

My name is Eric Swenson, the Mayor of Woodburn.

I am writing in support of the funding proposal submitted by Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon for one-time projects that will help those who struggled most in our community recover from the pandemic, fires and ice storms while directly addressing racial justice issues endemic in our economically challenged but proudly diverse community.

The funding of a Community and Cultural Center in Woodburn coupled with strategically placed turf fields, sports courts and walking and running paths would foster physical and mental wellness amongst our own residents while bringing sustainable economic recovery and development to our small and minority owned businesses hardest hit by the crisis of the last year.

These projects - long dreamed of and meticulously planned for - would give the residents of Woodburn and our surrounding areas places for exercise, socialization and education - all contributing to community wellness. It would also allow Woodburn to become an athletic tournament and event center for the much of the Willamette Valley (and an alternative to traffic unfriendly Portland) much like Medford's role in Southern Oregon and Seaside on the coast. With enough turf fields, gym space and running paths Woodburn's central geographic location would attract a plethora of tournaments and running events, bringing in people from all around the Northwest to experience the cultural richness of Woodburn.

The long term positive economic impact on our small businesses, heavily minority owned and hard hit by the pandemic, of thousands of people coming to our area to stay and shop many weekends a year, would be substantial. It would also put the City of Woodburn and it's myriad Latinx and Slavic cultures in a much needed positive light - increasing the perception of our immigrant communities as the talented, hard working, contributing members of the American Dream that they are.

Our proposal for a trolley that would shuttle all those visitors, and even a small percentage of the 4 million people who visit the Outlet Mall each year, to our downtown businesses would allow our small business community to finally benefit from Oregon's most visited tourist site.

You already know that our Community and Cultural Center has well designed renderings from the \$1 million granted from state lottery funds developed and in a public process that involved all aspects of our community and will have dedicated space for direct state, county and city services to our most fragile residents, serving as a wellness center for us and the small towns and rural areas around us. The turf fields and greenway trail projects have also been ready and waiting for over a decade within our Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Plan.

Our petition for the renovation of the Farmworker Housing Development Education Center at Nuevo Amanacer apartments - also design ready - will provide a wellness and education focus for our model migrant farmworker community. Our other ask is for the renovation of our dilapidated AWARE Food Bank, in the heart of downtown and part of the Marion-Polk Food Share.

All of this is grounded in Woodburn City Council's two priorities:

- Create an inclusive environment where residents participate and are actively engaged in our community.
- Promote an environment that encourages sustainable economic health maximizing our geographic, workforce, cultural and community assets.

Besides being the largest minority/majority city in the state, Woodburn is the fastest growing with 10,000 new residents occupying 1000 new homes and 1000 new apartments in the next 4 years. We are also the youngest city in Oregon, and we want our youth to grow up and remain in a flourishing community their parents have worked so hard to build.

The City of Woodburn is committed to using all available matching funds to allow these projects to have an immediate economic and wellness impact on our community Thank you.