



March 26, 2025

**Chair Tran, Vice Chairs Grayber & Lewis, and Members of the Committee,**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of House Bill 3654. On behalf of the City of Central Point, we urge your support for this common-sense and much-needed measure.

As a city with a population under 20,000, Central Point faces infrastructure demands with far fewer resources and staff capacity as larger cities. HB 3654 would provide a critical boost by allowing smaller incorporated cities like ours to use capital construction and municipal infrastructure grant funding for all phases of a project, including engineering, planning, and support services—not just construction.

Capital infrastructure projects—whether roads, water systems, or wastewater improvements—require extensive pre-construction work before a shovel can ever hit the ground. These upfront phases are essential for delivering safe, cost-effective, and shovel-ready projects. Yet, under current rules, many grants only cover the construction phase, forcing small cities to cover expensive planning and design costs with already limited general funds.

In a city like Central Point, this often means delaying needed improvements, scaling back scope, or forgoing competitive grant opportunities altogether. HB 3654 changes that. It gives small cities the flexibility we need to responsibly plan and deliver infrastructure that serves our residents and supports future growth.

Allowing funding for pre-construction phases helps small jurisdictions do it right the first time. It supports better project design, ensures environmental and engineering compliance, and ultimately reduces costly delays or change orders down the road. It also supports small consulting and engineering firms that often partner with municipalities on these critical early phases.

HB 3654 is not about expanding the size of grants—it's about expanding their impact.

This legislation is a win for equity, a win for efficiency, and a win for rural and smaller communities like Central Point. We appreciate the Legislature's recognition that "one size fits all" doesn't work when it comes to infrastructure funding. By passing HB 3654, you empower communities like ours to build a stronger foundation—literally and figuratively—for the future.

Sincerely,

**Chris Clayton**

City of Central Point, City Manager