

May 7, 2021

Newberg Downtown Coalition
210 N. Blaine Street
Newberg, OR 97132



The Honorable Senator Fred Girod, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Paul Holvey, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital
Construction

900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

Co-Chairs Holvey, Girod and Members of the Committee,

We are writing to express our strong support for the Bonding Authorization of \$32 million for the Newberg-Dundee Bypass in SB 5534. Newberg Downtown Coalition is a non-profit organization representing the concerns of the downtown area's private businesses and property owners to city, county and special district level organizations.

Thanks to investments made by the Legislature and the Oregon Transportation Commission over the past two years, Phase 2 of the bypass is now shovel ready. This \$32 million in state lottery bond funding will enable ODOT to move to construction on Phase II of the bypass while providing a critical state match that can leverage federal dollars to complete construction.

The completion of the first phase of the Newberg-Dundee Bypass has provided an alternate route for regional traffic that would otherwise go directly through the main downtown streets of Newberg -- our main street of businesses, First street, is also Hwy 99.

Unfortunately, even with the reduction of traffic, there remain safety issues for pedestrians and bicyclists, that without completion of the bypass, traffic growth will erase the benefits we have seen. As our community continues the post-COVID opening, we will be hosting community events such as the Wednesday Market, First Fridays, Art Walk, Summerfest and Old Fashioned Festival as well as the Downtown Halloween Trick or Treat event. Without the bypass, traffic is still dangerous for children crossing First Street and shoppers visiting our main business core.

These issues will only be resolved by completing the entire regional Bypass from Rex Hill to Dayton, which will only grow more expensive with time. We understand the Bypass is within striking distance of being eligible for major federal funding, and that as little as \$32 million could get the project shovel-ready for construction. We do not want to miss this federal funding

opportunity to leverage the sizable investments made by the State and local communities and obtain the funds necessary to finish the project.

The Legislature and Governor have entrusted you with leading the way forward for the most critical projects in this state. The Newberg-Dundee Bypass is absolutely vital to communities stretching from the Metro area all the way to the Central Coast. We encourage you to make this project a priority and work with our region to identify the funding needed to make this full Bypass solution a reality.

We appreciate your leadership, and this opportunity to register our support.

Sincerely,

Polly Peterson, Executive Director, Newberg Downtown Coalition