



To convene, network, train, and empower Mayors

October 14, 2022

Oregon Legislature
900 Court Street, NE, H-269
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Partnership Needed to Solve Statewide Homelessness Emergency

We write to you as leaders, partners and voters seeking collaboration and action. Cities are facing a crisis as we respond to the emergency of homelessness across Oregon.

Last week at the League of Oregon Cities conference, Mayors came together from across the state to discuss critical policies and programs that impact Oregonians. The number one issue throughout Oregon – in both rural and urban communities, large and small – is homelessness. We know this humanitarian crisis is impacting both the individuals directly experiencing homelessness as well as communities at large.

Many jurisdictions have developed new programs, expanded service efforts, built regional partnerships, and are making substantial investments of local general fund and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to respond to the unhoused emergency. Yet, this humanitarian crisis exceeds our individual capacity. While active projects, programs, and partnerships are in place in many cities in Oregon, the state has an opportunity to partner with local governments to build upon these efforts to make an immediate and impactful difference.

Cities cannot be left to solve this statewide crisis by ourselves. No one single approach is effective without a collaborative and coordinated strategy to work together to create the quality of life we all want for everyone who lives in our cities and state. Cities are one part of what must be a statewide approach. We need state leadership to allocate direct funding that is scaled to respond to the gravity of this crisis facing cities statewide.

This past May, the Oregon Mayors Association formed a Taskforce on Homelessness. Twenty-five mayors, representing cities of all sizes from around the state, studied Oregon's homelessness crisis. And while the crisis may seem insurmountable, given that the symptoms and solutions look different between urban and rural communities and vary based on a city's size, geography and available service providers, local government leaders have developed a solution to Oregon's crisis of the unhoused.

The solution is that the State of Oregon and its 241 cities must come together in partnership to establish and expand local, community-based responses. Time and time again, local programs, which are community-centered, are the programs that provide immediate shelter, needed services, and secure safety for unhoused Oregonians.

For this crisis to be humanely and timely addressed, the State must partner with cities to fully fund local homelessness response and prevention programs. Fully funding local programs requires direct allocations to each incorporated city in Oregon, totally \$123,575,800 annually. In addition to direct, annual allocations, coordinated capital construction investments for specific shelter and transitional housing projects, statewide, is also required.

Oregon's mayors are leading the on-the-ground response on homelessness, but we cannot do so alone and need joint leadership from state government to support cities and our county partners. We call on Oregon's next governor and legislature to fund the services and housing needed to make an impact on Oregon's homelessness crisis.

Sincerely,

Jeff Gowing
Mayor of Cottage Grove
OMA President

Julie Akins
Mayor of Ashland

Gena Goodman-Campbell
Mayor of Bend

Beth Wytski
Mayor of Dayton

Lucy Vinis
Mayor of Eugene

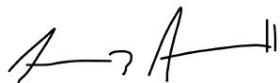
Teri Lenahan
Mayor of North Plains
OMA President Elect

Lacey Beaty
Mayor of Beaverton

Meadow Martell
Mayor of Cave Junction

Jim Trett
Mayor of Detroit

Carol MacInnes
Mayor of Fossil



Travis Stovall
Mayor of Gresham



Steve Callaway
Mayor of Hillsboro



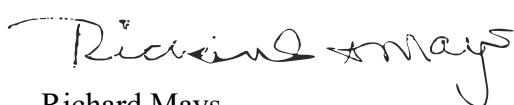
Carol Westfall
Mayor of Klamath Falls



Randy Sparacino
Mayor of Medford



Ted Wheeler
Mayor of Portland



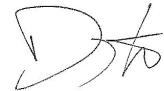
Richard Mays
Mayor of the Dalles



Rod Cross
Mayor of Toledo



Henry Balensifer III
Mayor of Warrenton



Dave Drotzmann
Mayor of Hermiston



Kate McBride
Mayor of Hood River



Ray Turner
Mayor of Lakeview



Jessica Engelke
Mayor of North Bend



Michael Preedin
Mayor of Sisters



Jason Snider
Mayor of Tigard



Tom Vialpando
Mayor of Vale

cc: Christine Drazen, Gubernatorial Candidate
Betsy Johnson, Gubernatorial Candidate
Tina Kotek, Gubernatorial Candidate