

Co-Chairs Johnson, Hayward and Rayfield and members of the committee,

My name is Rachael Fuller and I am the City Manager for the City of Hood River.

Affordable housing is an has been one of the top economic development priorities for the Hood River community for decades. The pandemic exacerbated this issue and is critical to economic recovery for our community's most vulnerable residents.

Hood River requests funding from the American Rescue Plan towards an affordable housing development project on approximately 9 acres of residentially zoned property owned by the City and County. We are requesting \$3.8 million dollars for this project to be used for street and sidewalk construction, intersection improvements, sewer, water and stormwater infrastructure, among other investments.

This request for funding meets five of the ten priorities of Governor Brown's "10-Point Economic Recovery Plan." Specifically,

1. "Investing in Oregon's hardest hit workers". The City has completed a feasibility study that demonstrates the project will support 100 units of affordable housing, with most of the units available to families making at or below 60% of median family income
2. "Reinvesting in Innovative Housing" This funding would allow the project to accommodate housing for workers making 80-120% of median family income in addition to the 100 units of stable rental housing.
3. "Resilient Rural Communities" This specific project is the #2 priority on our regional comprehensive economic development strategy list demonstrating broad regional support.
4. "Supporting Oregon's workforce." 30% of the population in Hood River identifies as Hispanic or Latino and Latino poverty rates are higher than those of white Oregonians. Lower income individuals are more likely to be renters and as of 2019, 48% of renters in Hood River were cost burdened.
5. "Investing in Oregon's Infrastructure." This project provides a direct investment in infrastructure to benefit housing for underserved communities.

The City of Hood River has a low property tax rate and relies on a diverse set of revenue streams to fund basic city services. The City's allocation from the American Rescue Plan will recover lost revenue from transient room tax, parking and municipal court that were dramatically impacted by the pandemic. We are grateful for this allocation and opportunity to recover lost revenue, but have little ability to fund local economic recovery projects because of these revenue losses.

This grant should be a priority for the committee not only because of how many boxes it checks but for the difference it could make in the lives of our residents. The pandemic has hit everyone hard, but housing insecurity has hit our vulnerable populations the hardest. This project directly addresses the issue and moves Hood River forward in helping our community members that are truly in need.

Thank you for your time.