

# RS EXCHANGE

## REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

### Weekly Report

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

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

- **Joint North Coast and Mid-Valley Regional Solutions Team meeting** – The North Coast and Mid-Valley Regional Solutions Teams recently held a joint meeting with the cities of Independence and St. Helens to discuss downtown redevelopment opportunities. Representatives from the Governor's Office, Business Oregon, Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), State Lands (DSL), Department of Transportation (ODOT), Housing and Community Services (OHCS), Oregon Parks and Recreation (OPRD), Oregon Employment Department (OED), State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) joined regional economic development partners from Columbia-Pacific Economic Development District and Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, and City staff and elected officials from the cities of Independence and St. Helens. The City of Independence provided an overview of the city's riverfront redevelopment projects, including a river walk, hotel, and residential development. A robust discussion provided lessons learned regarding public engagement, public-private partnerships, project funding, brownfield redevelopment, Main Street investments, the role of Regional Solutions, key factors to success, and opportunities to leverage long-term community investments.



Shawn Irvine, City of Independence Economic Development Director, shares the Independence redevelopment story with City of St. Helens staff and elected officials, and members of the North Coast and Mid-Valley Regional Solutions Teams.

The City of St. Helens has undertaken a comprehensive look at redeveloping their downtown waterfront district. A brownfield site where Boise Veneer was once located has been acquired by the City, providing a catalytic redevelopment opportunity. The City plans to restore the connection between downtown St. Helens and the Columbia River, provide public access to the

waterfront, and preserve the natural and cultural heritage of St. Helens. The City envisions a thriving downtown and active waterfront with new mixed-use development. The Independence lessons and experience resonated with City of St. Helens staff and elected officials. The cities share similar population size, orientation to a river, and a brownfield site central to redevelopment. The convening of resources and opportunity to share ideas and opportunities for community revitalization was invaluable.



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## [Mid-Valley Region](#) – Jody Christensen

- **Joint North Coast and Mid-Valley Regional Solutions Team meeting** – Please see the North Coast – Mid-Valley report above. The two Regional Solutions teams and the cities of St. Helens and Independence met to discuss downtown and riverfront redevelopment opportunities.



Thank you to City of Independence Council President Morton, City Manager Tom Pessemier, and Economic Development Director Shawn Irvine for hosting the group.

## Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

- **Mid-Valley RSAC CANCELED:** The Friday, March 20th, 2020, has been canceled.

### South Valley/Mid Coast Region – Sarah Means

- **Coburg Employment Lands: Background** – In 2018, RST formed an Employment Lands Task Force along with the City of Coburg. The objectives for the Task Force was to assist the community with their employment lands zoning code changes – specifically the Highway Commercial and Campus Industrial zones. The Task Force, at the direction of the City Council, opted to work on a single zone at a time and began with the Highway Commercial designation. The Task Force worked through more than six meetings with involvement from a diverse group of partners (including DLCD, ODOT, Business Oregon, DEQ, Lane County, community members, and planning commission and city council representatives) to come to agreement on a new Highway Commercial zoning code for the City.
  - **Update:** RS was recently contacted by a property owner on the east side of Interstate 5. The subject property is approximately 105 acres of land that needs to be annexed into the City and rezoned. The property owner has been working with the City, local partners and the RST to determine the best zoning for the property and outline a strategy for development on the site. The site will likely be zoned Light Industrial which provides a great opportunity for the City and the region to bring online a large industrial lot for economic development purposes. The RST will continue working with the City and property owner on the project in the coming months.

### Southern & South Coast Regions – Alex Campbell

- **Cascade Mountain Spring Water:** A small water bottling company operates in northern Jackson County in the town of Butte Falls, purchasing bulk water from the city. They recently secured significant outside investment, hired their first full-time employees, and are doing several major market tests this year. RS is assisting with a question about the City's municipal water classification and how that could impact the company.

