help property and business owners with brownfield site assessments for remediation, reuse planning, and job training opportunities. The City is using the grant to begin building a formal brownfields program that could help meet the City's goals and policies to protect and enhance public and environmental health, boost economic development potential, remediate and expand existing business, attract development opportunities, and increase property values and tax revenues. It would be very helpful to have a local tax exemption tool to leverage these funds and turbocharge our brownfield program.

Beaverton currently has 96 known brownfield sites comprising 316 acres (14%) of the study area made up of the Enterprise Zone boundary. Our recent brownfields inventory identified another 135 sites as suspect or unknown, approximately 260 acres (11%). As a result, the issue of brownfields impacts our community and limits the capacity of current land and business owners to expand their business and

improve their property. The tax exemption makes redeveloping a brownfield site an attractive option for a potential business or property owner to take the next step in addressing these land constraints.

The City of Beaverton is eager to bring more development to Oregon and has leveraged many of the available tools such as the Enterprise Zone, Urban Renewal District, Vertical Housing Tax Exemption programs, but even these valuable tools do not address our brownfields needs and help mitigate the land constraints Beaverton faces. We are actively pursuing information to understand the new brownfields land banking legislation and appreciate the Committee's past support for this game-changing tool.

I urge the Committee to pass this important legislation that will only continue to assist us in our brownfields efforts. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Williams
Economic Development Manager