



May 7, 2025

Honorable Members of the Subcommittee on Capital Construction, Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Re: Cornelius Recreation and Community Center Project Funding Request

Dear Committee Members,

With the passage of their capital bond measure in 2022, the Forest Grove School District is replacing the aging Cornelius Elementary School, adjacent to City Hall, the Cornelius Public Library, and Cornelius Police and Fire Departments. Much of the old school building, at 80+ years old, is well past its useful life. The gym, cafeteria, and associated administrative space is only ~30 years old and is ideal for reuse as a recreation and community center. The City plans to purchase the existing building from the District after students move into the new school in fall, 2025.

In 2024, the City developed a Concept Plan for the building renovation that reflects substantial community input for what needs the project will address. The building will serve not only residents of Cornelius, but those of neighboring communities including Forest Grove and unincorporated Washington County. It will serve as a needed center for community gathering and will enrich lives. Planned uses include:

- Youth and adult recreation, including basketball, pickleball, and exercise classes
- Emergency shelter for extreme heat, cold, and other emergencies
- After school activities
- Activities for seniors
- Arts programming
- Community events

Beyond acquisition, the building requires updates to meet community needs. Local funding has been identified to cover 35% of total project costs. State funding is needed to complete needed resiliency upgrades, space realignments, and basic renovation.

OUR REQUEST

Local funding	\$3,232,546
Total Project Cost	\$9,232,546
State funds requested	\$6,000,000

Cornelius is a culturally rich and diverse community, with more than 50% of the community identifying as Latino. It has many beautiful parks and natural areas, a growing cadre of small businesses, a friendly, welcoming atmosphere, and proximity and ties to agriculture. Cornelius is also a relatively low income community, and with local government revenue among the lowest in the greater Portland region, we cannot realize this critical project alone.

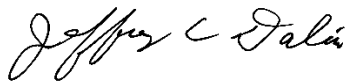
This space will help us all deliver needed services and programs, enhancing lives and supporting those who need it the most. It will address important needs of many demographic groups in the community, including adults, children and youth, and seniors. The Cornelius Town Center Master Plan, which was developed with substantial community engagement, identifies the need for a recreation and community center facility.

We need your help to make this project happen. We urge you to fund this request, and thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

The Cornelius Recreation and Community Center Coalition:

Jeffrey Dalin, Mayor



Angeles Godinez-Valencia, City Council President



John Colgan, City Councilor



Eden Lopez, City Councilor



Gregory Vaughn, City Councilor



Cornelius
Oregon's Family Town

Dr. Suzanne West, Superintendent
Forest Grove School District

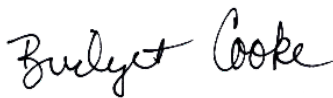


Melanie Johnston, Chair
Cornelius Boosters



Boosting the Cornelius Community Since 1953

Bridget Cooke, Executive Director
Adelante Mujeres



Nathan Teske, Executive Director
Bienestar



David Morris, Chief
Cornelius Fire Department



Caprice Massey, Sheriff
Washington County

