



The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

September 8, 2023

To: **Co-Chairs Damien Hall and J.D. Tovey**
[Members of the Housing Production Advisory Council](#)

Re: **Council Recommendations - Infrastructure Fund - SUPPORT**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon has engaged in both housing and land use policies for many years. We also have strong positions on revenue, on budgeting and on taxation.

We provided earlier comments in our [August 25th letter](#) on the issue of infrastructure funding:

*Using these values as a guide, **we support your focus on infrastructure funding**. It's buildable lots that developers need and those who build housing for those 60% and below AMI are most in need of financial assistance for infrastructure. An **ongoing revolving fund** could provide help for individual lots in cities to pay for sidewalks, stormwater requirements, connection to sewer and/or water or road improvements. A fund could also help with the provision of infrastructure for raw land currently in Urban Growth Boundaries so those lands can be annexed into a city and the cost of multiple infrastructure needs reduced. **With the current federal government funding sources, Oregon should take advantage of access to those monies to supplement any state monies for such a fund.***

We are aware of the Dept. of Environmental Quality's Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund and the fact that recent federal legislation has provided additional monies for this fund, as well as the Oregon Health Authority's Safe Drinking Water Fund. And we know that the Oregon Dept. of Transportation has a variety of funds to assist in addressing multiple transportation issues. However, local governments have been hamstrung by property tax Measures 5 and 47/50, both of which forced cities to create or increase the amount of Systems Development Charges required in order to address infrastructure needs. Their ability to provide funding or ask voters to bond for these needs is also limited. **Any new fund should be complementary to any current funding programs or should be grant funding for low-income housing.**

We are also aware of the amount of raw land sitting in current Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs) that would benefit from a loan fund to help pay for needed infrastructure.

Additionally, many cities need to upgrade their current water and wastewater systems in order to meet current EPA standards. Yet, particularly in smaller cities, asking residents to self-fund those upgrades or expansions would put their utility bills beyond reach. (The League supported [HB 3125](#), to create a Ratepayer Assistance Fund to help low-income people pay for sewer and water bills in 2023. Although that bill was not passed, funding was provided to study this important issue.)

We support the concept of an Infrastructure Fund with state dollars as well as accessing whatever federal dollars might be available. But we also recognize the challenge of setting up a new funding program. However, the League is ready to help seek out a fair and equitable funding source beyond the General Fund (although that source should be considered in 2024 due to the urgent need to create buildable lots in current cities) in order to create an ongoing (not sunset in 10 years) fund since this need will continue well into the future. The urgent need to address this funding gap will require creative and efficient action by our state agencies.

We hope you will consider these comments as you develop your final recommendation.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this proposal.



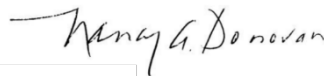
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