

W. 8. b.

Memorandum Date: February 9, 2011  
Board Order Date: February 23, 2011

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**TO:** Board of County Commissioners  
**DEPARTMENT:** CAO/Economic Development Standing Committee  
**PRESENTED BY:** Mike McKenzie-Bahr, Community and Economic Development Coordinator

**AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** ORDER/IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING A \$75,000 LOAN FROM THE OVERNIGHT STAY DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUND AND A \$75,000 GRANT FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROGRAM TO ST. VINCENT DE PAUL FOR THE OAKRIDGE BUSINESS INCUBATOR PROJECT.

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**I. MOTION**

Move to approve a \$75,000 loan from the Overnight Stay Development Loan Fund and a \$75,000 grant from the Economic Development Strategic Investment Program to St. Vincent de Paul for the Oakridge Business Incubator Project.

**II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) is converting the former roller rink in Oakridge to a business center. Once renovated, the building will house a business incubator, retail store, social service center and laundromat.

SVDP is requesting loan and grant funding assistance from Lane County for the business incubator portion of this project only. The incubator will serve Oakridge and all the surrounding unincorporated rural areas in eastern Lane County.

The Oakridge business center will add six jobs that pay between \$9 and \$16 per hour. SVDP employees are eligible for full benefits (health, dental, and life insurance; holiday, vacation and sick pay) after three months. In addition, the center will support five to ten small businesses that will also generate new jobs.

While this project focuses primarily on the "Business Development" category of economic development, SVDP plans to provide workforce development services for up to 20 people every year.

The Kresge Foundation, a large charitable foundation based in Michigan, will be a major funder for this project. They are providing \$870,000 in loan and grant funds to support the entire project. Kresge has made a condition of their contribution that there be local match in the project.

SVDP and individual community members will contribute an additional \$119,000, bringing the total matching funds to \$989,000.

The \$75,000 in grant and \$75,000 in loans funds from Lane County will play a critical role in demonstrating local support for the project, as well as filling the remaining project budget gap.

Additional project partners include eDev, Lane County's microenterprise organization, and local residents and businesses who believe this project is just the economic injection Oakridge needs.

SVDP believes this project will be completely self-sustaining in the first two years and will serve as a replicable model for other communities.

### **III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION**

#### **A. Board Action and Other History**

In April 2010, the Board of Commissioners created the Overnight Stay Development Loan Fund, using \$100,000 from the Rural Tourism Marketing Program reserve and \$150,000 from the Economic Development Strategic Investment Program. The fund is to be used for economic development projects that generate additional overnight stays creating local jobs and additional motel/hotel overnight stays, which in turns creates more Transient Room Tax to be used for programs that will generate even more overnight stays.

The Rural Tourism Marketing Program is funded by the Transient Room Tax, which are funds paid by overnight stays in Lane County and used for programs that will generate more overnight stays.

The Economic Development Strategic Investment Program is a grant program used to fund activities which support economic development in Lane County and is meant to encourage partnerships between the County, communities within the county, non-profit organizations, private parties, and others directly involved in economic development activities. Funding for the program comes from Video Lottery proceeds.

Unlike the regular RTMP allocation and the Economic Development Strategic Investment Program, the Overnight Stay Development Loan Fund is not

designed be granted out, it is a loan fund for economic development projects that generate additional overnight stays.

The adoption of the Overnight Stay Development Loan Fund creation Board Order also identified Cottage Grove as the first loan recipient. The City had created a private and public partnership to save and improve the Village Green Motel, Cottage Grove's only conference center/ motel. As that project progressed, the money from the Overnight Stay Development Loan Fund was not needed.

Though there was interest in the fund at the time of the announcement of the Cottage Grove, Village Green loan, and County staff met with other potential projects, no other borrowers have come forward to date.

It is the intention of the fund, that when a loan is made and then paid back, the funds would be used for other economic development projects that increase overnight stays.

Each year, the Lane County Board of Commissioners also allocates grants from the Economic Development Strategic Investment Program to fund activities which support economic development in Lane County and is meant to encourage partnerships between the County, communities within the county, non-profit organizations, private parties, and others directly involved in economic development activities. Funding for the program comes from Video Lottery proceeds. Lane Manual 4.105 states the Program priorities: "Programs that encourage business growth and investment that create new employment opportunities, attract and expand business, increase tourism, and facilitate start-up and emerging businesses.

