



WILLAMETTE HERITAGE CENTER

TO: State of Oregon Ways & Means Committee
Capital Campaign Sub-Committee Members

April 18, 2025

RE: The Willamette Heritage Capital Campaign Funding Request

The Willamette Heritage Center (WHC) serves as a gathering place for Oregonians across the state who visit our capital city. As stewards of this historic landmark, we are dedicated to preserving its legacy and ensuring it continues to serve as a vibrant community resource.

We respectfully request funding from the Oregon Legislature to support our capital construction project, *Preserving History & Strengthening Our Community's Gathering Place*. This initiative seeks to implement a comprehensive preservation plan to safeguard several historic structures on WHC's five-acre campus, including the iconic Thomas Kay Woolen Mill Building (1895), three historic houses, and a church (1841–1858).

A professional building condition assessment, conducted by CBTwo Architects, has thoroughly documented the exterior conditions of these historically significant buildings. With this critical evaluation, we are ready to address urgent preservation needs and undertake long-term improvements.

As a nonprofit organization, WHC relies on private funding to sustain its operations and preserve the cultural assets that tell the story of Mid-Willamette Valley's history. We offer event spaces at affordable cost-recovery rates to provide accessible meeting venues near the state capital. In the past year alone, we hosted meetings and events for more than 350 organizations. WHC remains a hub for heritage and community, serving Oregonians past, present, and future.

Our campus, which includes 14 historic buildings, vividly reflects the region's history while supporting today's diverse communities through educational exhibits, a research library and archive, a textile learning center, and public event spaces. We preserve the textile heritage of the Willamette Valley and maintain some of the oldest buildings in Oregon—several of which predate statehood and, in two cases, the establishment of Oregon's earliest provisional government.

The \$3 million Capital Construction Sub-Committee funding request will act as a vital catalyst, enabling us to secure additional resources to advance essential preservation efforts. This investment will help ensure these irreplaceable landmarks remain beloved, accessible, and well-utilized for future generations.

Thank you for considering our request to support historic preservation at WHC. With your partnership, we will continue to protect and celebrate this cherished community gathering place for the benefit of all Oregonians.

Respectfully,

Michelle Cordova
Executive Director

John Hawkins
President, Board of Directors