



March 15, 2017

Dear Co-Chairs Winters and Stark:

Clackamas County is seeking state funding of \$1.25M for phase I of our courthouse replacement project. The total estimate of this planning work is \$2.5M. We actively participated in the Association of Oregon Counties' (AOC) Court Facilities Task Force over the interim, and at the conclusion of the process, the group recommended to the Chief Justice that Clackamas County's proposal should be among the projects selected for funding from the Oregon Courthouse Capital Construction and Improvement Fund (OCCCF) during the 17-19 biennium.

Clackamas County's courthouse was built in 1936 in the heart of downtown Oregon City. While it continues to serve hundreds, sometimes thousands, of residents daily, courthouse needs have outgrown the facility's ability to adequately meet the demands of our increasing population and the need to hold hearings in a timely manner.

Clackamas County's population is projected to grow approximately 53% by the year 2050. The current approved master plan, forecasted to 2030, identifies a need for 16 courtrooms to adequately serve Clackamas residents. The current courthouse only has 11 courtrooms. Population projections for 2050 recommend a facility with 18 to 26 courtrooms to adequately address public need. Currently, it is impossible to accommodate this predicted growth at the current courthouse facility in downtown Oregon City, where the building is landlocked by surrounding structures, Main Street, OR 99E, and the Willamette River.

Clackamas County's courthouse also poses significant safety risks, lacking adequate jury assembly space, as well as secured routes for defendants, witnesses, police officers, and prisoners. Secured parking is also non-existent for judges and jurors, who must exit through public hallways and access areas to reach their cars. Additional safety concerns for the Clackamas County courthouse include the findings of a recent building assessment which noted the courthouse would experience "significant damage" during a major earthquake.

The replacement of Clackamas County's courthouse represents an investment for our residents. Not only would the courthouse be rebuilt to meet the capacity and safety needs already mentioned, the relocation of the courthouse from downtown Oregon City to the Red Soils Campus in Oregon City will reunite the courthouse with other complimentary services that exist at the County offices – including Resolution and Mediation Services, Juvenile Services, and the County Jail.

Also planned for co-location, within the courthouse, is a large secure suite for the State Department of Human Services which will provide family services and a daytime safe space for children involved in justice system activity to receive Human Services staff support. This co-location will offer a suite of new and expanded services to residents interacting with the justice system. Location of the new courthouse on the Red Soils Campus will dramatically decrease the cost of the new courthouse because the land is already owned by the County, utilities are already pre-installed, and traffic circulation improvements have already been built.

The funding we hope to secure in the 17-19 biennium from the OCCIF is essential to Clackamas County's project, and we look forward to working with the state to ensure public safety needs of our residents and all Oregonians are met.

Please contact Chris Lyons at clyons@clackamas.us for more information.

Sincerely,

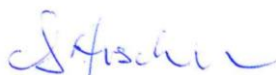
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