The Program is capitalized annually with a minimum of 50% of the new video lottery revenue received each year from the Oregon State Lottery Commission's transfer to counties for economic development activities. In addition, all video lottery funds unspent each year are added to the Program.

Currently the Economic Development Strategic Investment Program, has a reserve (Operational Contingency) of \$313,848 and \$205,243 in unallocated project funds, totaling \$519,091 available for economic development projects.

## **B. Policy Issues**

Should the Lane County Board of Commissioners approve a loan from the Overnight Stay Development Loan Fund and a grant from the Economic Development Strategic Investment Program of the Oakridge Business Incubator project?

**C. Board Goals**

This project meets the Board Goal to “Develop Lane County's economic engine” and its strategies to “Grow local businesses.”

**D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations**

The Overnight Stay Development Loan Fund has \$250,000 available to be loaned out.

The Economic Development Strategic Investment Program, has a reserve (Operational Contingency) of \$313,848 and \$205,243 in unallocated project funds, totaling \$519,091 available for economic development projects.

**E. Analysis**

The Overnight Stay Development Loan Fund was created to loan money to projects that would create additional overnight stays in Lane County. Having a business incubator in Oakridge will help accomplish this goal through evening and late night meetings that will necessitate out of area consultants and business to stay overnight in Lane County.

Use of the reserve funds would not jeopardize the current RTMP program as those funds are replenished each year with motel tax collections. Nor does it jeopardize the Economic Development Strategic Investment Program as these funds are traditionally used as grants and also replenished each year.

Since the goal of the RTMP funds is generate more room tax it makes sense to develop additional ways to do that, rather than to keep the funds in a reserve.

The key to success of an Overnight Stay Development Fund will be to 1) pick projects that can have an immediate impact on increasing overnight stays and 2) pick projects that the risk of loan default is minimized. This can be done by having multiple funders in the project and backing project developers with a history of success, as the local St. Vincent de Paul has had.

On the economic development side, the Oakridge business incubator will have the following outputs:

- Support five to ten entrepreneurs per year
- Provide job training for up to 20 people per year

The project will have the following outcomes:

- Develop at least five new businesses through the business incubator
- Create six full-time jobs with benefits

#### **IV. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION**

Upon Board approval a loan from the Overnight Stay Development Fund, the Community & Economic Development Coordinator will then work with legal staff and St. Vincent to draft a loan document that meets the goal of that fund.

That loan agreement would then go through a County Counsel and County Administer review process before it is implemented.

#### **V. RECOMMENDATION**

The Lane County Community & Economic Development Coordinator recommends approving the attached Board Order.

#### **VI. FOLLOW-UP**

Staff will give the Board periodic updates on the status of the loan and the Oakridge Business Incubator Project.

#### **VII. ATTACHMENTS**

A: Board Order

B. Lane County Economic Development Project application: Oakridge Business Incubator

IN THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER NO. ) IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING A \$75,000  
) LOAN FROM THE OVERNIGHT STAY  
) DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUND AND A \$75,000  
GRANT FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROGRAM TO ST.  
VINCENT DE PAUL FOR THE OAKRIDGE  
BUSINESS INCUBATOR PROJECT.

WHEREAS, the Lane County Board of Commissioners established the Overnight Stay Development Loan Fund specifically designated to fund programs that will generate more overnight stays to assist the County's vital tourism industry, and

WHEREAS, the Lane County Board of Commissioners established the Economic Development Strategic Investment Program to fund activities which support economic development in Lane County and is meant to encourage partnerships between the County, communities within the county, non-profit organizations, private parties, and others directly involved in economic development activities, and

WHEREAS, the Lane County Board of Commissioners has adopted a Board Goal to "Develop Lane County's economic engine" and a strategy to "Promote events and tourism with a focus on enhancing high-wage job opportunities," and

WHEREAS, the proposed Oakridge Business Incubator Project is a project that has created a local partnership between the City of Oakridge, non-profits and local businesses, and

