

Infrastructure Finance and Resilience Investment

The LOC will work during the 2019 legislative session to maximize both the amount of public infrastructure funding and the flexibility of funds available to better meet the immediate and long-term needs of cities across the state.

Background

A key issue that most cities are facing is how to fund infrastructure improvements (including maintaining, repairing and replacing existing infrastructure and building new infrastructure to address capacity and regulatory requirements). Increasing state resources for programs that provide access to lower-rate loans and infrastructure-specific grants will help cities invest in vital infrastructure improvements. Infrastructure development impacts economic development, housing and livability. The level of funding for these programs has been inadequate compared to the needs over the last few biennia, and the funds are depleting and unsustainable without significant program modifications and reinvestments.

A 2016 LOC survey identified a need for \$7.6 billion dollars over the next 20 years to cover water and wastewater infrastructure projects for the 120 responding cities. A significant reinvestment in the state's Special Public Works Fund (SPWF) is

needed to help meet the needs of local governments. This loan program, administered through Business Oregon, currently provides funding assistance for a variety of infrastructure projects, including, but not limited to, airport facilities, port facilities, levees, brownfields, telecommunication facilities, roadways and bridges, solid waste disposal sites and water/wastewater systems. Current funding levels for this program are insufficient to cover the long-term needs across the state. While past legislative sessions have focused on finding resources for transportation infrastructure, the needs for water, wastewater, and stormwater have not been given the same attention. In addition, there is a critical need to improve upon the seismic resilience of public drinking water systems, publicly-owned/operated dams and storage facilities, and wastewater systems.

Desired Outcome

The LOC will advocate for an additional \$85 million for the SPWF that can fund critical infrastructure projects, including seismic improvements for water systems. In addition, the LOC will pursue opportunities for seismic bonding capacity for public infrastructure.