



RS EXCHANGE

REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Weekly Report

Wednesday, December 4th, 2019

Below are some highlights from the Governor's [Regional Solutions \(RS\) Coordinators](#), on behalf of the eleven interagency teams across Oregon.

North Coast Region – Jennifer Purcell

- **Childcare Supply and Early Learning Expansion:** *Background* – A lack of sufficient quality childcare is a barrier to economic development. RS is working with NW Regional Education Service District (ESD) to assess childcare supply in Tillamook, Clatsop, and Columbia counties, identify barriers to increasing availability, and support collaborative partnerships and innovative solutions.
 - *Update* – RS met with NW Regional ESD, Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R), Oregon Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and Economic Development and Workforce Development partners in Clatsop County to discuss operational challenges facing licensed childcare facilities. We identified a number of foundational training requirements that are perceived as barriers, clarified access to free resources, and began exploring workforce training scholarships that may be available. We discussed the challenges of a limited labor pool and barriers to growing the workforce, such as qualification requirements and pay equity. We recognized an opportunity for collaboration between SBDC and CCR&R to strengthen technical assistance (TA) resources relating to small business management and childcare operations. Next steps involve exploring these partnerships and workforce development opportunities further.
- **Westport Slough:** *Background* – Clatsop County received \$450,000 in Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) funding for dredging and dock improvements to restore Westport Slough for commercial use. RS Team members from Business Oregon, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), and the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) worked closely with the County to advance this regionally significant economic development investment.
 - *Update* – Dredging and dock improvements are complete and Teevin Brothers expects to begin barging operations in the first of the year.
 - *Next Steps* – RS continues to work with County officials and local stakeholders to coordinate the timing, sequencing, and funding for a number of related infrastructure and community development projects, including transportation system improvements, water and wastewater upgrades, and park development.

Mid-Valley Region – Jody Christensen

- **City of Independence Rail Crossing:** The City of Independence is looking at considerable residential growth on the south side of town, which has access constrained by a rail line. RS, ODOT, and ODOT Rail recently met City Manager Tom Pessemier and Economic Development Director Shawn Irvine to learn more about the sites, transportation plans, and possible scenarios. RS will continue to work with the city as the project unfolds.
 - Thank you to Jae Pudewell, ODOT RS Team Member, Naomi Zwerdling, ODOT Transit Program and Policy Lead, and Prescott Mann with ODOT Crossing Safety/Crossing Compliance for their expertise.
- **Planning Grants Awards:** Department of Land and Conservation Development (DLCD) announced its Technical Assistance (TA) Grants. In the Mid-Valley, the City of Woodburn received \$45,000 for its Southwest Industrial Reserve Planning Project, a regional priority project, and the City of Newberg's Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA) application received \$20,000. Congratulations.
- **Oregon's 100-Year Water Vision Your Input** The Oregon Water Enhancement Board (OWEB) is seeking comments on the vision's framework. The [survey](#) closes on Friday, December 13. To learn more about visioning work, visit the [website](#) where you can find great informational videos and other resources.
- **What's next in Ag Innovation:** RS is participating in the Chemeketa Community College (CCC)/Marion County work focused on supporting agriculture in the Mid-Valley. This week, a survey launched to help determine what factors are driving innovation in the agricultural value chain. Based on inputs, new workforce development initiatives and economic development programs will be considered for investment of lottery dollars designated for Marion County economic development. While data will be used initially in the Mid-Valley, this survey is open statewide.
 - The [Ag Innovation survey](#) should take about 4 minutes to fill out. Results are without attribution unless you wish to add your name and contact information when prompted. If you do not add that information, your name and email account will *not* be collected. **The survey closes December 17th.**
- **Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) Announced:** The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is now accepting proposals for project ideas for the USDA [Specialty Crop Block Grant Program \(SCBGP\)](#). This unique opportunity is open to agriculture industry associations, producer groups, processors, commodity commissions, non-profits, for profits, and local government agencies to apply projects that support specialty crops. The Mid-Valley Regional Vision and Priorities are aligned with the program's goals. Several [workshops](#) are scheduled to help applicants with the applicant.
 - "ODA and the advisory committee are looking for innovative two and a half year proposals with a suggested funding range of \$25,000 to \$175,000, and encourage interested parties to work regionally to submit collaborative project proposals that benefit Oregon growers and processors as well as partners in other states that share common specialty crops. Those who have received specialty crop grant funds in the past are also encouraged to apply, whether they are interested in building on an existing project or if they are proposing a new project. Proposals should be submitted online and must be received by **Tuesday, January 31, 2020 at 12:00 noon Pacific Standard Time.**"

South Valley/Mid Coast Region (SVMC) – Sarah Means

- **Sweet Home RS Team Outreach:** Special thanks to the City of Sweet Home for hosting the RS Team recently for an outreach meeting. With new staff representing both the RS Team and the City, this provided a great opportunity to get to know partners and better understand local priorities. Several topics were discussed with a primary focus on redevelopment of both residential and industrial lands in the City.
- **DLCD TA Grant Awards SVMC:** Congratulations to the City of Springfield and the City of Philomath for their successful grant applications in the current round of DLCD TA awards. The City of Springfield will receive \$51,500 in funding to complete a Local Wetland & Riparian Inventories and Assessment for their Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) expansion area. The City of Philomath will receive \$50,000 to complete an EOA, Buildable Lands Inventory (BLI) assessment and Housing Needs Assessment (HNA). The SVMC received a total of seven applications for the DLCD TA Grant, totaling \$316,052 in financial assistance requests.

Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

- **SVMC RSAC:** Wednesday, December 18th, 2019, 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM; Location – Ford Alumni Center, University of Oregon

Metro Region – Raihana Ansary

- **City of Canby:** Metro RS met with Canby's Economic Development Director, Jaime Stickel, about their desire to address growing capacity needs at their Pioneer Industrial Park with the construction of an alternative access road. The City is expected to hire an engineer in early 2020 who will be tasked with evaluating potential road alternatives. They will reach out to Metro RS shortly thereafter to explore potential funding sources, including, but not limited to, Immediate Opportunity Funds (IOF). There may also be wetland issues in and around the area that would require Department of State Lands (DSL) involvement. Metro RS will stay tuned and coordinate state agencies when needed.
- **City of Milwaukie:** Metro RS met with Milwaukie's Administrator Ann Ober about priority projects underway in the City, including the future relocation of their city hall and the development of a mixed-use project downtown. We also checked-in about the following Metro RS priority projects that we are working on with the City of Milwaukie:
 - Old Stone Building – Earlier this year, Metro RS convened a meeting between ODOT Region 1 (R1) and the City of Milwaukie about the potential for ODOT to surplus an old stone building located on OR-99 E, which has been identified as a key opportunity site in the North Milwaukie Industrial Area (NMIA) Plan. There has been significant commercial interest in the property. ODOT R1 is willing to surplus the property with the understanding that the adjacent maintenance yard remain in ODOT's authority in the long-term. City staff are going to check-in with their City Council soon about their appetite for such an arrangement; and if agreed upon, send a formal request letter to ODOT. Metro RS will stay in the loop and continue to engage if needed.
 - Kellogg Creek Dam – The Kellogg Creek dam under OR-99E in Milwaukie prevents effective fish passage into the nine miles of Kellogg Creek tributary to the Willamette River. A full dam removal and bridge reconstruction project, estimated to cost upwards of \$20 million, is prohibitively expensive and has no funding strategy to move forward. Milwaukie staff are going to inquire about Oregon Water Enhancement Board (OWEB) resources for the project and Metro RS will coordinate state agencies including the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the Governor's Natural

Resource Office (GNRO)—to examine the viability and pros and cons of potential lower-cost fish passage alternatives.

North Central Region – Nate Stice

- **Maupin Housing Needs:** Congratulations to the City of Maupin, which worked with the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) to secure DLCD TA funding to conduct a HNA and construct a development strategy. The study will build on a recently completed economic opportunity analysis. As a frontier community with a significant tourism economy, Maupin faces unique housing challenges. The Team has discussed with these challenges with the community, and we look forward to helping them start to address those challenges through this process.

Central Region – Annette Liebe

Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

- **Central RSAC:** Thursday, March 12th, 2020; Time/Location – TBD

South Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **Lake County Rail:** The County submitted Categorical Exclusion documentation to the US Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Federal Rail Administration (FRA) for the rail project and the federal grant on December 4th. Many thanks to the state agencies who assisted in completing this documentation.

Greater Eastern & Northeast Regions – Courtney Warner Crowell

- **John Day Wins \$6 million USDA ReConnect Funding:** This week USDA announced that the Oregon Telephone Company (OTC) would receive \$6 million to construct 89 miles of fiber connecting all of Grant County and into Wheeler County. This builds off of the \$1.8 million that John Day was awarded in 2017 for broadband. The City of John Day and OTC partnered together on this application and it is a huge win for the entire County. This is the only USDA ReConnect award in Oregon. Here is a [link](#) to a local article that discusses the award and project in greater detail.
- **Governor Brown Visits Umatilla County:** This week, Governor Brown visited Umatilla County and got to see the Hermiston Agriculture Research Center, the innovative Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs happening at Hermiston High School, and the exciting work happening at the Pendleton Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) test range.
- **Union County Housing Projects:** Kim Travis of Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) and RS participated in a community conversation about Union County housing needs and potential housing projects. It was a great gathering of everyone involved in housing in Union County and a great step towards creating partnerships to address both affordable housing and workforce housing.
- **Hines Pellet Mill Project:** Held our monthly coordination call on the Hines Pellet mill with DEQ, Harney County, the company, and other interested parties to hear how the permitting process is going. We had some great steps forward and it looks like the review report will be able to be shared with the company this week, which is a great step forward. Additionally, DEQ is allowing the company to begin construction on some key elements that will allow the company to begin production by June. This construction does not

connect to the boiler and therefore, is able to be constructed before the permit is awarded. Unfortunately, we did learn that there will be additional source testing required under Cleaner Air Oregon that was not anticipated by the company. We are still working to see what will be required under the permit.

- **Regional Solutions Open House:** Thursday, December 12th, 2019, 9 AM – 2 PM; Location – Eastern Oregon Regional Solutions Center; 233 Badgley Hall, One University Blvd, La Grande, OR 97850

