



February 13, 2024

TO: Oregon Legislature | Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Immanuel Lutheran Church (ILC) of Woodburn urges the Oregon Legislature to approve a \$7 million request for capital funding for the proposed Greater Woodburn Opportunity Center (GWOC). GWOC will be a welcoming community gathering place where residents will access multicultural and intergenerational health, social and economic services, senior center, community meals, public events and natural space.

Immanuel Lutheran (ILC) has committed over \$3 million to this project. These funds, along with other resources such as New Markets Tax Credit investment, federal funding sources, and philanthropic sources, will leverage the State's investment, yielding a 150% ROI.

In 2004 ILC raised the funds for and acquired 8.2 acres of farmland in west Woodburn (Evergreen Road and Linfield Avenue), in the middle of open fields that would soon be developed into a residential neighborhood of subdivisions and apartment complexes. In 2013, ILC began a series of listening sessions in the community, resulting in a feasibility study that supports the construction and implementation of a resource hub offering community services and amenities that are lacking in Woodburn.

This resource hub is now known as the Greater Woodburn Opportunity Center (GWOC). GWOC now has more than a dozen committed partners and a broad array of community support, including Woodburn's majority-Latino leadership and the City of Woodburn. It is truly a collaborative project, following the Integrated Services Delivery model.

ILC has partnered with Community Resource Trust - an organization experienced in nonprofit property development and asset management. Notable projects include the Cornerstone Apartments, a 180-unit affordable housing community in Salem, and the Salem-Keizer Career Technical Education Center.

With all partners in place and predevelopment well underway, the team is ready to move forward with this vision, 10 years in the making.

Your consideration of this essential community request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

*Kerri Gubbins*  
Kerri Gubbins, President  
ILC Board of Directors