



CITY OF
PORTLAND, OREGON

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

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March 9, 2017

Senator Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair
Representative David Gomberg, Co-Chair
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
900 Court Street NE, Hearing Room F
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Special Public Works Fund Recapitalization

Dear Co-Chairs Johnson and Gomberg and Members of the Committee,

The City of Portland supports recapitalization of the Special Public Works Fund (SPWF), as well as allocation of funding for levee accreditation grants and loans through the Oregon Business Development Department's budget in HB 5025. This funding is critical for development and repair of publicly-owned facilities that support economic and community development throughout the state.

SPWF loans and grants administered by the Infrastructure Finance Authority (IFA) enable local governments to construct, improve and repair public infrastructure and facilities that support economic growth and create new jobs. Eligible facility and infrastructure projects range from airport facilities to wastewater systems. In the last biennium, 76% of SPWF loans and 71% of grants funded rural projects. Recapitalizing the SPWF will ensure that vital infrastructure projects will continue across Oregon, particularly in rural communities. The City of Portland supports is continuing this investment through recapitalization of the SPWF.

Properties protected by levee systems across Oregon are at risk of losing access to the National Flood Insurance Program due to new federal policies for levee accreditation in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy. Failure to maintain accreditation would result in significant economic impact to property owners in the affected areas. State support for levee accreditation via the IFA has been a vital component to the Columbia River levee repair and accreditation efforts undertaken by the City of Portland in collaboration with stakeholders through Levee Ready Columbia. The City of Portland has appropriated approximately \$1.7 million in its 2016-17 budget to support engineering and planning work associated with levee accreditation and continues to engage in the Levee Ready Columbia process. No one agency or government can do this work alone, and the collaboration amongst public and private stakeholders has been a success with our local projects. The City of Portland urges support for a \$10 million appropriation to the IFA to support grants and loans that support collaborative levee evaluation and engineering in local communities.

The City of Portland respectfully urges your support for funding these public infrastructure programs.

Sincerely,



Christine Lewis
Senior Associate