WHEREAS, the proposed Oakridge Business Incubator Project will create additional overnight stays in Lane County and create six full-time jobs with benefits, NOW

THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that \$75,000 be loaned from the Overnight Stay Development Loan Fund to St. Vincent de Paul for the Oakridge Business Incubator Project, bearing interest at 6% per annum, payable in full on June 30, 2016, and

ORDERED that a \$75,000 grant from the Economic Development Strategic Investment Program be awarded to St. Vincent de Paul for the Oakridge Business Incubator Project, and

IT IS ALSO HEREBY RESOLVED AND ORDERED that County Administrator is authorized to prepare and execute a loan agreement with St. Vincent de Paul.

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of February, 2011.

APPROVED AS TO FORM

Date 2-14-11 Lane

County

  
OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faye Stewart, Chair  
Lane County Board of Commissioners

**Lane County Economic Development Project**

Section I

**Proposal Cover Page**

**Grant Amount Requested: \$75,000 grant / \$75,000 loan Match Amount Proposed: \$989,000**  
**Please select the appropriate application box**

Project Focus:

Business development,  Workforce development

**PROJECT TITLE: Oakridge Business Incubator**

*Principal Project Organization:* St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County, Inc.

*Address* P.O. Box 24608 / 705 Seneca Road, Eugene, OR 97402

*Project Contact Person:* Terry McDonald, Executive Director

*Phone:* (541) 687-5820 x 125 *Fax:* (541) 683-9423

*E-mail:* tmcdonald@svdp.us

*Person/Agency preparing fiscal reports* Toney Schindler

*Title:* CFO

*Address* P.O. Box 24608 / 705 Seneca Road, Eugene, OR 97402

*Phone:* (541) 743-7162 *Fax:* (541) 683-9423

*E-mail:* tschindler@svdp.us

Signature of Applicant and each Partner included in Proposal (Copy and Use additional sheets as needed)

_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ Typed name/Title	_____ Applicant Organization
_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ Typed name/Title	_____ Partner Organization
_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ Typed name/Title	_____ Partner Organization

## **Section 2 - Project Summary**

In order to create new jobs with benefits and workforce development opportunities in rural Lane County, St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) is converting the former roller rink in Oakridge to a business center. Once renovated, the building will house a business incubator, retail store, social service center, and laundromat. **SVDP is requesting funds for the business incubator portion of this project only.** The incubator will serve Oakridge and all the surrounding unincorporated rural areas in eastern Lane County. This project will be completely self-sustaining in the first two years and will serve as a replicable model for other communities.

This project meets both Lane County Strategic Plan goals:

**1) Work for a strong regional economy to expand the number of family wage jobs available in Lane County.** The Oakridge business center will add six jobs that pay between \$9 and \$16 per hour. SVDP employees are eligible for full benefits (health, dental, and life insurance; holiday, vacation and sick pay) after three months. In addition, the center will support five to ten small businesses that will also generate new jobs. Our employment estimates are conservative and take into account the difficulty of operating businesses in small communities.

**2) Contribute to appropriate community development...** The roller rink has been vacant for over 10 years. This is a positive real estate development that will spur other development along Highway 58. SVDP is ready to proceed with the acquisition of the property. We anticipate opening the business incubator and hiring staff in summer 2011.

While this project focuses primarily on the "Business Development" category of economic development, SVDP plans to provide workforce development services for up to 20 people every year. With the addition of this service the project also falls under the "Workforce Development" category.

Distressed rural communities such as Oakridge have been left behind in many economic development projects. This project clearly serves a rural community. As we worked to design the package of services, including the business incubator, we consulted with government officials, economic development committee members, social service providers, and other stakeholders to ensure our proposal reflected community needs.

The Kresge Foundation, a large charitable foundation based in Michigan, is interested in serving as a major funder for this project. We have requested \$870,000 in loan and grant funds to support the entire project. SVDP and individual community members will contribute an additional \$119,000, bringing the total matching funds to \$989,000. Matching funds from Lane County will play a critical role in demonstrating local support for the project, as well as filling the remaining budget gap.

Additional project partners include eDev, Lane County's microenterprise organization, and local residents and businesses who believe this project is just the economic injection Oakridge needs (see attached letters of support).

## **Section 3 - Project Narrative**

### **1. Project Focus and Scope: Business Development and Workforce Development**

SVDP's business incubator will provide space for five to ten new businesses to grow and prosper. Entrepreneurs will be linked with eDev, a Lane County nonprofit that provides classes, training, business coaching and access to capital. Businesses that do not wish to rent incubator space can also avail themselves to eDev's services; the facility will have a conference room where eDev can provide consultations. The Oakridge business center will create six jobs in Oakridge. Employees will receive the same pay and benefits as SVDP employees at other



similar facilities. Pay rates range from \$9.00 - \$16.00 per hour. Employees typically receive a 3% raise every year. SVDP strongly believes in promoting people from within, meaning there are ample opportunities for career advancements. All employees are eligible for benefits after three months of employment. Our benefits package includes health, dental and life insurance, and vacation, holiday and sick pay.

The business center will also provide opportunities for workforce development. SVDP has a comprehensive program that provides work assessments, job readiness training and job placement services. We work with people with multiple barriers to employment: for example, homelessness, disability, and/or lack of access to child care. People are placed at a variety of SVDP work sites to determine what skills they have, what kinds of tasks they enjoy doing, and where they should focus their training and job search. They work with a case manager to acquire skills and get on-the-job experience. At the end of this program, SVDP works with private employers to find permanent job placements for trainees. We plan to make this program available to up to 20 people per year.

SVDP is internationally recognized for its sustainable business initiatives. Our "green" practices include utilizing alternative energy whenever possible, maintaining recycling bins at offices, and using green building practices and supplies in rehabilitation projects.

## **2. Project Goals, Performance Measures (outputs and outcomes)**

The Oakridge business incubator will have the following outputs:

- Support five to ten entrepreneurs per year
- Provide job training for up to 20 people per year

The project will have the following outcomes:

- Develop at least five new businesses through the business incubator
- Create six full-time jobs with benefits

We will track these outputs and outcomes:

- Supporting entrepreneurs: The Site Manager will sign a lease agreement with each entrepreneur who leases a business incubator space, allowing SVDP to track the number of people we serve. eDev will be asked to report on the number of people they help.
- Creating jobs: SVDP will report on the number of people on the payroll in Oakridge.
- Job training and placement: SVDP's Self-Sufficiency Services department, which manages the vocational rehabilitation program, has a detailed system for tracking the number of clients they serve and the outcomes of those services.

SVDP anticipates the following barrier to success and has a plan for addressing it:

- **Oakridge may not have enough entrepreneurs to fill the incubator space.** We understand from speaking with City staff and local business people that there is interest in space for small businesses to set up. To increase the likelihood of finding successful entrepreneurs SVDP will partner with eDev, Lane County's microenterprise organization. These professionals will provide services to clients to help them succeed in business. Services include classes, training, business coaching and access to capital.

Please note that without matching funds to indicate community support The Kresge Foundation may choose not to make an investment in this project, and SVDP may lose \$870,000 in matching funds.

### **3. Selection and Involvement of Partners**

The Kresge Foundation is SVDP's main partner. In 2010 Kresge approached us and asked for project suggestions. They were interested in doing some sort of rural economic development, and the Oakridge proposal seemed like a good fit with their guidelines.

eDev will provide services to low-income entrepreneurs in Oakridge. They will work with businesses leasing incubator space and other individuals looking to start or strengthen a business. eDev has a long track record of providing services to entrepreneurs in Lane County, working with roughly 300 people every year.

City staff, businesspeople and advocates in Oakridge have been quite supportive of this project. These individuals recognize the many benefits it will bring to their community.

Once all project funding has been secured we will begin public information activities. These will include sending press releases to local and regional newspapers, television stations and radio stations; purchasing newspaper ads; and posting information to our website, Twitter and Facebook pages. We will acknowledge Lane County's support in our public information announcements.

### **4. New Opportunities, Capacity and Readiness**

This project will create six permanent jobs with benefits (all of which pay above minimum wage). It will also support five new businesses and extend workforce development activities to 20 people. This is the minimum economic impact on the community. This project has real potential to spur business growth, develop new employment, and increase the tax base in Oakridge. It will be completely self-sustaining in the first two years, and will serve as a replicable model for other rural communities.

