

DWAYNE YUNKER
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 3



OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Senator Fred Girod, Co-Chair JWM Subcommittee On Capital Construction
Representative Rob Nosse, Co-Chair JWM Subcommittee On Capital Construction
Members of the JWM Subcommittee On Capital Construction

February 12, 2026

Re: House District 3 Capital Project Request
Grants Pass Fire & Rescue Station 7 Replacement (Hillcrest) – \$9,998,816

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the JWM Subcommittee On Capital Construction:

As the State Representative for House District 3, I write in strong support of the City of Grants Pass request for a one-time capital appropriation of \$9,998,816 to replace Hillcrest Fire Station (Station 7), originally constructed in 1972.

Over the past several wildfire seasons, Southern Oregon has experienced repeated, large-scale fire events that have strained every layer of our emergency response system. Josephine County and neighboring counties have faced fast-moving wildfires, prolonged smoke events, evacuation notices, and mutual aid deployments that required local firefighters to operate for extended periods under high-demand conditions.

Grants Pass firefighters have not only protected homes and businesses within the City, but have also supported regional wildfire response efforts across Southern Oregon. They have responded to structure fires, vehicle accidents along rural corridors, medical emergencies, and wildfire incidents that required sustained operational readiness.

Hillcrest Station (Station 7) plays a central role in that response network.

Station 7 serves northern Grants Pass and supports:

- Fire suppression and EMS response
- Police operations, including emergency management functions
- Continuity-of-operations support for Josephine County 911 during outages or disaster events

When wildfires threaten our communities, as they have repeatedly in recent years, this station becomes part of the backbone of coordinated response.

However, the existing 1972 facility is functionally obsolete and increasingly unreliable as critical public safety infrastructure. The building no longer meets modern design standards for operational efficiency, emergency communications integration, or contemporary fire station best practices.

Documented deficiencies include:

- Aging and unreliable building systems
- Outdated layout and operational configuration
- Ventilation and infrastructure systems nearing end of life
- Building materials and components that no longer meet current construction standards

These conditions are not the result of neglect, they are the natural consequence of a 50+ year-old facility that has simply reached the end of its functional lifespan. Renovation has been evaluated and determined not to be a practical or cost-effective long-term solution. Full replacement is the responsible course.

Importantly, this project has been structured with fiscal discipline.

The City is utilizing a proven Southern Oregon design-build model successfully implemented in Medford, working with ORW Architecture and Outlier Construction. By reusing a completed, code-compliant fire station design with verified legal clearance, the City will:

- Reduce design costs by approximately 50%
- Save more than \$500,000
- Shorten design time by roughly six months
- Accelerate total delivery by approximately seven months
- Increase cost certainty and reduce risk

Preliminary planning, site evaluation, cost modeling, and team selection are complete. The project is positioned for delivery within 18–24 months of funding.

The \$9,998,816 request is structured as a single, all-inclusive appropriation covering demolition, site work, utilities, vertical construction, emergency power, communications, life-safety systems, equipment, contingencies, and owner-side costs. This avoids piecemeal funding and ensures full, functional delivery.

From a statewide perspective, this investment:

- Protects life and property
- Strengthens regional wildfire and disaster response capacity
- Supports coordinated mutual aid across Southern Oregon
- Ensures reliable emergency operations during major incidents

Southern Oregon will continue to face wildfire risk. Climate conditions, forest density, and regional geography make that a long-term reality. Ensuring that frontline emergency infrastructure is modern, reliable, and operationally efficient is not optional. It is prudent risk management.

As legislators, we have an obligation to ensure that when Oregonians dial 911 during a wildfire evacuation, a medical emergency, or a structure fire, the system behind that call is stable and dependable.

This request is not about expansion. It is about responsible replacement of aging infrastructure that has served its community for more than five decades.

I respectfully urge your support for this \$9,998,816 capital construction request. It represents disciplined planning, proven delivery strategy, and essential public safety investment for Southern Oregon.

Thank you for your leadership and your continued commitment to ensuring that rural communities are not left behind when it comes to public safety infrastructure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dwayne Yunker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Dwayne" on the top line and "Yunker" on the bottom line, slightly overlapping.

Dwayne Yunker
State Representative, Oregon House District 3