



Brooks Resources Corporation

April 18, 2017

Senator Betsy Johnson
900 Court St NE, S-209
Salem, OR 97301

Representative David Gomberg
900 Court St NE, H-471
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for Regional Solutions Program and Project funding (HB 5023, SB 5530)

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Johnson and Representative Gomberg:

Our Regional Solutions program in Central Oregon has been a great success. I am writing as Convener of the Central Oregon Regional Solutions Advisory Committee to support the Regional Solutions project funding request for 2017-19 of \$11M in lottery bond proceeds. In my experience, the Regional Solutions approach has expanded the capacity of our region to identify and complete important projects. By prioritizing projects regionally we are better able to respond to critical needs and opportunities. The Regional Solutions Team serves as an effective one stop for coordinating and obtaining information about state regulatory requirements and funding opportunities.

During 2015-17 our committee prioritized two projects for state investment through Regional Solutions. The first is the Innovation Center for Entrepreneurship at OSU Cascades. This project co-locates faculty and programs with training and incubator space for the private sector that fosters collaboration, enhances innovation, and spurs economic development. The Center is currently under construction and OSU Cascades is allocating discretionary funds to hire an Executive Director. Recruitment for the Executive Director is currently underway. The second project, the Transformative Transportation System project, has been a catalyst for Cascade East Transit's larger plan for regional shuttle stops. The funds were leveraged with urban renewal and Oregon Community Foundation funds to secure Connect Oregon funding for a park and ride lot and transit hub in Redmond. This investment also catalyzed the vision for a proposed La Pine Transit Center. Overall, the Regional Solutions investment leveraged about \$3M in transit projects.

One feature that I truly value about Regional Solutions is the dynamic approach to setting and responding to priorities. Similarly, our committee membership has evolved over time as elected officials are no longer in office and priorities evolve.

In Central Oregon the priority projects funded by the legislature have stimulated other investments to increase economic opportunities and create or retain family wage jobs in our region. For these reasons, I strongly urge your support for continued investment in Regional Solutions priority projects.

Respectfully,

Michael P. Hollern, Convener
Chairman of the Board