A unique feature of this project is that it also provides social services. By raising private funds to help people pay rent and utility bills, learn about budgeting, acquire job skills, and much more, we are moving people away from long-term welfare support. Our job training programs focus on highly transferable skills such as customer service, warehouse operations (driving a forklift, etc.) and office management skills.

SVDP is ready to proceed with the acquisition and construction upon receiving funding from the Kresge Foundation and Lane County. We anticipate that the business incubator will be completed by summer 2011. Once the rehabilitation is finished we will begin hiring staff.

**Section 4 – Budget Proposal**

Project Title:  Oakridge Business Incubator

Budget Item	Description	Grant funds	Percent of Grant Funds	Totals
Equipment	Business Incubator Equipment – heating system, office equipment, conference room furniture, signage	75,000	50%	75,000
Other	Acquisition of property at 47663 Highway 58, Oakridge, OR 97463	75,000	*50%	75,000
Total Matching funds	Kresge Foundation / SVDP / Individual donations			989,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	—	<b>150,000</b>		<b>1,139,000</b>

**\*75,000.00 for property acquisition is a loan requested through Lane County’s TRT overnight stay revolving loan fund – or similar video-lottery loan fund arrangement.**

Revenue for the Project.

List in the following format (up to one page) the various cash and non-cash resources that contribute to completion of the project scope of work. Add lines for other partners.

Source	Description	Cash	Non-cash	Total
Proposed Grant	Business Incubator necessary equip	75,000	0	75,000
Proposed Loan	Property Acquisition	75,000	0	75,000
Partner A	Kresge Foundation	870,000	0	870,000
Partner B	St. Vincent de Paul	0	99,000	99,000
Other Partners	Donations from individuals and small foundations	19,000	1,000	20,000
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>\$1,039,000</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>\$1,139,000</b>

Budget Narrative

SVDP will contract with Meili Construction for property rehabilitation. This locally owned business has been in Lane County since the 1960s. They have worked with SVDP on numerous affordable housing and commercial construction projects. Meili will subcontract portions of the work to two locally owned businesses: Builder’s Electric and Home Comfort and Heating. [still working on indirect jobs number]

**Section 5 – Performance Measures and Targets**

**Project Title:** \_ Oakridge Business Incubator\_\_\_\_\_

<b>Outputs (amount or frequency of project activity)</b>
Support five to ten entrepreneurs annually through the business incubator
Job training for up to 20 people per year
Reporting time frame – annually
<b>Outcomes (amount or frequency of project activity)</b>
5 – 10 new and existing businesses grow and prosper
6 new jobs created in year one
[15 indirect jobs in construction created in year one]
Reporting time frame – annually

**Section 6: Statement of Assurances and Proposal**

**Project Title:** Oakridge Business Incubator

The undersigned attests that the information provided to determine eligibility is true and accurate to the best of his/her knowledge. The undersigned further attests that he/she has the authority and/or responsibility to represent his/her organization in all phases of this Request for Proposal process. Finally, the undersigned understands that any false or substantially incorrect statement may disqualify this proposal from further consideration or be cause for termination of any further contract.

If this proposal is selected for funding, the undersigned provides assurances on behalf or his/her organization that the organization will comply with the General Conditions and Special Conditions in its subcontract with Lane County. The organization will also comply with all applicable federal, state, county and local statues, rules and funding criteria governing service, facilities and operations. Finally, the organization will submit all required reports, documents and forms within the allotted time for their submission.

The undersigned, as applicant, declares that he/she has carefully examined the specifications and requirements of the Lane County Request for Proposal packet and that applicant agrees, if the proposal is accepted, that applicant will contract with Lane County to furnish the services as specified, in accordance with the proposal offered here.

The Applicant hereby certifies that he/she is a resident bidder as defined in ORS 279A.120, of the state of \_\_\_\_\_.

By initialing this space \_\_\_\_\_ applicant hereby certifies that he/she has not discriminated against minority, women, or emerging small business enterprises in obtaining any required subcontracts.

