

December 1, 2023

Dear OHCS,

As many of you know very well, OHCS received a historic budget from the 2023 Legislative Session: \$1.14 billion in housing investments. With this level of investment comes increased expectations and pressure to deliver on behalf of Oregonians. As stewards of these resources, we've embraced a heightened level of accountability and upped our implementation planning game. The result of efforts from staff across the agency is a **2023-25 Implementation Blueprint**, which I will be presenting to our Housing Stability Council later this morning and have attached to share with all of you now.

As an agency, we've never posted a **comprehensive, proactive** implementation plan like this. It may look simple, but the level of coordination and planning behind those color-coded lines is truly a monumental accomplishment. The blueprint lays out critical path milestones and overall timelines for the 36 investment and policy projects that make up this biennium's historic growth budget. Representing the work from all our programmatic divisions and essential support from our many shared service teams, this planning effort was made possible because of thoughtful contributions of at least 100 members of our staff over the last few months. *I am deeply grateful for the energy, patience, and willingness of all of you to try something new—thank you!*

To start, we are releasing this blueprint internally and then publicly to allow a wide range of our stakeholders to better understand the critical paths necessary to bring to fruition these important policy and program investments. These project plans represent a current snapshot specific to our 2023-25 legislative implementation, but this effort does not stop here. This is a living, iterative process, which will be built upon and continuously improved upon for ongoing project coordination. With continuing efforts underway to build out internal systems and a commitment to publicly update these project plans quarterly, the **transparency** represented by this blueprint will help us to center the working relationships—internally and externally—necessary for us to together better serve the Oregonians needing access to OHCS programs.

Equally important, we have embarked on this planning and cross-agency coordination effort with a specific lens to deliver on these commitments while also prioritizing **sustainable workloads** for staff. This level of visibility is already allowing us to better sequence and forecast work needs across divisions. While it won't shift overnight, this is the type of internal operation that will help us to be more responsive and less reactive.

The 2023-25 Legislative Implementation Planning project was taken on under the umbrella of an agencywide initiative called **Operational Excellence**, or "OPEX." We define operational excellence as a working environment where every employee can see, deliver, and improve the flow of value to a customer—be that an internal or external customer. We are investing in our internal systems, culture, and processes so our operations can keep up with and deliver upon the programmatic aspirations necessary to achieve our mission.

Convening internal stakeholders and crafting procedures for implementation planning was the first explicitly OPEX-inspired project, but it will not be the last as leadership recognizes the many ways our **operations need to be right-sized and modernized** to meet the needs of our growing agency. Stay tuned for more such projects, as well as ways this blueprint will help us to continue improving coordination internally and transparency externally.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I appreciate your commitment to your work, teammates, and all Oregonians.

Sincerely,
Caleb Yant
Deputy Director