



March 2, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners, I am writing to express our support for the City of Molalla's request for federal funding for their wastewater treatment plant.

Like all cities in the county, Molalla's population is growing. The activated sludge lagoon style wastewater treatment plant which has been used for the past 50 years is better suited to serve a city with half the population of Molalla. Recent litigation under the Clean Water Act resulted in a memorandum of agreement for operations with Oregon DEQ and a requirement for Molalla to build a new wastewater treatment plant by December 2025.

The City of Molalla is a resource stressed community: over 10% of the population earns less than the federal poverty level and per-capita income is more than 15% below the national average. The City has searched extensively for funding assistance. To date, they have been able to access leveraged funding from Oregon DEQ and are hopeful for additional support from USDA Rural Development. However, the debt service required to build the new plant, with exclusively leveraged funding, will put the cost of the average single family residence's monthly sewage bill in excess of the EPA's affordability index. An infusion of Federal funding for this project would directly benefit the citizens of Molalla through rate relief, easing the burden on this already income-stressed population.

The new Sequence Batch Reactor style plant will be capable of producing effluent water quality far cleaner than what is required by modern discharge permits and will allow the city to add capacity as the population grows without the need to build a new plant. Clean water and the effective treatment of wastewater is vital to economic development and a key to the City of Molalla's future prosperity.

Thank you for your support of this essential project.

Sincerely,

Tootie Smith, Chair
On behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners