

March 10, 2023

Oregon Legislature

RE: Support for The Children's Museum of Southern Oregon/The Ivy School

Honorable Members of the Oregon Legislature:

Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc. (SORED) strongly offers our letter of support for a funding allocation to the Oregon Center for Creative Learning in Medford. Comprised of both the Children's Museum of Southern Oregon and the Ivy School, this local amenity is incredibly busy with visitors from multiple states, and moreover, their pre-school program has a significantly long wait list.

The Center for Creative Learning, located in a historic Carnegie library facility, has already secured a \$1 million federal grant to expand and is in need of additional resources for which they are requesting a \$4 million allocation from the State of Oregon. SORED support for this project aligns with two key initiatives identified in our 2020-2025 One Rogue Valley Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS): Tourism and Placemaking.

INITIATIVE 4. TOURISM Support the organizations and places that strengthen the tourism and experiential environment in Southern Oregon.

- 4.1. Support initiatives to expand tourism in Southern Oregon.
- 4.3. Leverage the region's thriving arts and culture industry to promote the region's amenities outside the Rogue Valley and within the region.

INITIATIVE 5. PLACEMAKING Nurture an environment that preserves Southern Oregon's quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors.

- 5.2. Support city-specific quality-of-place initiatives that contribute to the unique identity of Southern Oregon's communities and encourage the development of vibrant downtowns.
- 5.2.4. Champion placemaking projects that create community amenities for residents, including youth.
- 5.2.5. Support the preservation and revitalization of historic and historically significant buildings, especially in underserved areas and urban renewal Districts.

We highly recommend your consideration and funding of this request to ensure local resources and programs for preschoolers are diverse and available, to allow families in our region have peace of mind and quality childcares options as they return to the workforce. Amenities such as the Oregon Center for Creative learning in Medford are critical to our regional economic vitality. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Colleen Padilla, Executive Director

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