By initialing this space \_\_\_\_\_ applicant hereby certifies that to the best of applicant's knowledge, he/she is in compliance with all the Oregon tax laws described in ORS 305.380(4).

The applicant represents that the proposal is in all respects fair and without collusion.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed or Typed Name and Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed or Typed Agency Name

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_, day of \_\_\_\_\_ 200\_\_.

by \_\_\_\_\_

Notary Public for the state of \_\_\_\_\_. My commission expires \_\_\_\_\_.

**Section 7 – Letters of Support**  
See attached.

76750 High Prairie Rd.  
Oakridge, OR 97463  
January 12, 2011

Terry McDonald  
St. Vincent de Paul  
P.O. Box 24608  
Eugene, OR 97402

Dear Mr. McDonald,

As a member of the Oakridge Economic Development Advisory Committee (OEDAC) for the past 13 years and a former manager of the Oakridge Industrial Park, I am writing to express my support of your efforts to secure funding from Lane County for the development of a St. Vincent de Paul center here in Oakridge.

The goals of the proposed center-to build a business incubator, retail store, laundromat and social service center is a practical approach to meeting the most pressing needs of this community. In the 13 years that I have been a resident here, I have seen the further economic decline of Oakridge which started in the 1980's with the closure of the lumber mills, the loss of businesses and services, the increasing poverty level of its citizens, and the lack of opportunities available for improvement and growth. However, I have also seen a community of people who care for each other, who volunteer and who work together to move forward. The prospect of a St. Vincent de Paul Center looks like a great move forward.

Currently I am heading up a special project of the OEDAC whose purpose is to recruit entrepreneurs to set up a business in Oakridge. The proposed business incubator in your program would be a perfect compliment to this effort. The recruitment committee consists of 20 key persons who are working on updating the city economic development website and preparing presentations to prospective business and education institutions with graduating students who would be interested in starting a business. The presentations are planned to commence this summer. The business incubator program would be a positive attraction to starting a business here in that it would allow growth with low cost of start-up expenditure.

It is obvious that job growth is an essential element in reversing the steady decline of the Oakridge community. St. Vincent de Paul's center is a step in the right direction.

Sincerely,

  
John Milandin  
Member OEDAC

# ENVIRONMENT CONTROL

A Building Maintenance Company



January 6, 2011

Mr. Terry McDonald  
St. Vincent de Paul  
PO Box 24608  
Eugene, OR 97402

Dear Terry,

As you know, there are many communities across the United States that are suffering from the many ailments that the recent recession has handed them. The city of Oakridge is no different. Many of us who call Oregon and Lane County home truly want the best for this community because it is like our back-yard. Just like any yard, it needs tending and nurturing in order to flourish and become healthy, especially from a business standpoint. I wholeheartedly support this application of funds for this more-than-worthy project.

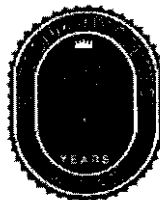
Upon the closing of the local laundromat this past year, I had the privilege of organizing a project to assist many of the families living in Oakridge in obtaining working washers and dryers for their homes, free of cost. Over the course of this project, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of how truly in need this small community is.

The goal of renovating this old roller rink building would provide another impetus to feed the fire of assistance which will in turn help push Oakridge toward self-sustainment and success.

This project will open many doors, for example:

1. The retail store will provide practical goods.
2. The business incubator will provide help and resources to individuals who want to start their own business.
3. The social service center will give the community a place to meet.
4. The laundromat will fill an enormous need for one of the most fundamental necessities.

Overall, this project will provide Oakridge a hub that will be a positive magnet for new business ventures, social/business gatherings, business consultation/mentoring and even provide a small, simple place to do your laundry.





St. Vincent de Paul's project will breath new life into the local economy. I am aware of at least one business, a computer repair company, that needs office space in order to succeed and grow. The incubator space is a perfect fit for them. In addition, I am willing to personally give \$1,000 to this project as well as provide a set of industrial strength washer and dryer.

