



CITY OF
West Linn

December 14, 2020

Senator Peter Courtney, Senate President
Speaker Tina Kotek, House Speaker
Senator Rob Wagner
Representative Rachel Prusak
Members of the Oregon Legislature

Dear Oregon Leaders,

I am writing to express the City of West Linn's strong support for a bill in progress for the 2021 session to create a new Willamette Falls Locks Authority. The Locks will benefit our city, the broader region, and the State of Oregon in a wide variety of ways including economic development, greenhouse gas reductions, seismic resiliency and recovery, historic and cultural preservation, recreation, tourism, and more. This public-private authority will provide Oregon the best chance to "unlock the locks" and achieve all of these important goals economically and sustainably.

The City of West Linn has been at the table for all of the Willamette Falls Locks Commission's work to determine a structure to best achieve the goals set by the Governor and Oregon Legislature to repair and restore the Locks. While I Chaired the Locks Commission in this effort, this letter expresses beyond that the support of our City Council and the entire West Linn Community in this goal we all share. After thorough consideration, the Locks Commission determined that a public corporation is the appropriate form of ownership and governance for the Locks, combining the accountability of a public entity with the nimbleness of a private enterprise. The City of West Linn strongly supports that conclusion, as we did earlier this year when the Legislature came very close to adopting HB 4150.

The plan to repair and restore the Locks will serve our businesses, tribal interests, and communities up and down the river, and a Willamette River Trail recreational destination for Oregonians and visitors. When created, the Locks Authority will provide the important "vehicle" needed to coordinate the important transfer process with the US Army Corps of Engineers. Therefore, we urge you to sponsor and/or support a bill creating the Willamette Falls Locks Authority to allow this work to move forward.

Thank you for your attention to this issue. We stand ready to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Russell B. Axelrod
Mayor
City of West Linn