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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF MEDFORD

MEDFORD, OREGON 97501

May 14, 1984

MEDFORD'S SISTER CITY:
ALBA, ITALY

Wete Fred

Governor Victor Atiyeh
254 State Capitol Building
Salem, Oregon 97310

Dear Governor Atiyeh:

On June 20, 1979 you submitted, as Governor of Oregon, a CO plan for the Medford area to EPA. This plan was based on information and recommendations made by State DEQ to Jackson County and modified by the County in ways acceptable to DEQ, including an I & M Program.

On review, EPA found that implementation of I & M required authority from the State Legislature. As you know, the Legislature did not provide such authority but reluctantly granted authority to, but did not require, Jackson County to implement I & M.

Jackson County, by a vote of its citizens, turned down the I & M Program.

Oregon DEQ, faced with EPA sanctions, is trying to find alternative measures. They have directed the City of Medford to take some drastic steps in a very short period of time. These actions include speeding up the flow of through traffic on State Route #99 south on Central Avenue by removing parking and providing three full lanes of traffic. This would apparently make a significant reduction in the amount of CO. This could be done for under \$300,000. The City Council, area merchants and businessmen, believe that such action would have serious negative impacts on the viability of our downtown area as a business center. This is supported by a study made by Gruen & Gruen a few years ago which supports a proposal to reroute State Route #99 south to Front Street and make Central a local street only.

This action would cost \$2,234,000 and has twice been voted down by the citizens of Medford, presumably because of its high cost during this economic depression.

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The potential impact of the DEQ proposal for Central Avenue is perceived to be so great that downtown business people are in the process of forming an assessment district to tax themselves \$500,000 to contribute toward the Front Street diversion cost. Most of us agree that it will be worthwhile to ask the people to vote again on a bond issue for about \$1.1 million which leaves a shortfall of \$600-650 thousand dollars. A higher bond level would be very questionable during this economic recession.

Since this whole situation is one that has been created by levels of government above the City of Medford, which has tried to be cooperative all the way, it seems proper for the higher levels of government to accept some of the responsibility for solving the problem.

We fully recognize the financial plight of the State of Oregon but can point to the strong efforts made by the City of Medford and its citizen and business leaders to solve a crisis created by Federal and State government.

We believe that the State of Oregon has an obligation to contribute to the solution of this problem, in large part created by State Highway #99. For this reason, we are requesting your assistance in helping to fund the diversion of State Route #99 from Central to Front in order to make it possible to meet the EPA requirements and still maintain the viability of the City of Medford as the fourth largest metropolitan community in Oregon.

Your assistance in helping to find ways to solve this problem will be greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,



Lou Hannum
Mayor

LH:bs

cc: City Manager
City Council
DEQ
Eldon Johnson
Rebecca DeBoer
County Commissioners

Kip Lombard
Chamber of Commerce
HOMA
Central Medford Economic
Development Council

cc:bs