



CITY OF

PORTLAND, OREGON

Ted Wheeler, Mayor
Amanda Fritz, Commissioner
Jo Ann Hardesty, Commissioner
Chloe Eudaly, Commissioner

May 15, 2020

The Honorable Kate Brown
Governor, State of Oregon
254 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

The Honorable Peter Courtney
President, Oregon State Senate
900 Court Street NE, S-201
Salem, OR 97301

The Honorable Tina Kotek
Speaker, Oregon State House
900 Court Street NE, Room 269
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Governor Brown, President Courtney and Speaker Kotek,

Thank you for your letter dated May 12, 2020 regarding CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) dollars directly allocated to the City of Portland and Multnomah and Washington counties. We appreciate your interest and input regarding allocation of these dollars and will be weighing these comments as our City and region determines how best to prioritize this funding in our response and recovery.

In creating the Coronavirus Relief Fund within the CARES Act, Congress identified the critical role of states in responding to this pandemic. Congress also acknowledged the unique and complex needs of large, dense population centers by providing direct funding to large counties and cities. As you know, this funding was accompanied by guidance from U.S. Treasury that delineated a broad array of acceptable examples of necessary expenditures created by this public health emergency. We are focused on providing these funds directly to Portlanders to meet their immediate and basic needs – as the Act intended.

We are all in this together. We both want to assure you of close coordination with our partner jurisdictions about the work they are leading and where our priorities overlap, and express our hope and expectation of close partnership with the state of Oregon. The greater Portland metropolitan region is the economic heart of the state with the largest, densest and most diverse population in Oregon. With that comes special challenges for our region, including the most coronavirus deaths and cases in the state, the most unemployed persons and associated risk of increased housing instability, to name a few. Preemptively closing the door on state funds to our region is short-sighted and we encourage the Governor and Legislature to reconsider this position. Additionally, we support our fellow cities and other local governments in being able to access state CRF resources with the full allowable uses as determined by U.S. Treasury in order to address the evolving and varied needs in their communities.

As Oregon takes early steps toward reopening, we know the path ahead is long. Our region has unique challenges in this pandemic, and we look forward to working with you to prioritize a safe and equitable response and recovery for our community and all of Oregon.

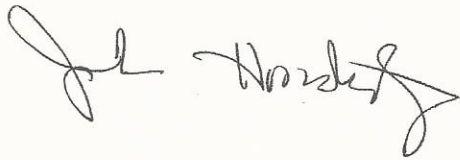
Sincerely,



Ted Wheeler
Mayor



Amanda Fritz
Commissioner



Jo Ann Hardesty
Commissioner



Chloe Eudaly
Commissioner