I wish you the best of luck with your application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ruben A. Garcia". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

RUBEN A. GARCIA

Owner/Manager

RAG:pi

Gnome-in-the-Woods Construction  
48175 Mcfarland Rd.  
Oakridge, OR 97463

January 10, 2011

Terry McDonald  
St. Vincent de Paul  
P.O. Box 24608  
Eugene, OR 97402

Dear Mr. McDonald,

As a business owner and civic leader in Oakridge, I am happy to offer my wholehearted support of your request for funds from Lane County for your proposed project in our city.

Over the last decade, the aggregate buying power in Oakridge has grown. Yet there has been very little increase in retail services like the ones you propose to locate here. Additionally, new retail opportunities have further been hampered by the lack of available commercial property for lease. More importantly, existing commercial space within Oakridge has suffered from decades of non-use. The neglect and subsequent decay of existing properties has rendered them economically unfeasible for any new development.

The dismal state of commercial property in Oakridge not only disheartens prospective new business ventures but exacerbates our local economy by continuing to drain much needed dollars. Currency flight and the extra expense of travel for basic necessities continues to keep a cloud of depression over our city and makes our chances of growth in the future more difficult.

As the Mountain Biking Capital of the Northwest, we need to have better curb appeal to attract and keep the dollars that are availed to us. Your business incubator will assist new businesses in their most fragile state-the first year. Statistics readily show that business incubators work.

Oakridge has the opportunity to be one of the shining small towns in Lane County. Our Oregon Main Street program participation has already made an impact along First Street. However, Highway 58 is our "front door" and will either make or break traffic passing through. We need new, fresh businesses to attract that traffic.

In closing, I hail your efforts to come and give Oakridge a very needed jumpstart. If there is anything I can do to further assist your efforts, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,



GEORGE W. CUSTER, owner



48267 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street, PO Box 690, Oakridge, Oregon 97463  
T: (541) 782-4261 F: (541) 782-4262

January 4, 2011

Terry McDonald  
St. Vincent de Paul  
P.O. Box 24608  
Eugene, OR 97402

Dear Mr. McDonald,

I understand you are applying to Lane County for funds to build a business incubator, retail store, laundromat and social service center in Oakridge. I am writing to voice my support for your application.

Oakridge is a community in distress. Since the closure of the lumber mill in the 1980's the town has suffered from high unemployment and poverty, and few opportunities for local residents to thrive. Oakridge has done much in recent years to attract new businesses, including developing an industrial park. In the past year the uptown merchants have developed an Uptown Business Revitalization Association that has made tremendous progress in changing the look of our Uptown and because of those efforts a few small businesses have opened. There is still much more needed to put Oakridge back to where it was before the falloff the lumber industry.

St. Vincent de Paul's project will breathe new life into the local economy and I feel with also bring back the pride that our community needs to help it grow and move forward.

I wish you the best of luck with your application.

Sincerely,

Rustie Ackland  
Branch Manager



Gordon Zimmerman, City Administrator  
PO Box 1410, Oakridge, OR 97463  
Voice: 541-782-2258 TDD: 541-782-4232 Fax: 541-782-1081  
Email: [gordonzimmerman@ci.oakridge.or.us](mailto:gordonzimmerman@ci.oakridge.or.us)  
Website: [ci.oakridge.or.us](http://ci.oakridge.or.us)

January 6, 2011

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Dear Mr. McDonald:

I understand you are applying to Lane County for funds to build a business incubator, retail store, laundromat and social service center in Oakridge. I am writing to voice my support for your application.

Oakridge is a community in distress. Since the closure of the lumber mill in the 1980's the town has suffered from high unemployment and poverty, and few opportunities for local residents to thrive. Oakridge has done much in recent years to attract new businesses, including developing an industrial park. However, there is still much more to do. We have very limited options to buy clothing in our community or to find furnishings for our homes without having to travel 45 miles to Eugene.

St. Vincent de Paul's project will breathe new life into the local economy. I am aware of at least one business, a computer repair company that needs office space in order to succeed and grow. The incubator space is a perfect fit for them. In addition, as the City Administrator I am personally involved in putting together data about Oakridge as a tool to draw businesses. I am confident that this information, combined with St. Vincent de Paul's incubator space, will be enough to draw new economic opportunity to Oakridge.

I wish you the best of luck with your application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon Zimmerman".

Gordon Zimmerman  
City Administrator