



PAT FARR

Lane County Commissioner
North Eugene District
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DATE: March 16, 2017

TO: Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety

RE: Lane County Courthouse 2017-19 Biennium Funding Request

Senator Jackie Winters, Representative Duane Stark and committee members:

Lane County is requesting bond authorization for the 2017-19 biennium to match the investment Lane County will be making in the preferred site for the courthouse replacement project. The bond authorization will enable the County to utilize state dollars to engage in a robust design process. Approval would allow Lane County to return with a construction ready package, including detailed design and construction budget in 2019.

From the inception of the Oregon Courthouse Capital Construction Improvement Fund (OCCCIF), Lane County has worked in coordination with the Association of Oregon Counties and the Oregon Judicial Department to ensure that its courthouse replacement project meets the requirements of the program, as well as the expectations of the Chief Justice and Legislature.

As an approved project in the first priority group, Lane County is grateful for the support of the Legislature and the Judicial Department to date, and pleased to be included in the Article XI-Q bond sale which occurred on February 21st of this year, after having gained authorization in the 15-17 biennium.

The Chief Justice's report back to the Emergency Board in December 2016 included an update regarding Lane County's progress, as well as an analysis of the OCCCIF program as it becomes more established. One of the key elements of that report is an evolving three-biennium model. Under this model, the first funding request is for a modest amount of funding intended to establish the legitimacy of a proposed project, followed by a more significant funding request to prepare the project for construction, with the final construction funding package supporting the building phase. The projects in front of you today all appear to be following this model.

Lane County's project has evolved significantly from the initial application in 2015. A comprehensive facility needs assessment was completed and collaboration occurred with community partners on a detailed site selection process that resulted in consensus regarding a preferred site. Lane County has worked diligently with the City of Eugene and expects to purchase a full, development-ready city block immediately adjacent to the existing courthouse in the civic center of downtown Eugene. In addition to a new county courthouse, it is envisioned that this civic center will also be enhanced by the planned construction of a new Eugene City Hall and numerous improvements to the downtown

park blocks and other public spaces, including a year-round location for the popular farmers market. As such, the Lane County Courthouse benefits from being part of a larger vision for which there is broad support and a strong partner in the City of Eugene.

Lane County's request for additional funding in 2017-19 is to ensure the County can act upon the opportunity before it and procure the preferred site for the project. Immediately thereafter, the County will commence a robust design and budgeting process that will result in a construction-ready project package for the 2019-21 biennium.

The Judicial Department's budget does not include Lane County's request for the 2017-19 biennium. This is largely because the department's budget was developed late last year, when Lane County was in the midst of the site selection process. I hope you can appreciate the progress Lane County has made since that time and the clarity it has provided with regard to anticipated expenditures in the 2017-19 biennium. I ask that this Committee consider the Lane County request.

Sincerely,



Pat Farr, Chair

Lane County Board of Commissioners

SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY