

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation.
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E
Washington DC 20590

Alan Jackson
32442 Taylor Butte Rd
Cottage Grove
OR 97424
July 1 2019

Dear Sirs,

Re: Cottage Grove Discretionary Grant Application

N.B. This note addresses the broader impact of infrastructure improvements over and above the obvious solution to practical needs emphasized in the application

I strongly support the City's application for a BUILD grant to support Main Street revitalization for two reasons:

1. The Main Street re-vitalization project can hasten the evolving transformation of the City into the core of an important regional culture based on the development of natural human and environmental resources.

2. It enhances of its importance as a transportation hub for a widespread rural community and beyond that will benefit from new employment and quality of life opportunities.

Transformation into Regional Culture Center

Dependency on a local culture that no longer exists and an environment that is yet to be adequately exploited makes change both essential and possible. Considerable potential exists because recent population growth has brought new skills and opportunity. Fortunately, local government knows how to respond.

Important social and economic improvement has been achieved by public and private partnerships based in part on the strong support of families central to previous activity including both large employers and workers.

The term “Revitalization” is misleading because the purpose is to facilitate new opportunity rather than update history. The proposed enhancements respond to local needs but have broader significance because they help the City become a regional center of character.

The resources for this reformation already exist in a broad range of interlocking practical and intellectual strengths. These include existing institutions like a large hospital, a well used library, an exemplary school system, airport, and commercial activity including a nationally recognized wine industry and a comprehensive range of professional offices, many well maintained sport facilities and fast growing entertainment venues. Vigorous organizations like Rotary have members who are community leaders with the understanding and experience to facilitate new activity based on infrastructure improvements.

The potential importance of Main Street as a cultural center cannot be over emphasized. Cottage Grove has recognized historic importance centered on Main Street and its immediate environment and has structures and interconnections conducive to a range of activity essential to a new identity.

Of special importance is the remarkable collaboration between local philanthropists and government notably in the conversion of a one time railway yard into beautiful park and auditorium that is only a few hundred yards from Main Street. (The City Manager has already been able to arrange visits from the Eugene Symphony and there is already a range of other lively entertainments in the park. Another remarkable achievement has been the conversion of a large military

armory into a multi purpose community center capable serving social needs and providing a quality environment for cultural activities.

Of significant economic importance is how an improved cultural environment will attract investment in new business with an attendant increase in employment, property values and tax income.

Most importantly, in connection with the City's application, the cultural potential can only be fully realized by essential improvements to the infrastructure of the inner city.

Enhancing Cottage Grove as a Transportation Hub

Cottage Grove is already a transportation hub for a widespread rural community and, importantly, it is connected with Interstate I-5 that generates a significant flow of visitor traffic into Main Street and its hinterland.

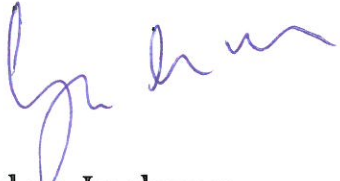
Equally important is the inward and outward regional traffic of Cottage Grove. Proximity to Eugene has made Cottage Grove an important commuter town that also encourages travel from Eugene. This reverse flow is important to the local economy. And it is key to bringing in new employers because it taps a reserve of

needed talent attracted by a fast improving local quality of life and lower property costs.

The potential benefits could not be fully realized if the internal infrastructure is not improved. This not only includes seamless internal traffic flows but access to and egress from the surrounding region.

City government has proved its capability to manage far reaching improvements but adequate funding is now essential.

Yours truly,



Alan Jackson

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