### Metro Region – Raihana Ansary

- **Scoggins Dam:** The Bureau of Reclamation and Clean Water Services (CWS) are working on the Tualatin Basin Joint Project to integrate Scoggins Dam safety modifications with increased water storage in order to protect against a major earthquake, secure the region's primary water source, and meet the long-term (100-year) agricultural, economic, and environmental water needs for our region.

Scoggins Dam/Hagg Lake is a federal facility and is Washington County's primary water source and a major regional asset. The reservoir irrigates 17,000 acres of farmland, provides drinking water for 400,000 residents and supports 283,000 jobs at more than 18,000 businesses including Intel, Nike and Genentech. It is also a major regional recreation destination with more than 900,000 visitor days annually.

The Joint Project requires close coordination with multiple federal and state agencies and tribal governments. RS is helping to coordinate state agency roles and responsibilities.

- **Update:** The entire Metro RS team met with CWS during a regular bi-monthly check-in. CWS, the Tualatin Repayment Partners (Tualatin Valley Irrigation District and the Cities

of Hillsboro, Beaverton and Forest Grove) recently met with the Bureau of Reclamation to review the Tualatin Joint Project options (1. Raise existing dam 2. Raise existing dam and seismically retrofit it 3. Construct new downstream dam). The Partners determined all three options are technically feasible but, due to the cost and complexity of the project, have decided not to select an Engineering Preferred Alternative until additional information about costs and risks has been examined. Project costs have escalated for the three options ranging from \$750M to \$1B. Meantime, CWS continues to work with state agencies including the Office of Water Resources Department (OWRD) on water rights and hope to begin a Division 33 consult with Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife and the DEQ in the coming months.

- **Broadway Corridor / USPS Site:** The Broadway Corridor is a total of 32 acres, including the former post office site and is a significant redevelopment opportunity in Portland's central city. There is an intentional focus on ensuring all communities have an opportunity to engage in and benefit from its redevelopment.
  - **Update:** Metro RS engaged Karen Homolac at Business Oregon to help explain and clarify the typical requirements outlined in Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) brownfield grants for Prosper Portland. Metro RS is convening a follow-up discussion with Tracy Schwartz at SHPO and Prosper Portland to understand what additional artifact review, if any, given prior Section 106 consultation, the project would be subject to.

## Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **Childcare:** The Central Oregon Childcare Steering committee met virtually with the CEO of Wonderschool. Wonderschool has developed curricula, marketing materials, payroll, and billing resources, etc. for residential early childhood providers. They have apparently been in touch with other communities throughout Oregon and are interested in gaining a presence here. Next step is to bring together higher education and key regional employers to lay out options.

## South Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **Lakeview Housing:** Background: In June 2019 RS, along with local partners, convened a meeting in Lakeview with employers and others to better understand workforce housing needs. Red Rock Biofuels, Warner Creek Correctional Facility, US Forest Service and the hospital all identified needs for single and multi-family workforce housing.
  - Update: Bogatay Construction along with their affordable housing development partner reached out to RS and OHCS to better understand the needs that have been identified. There is some interest in moving forward with a mixed income multi-family project in Lakeview. RS was able to share notes from the June 2019 meeting as well as 2019 the Housing Needs Analysis.
- **South Central Regional Solutions Advisory Committee meeting:** The committee met on March 9<sup>th</sup> in Lakeview. Agenda items included recommendations from a recently completed Lake County "development demand analysis". The RS priorities line up with the recommendations from the consultant; the only recommendation not included in the RS priorities is the need to increase availability of early childhood education slots. The committee also reviewed the newly completed Lake County Fairgrounds Master Plan. The Fairgrounds are a critical regional community and economic asset and there is great interest in updating and improving the facility to accommodate more events. The RS Committee will revisit priorities at their next meeting.

- **City of Klamath Falls Water Reuse (new project):** In light of the water quantity and quality issues in the Klamath Basin, the City of Klamath Falls has recently become very interested in discharging wastewater effluent to an irrigation district for irrigation use thereby, removing their discharge from the Klamath River. RS convened Klamath County, City of Klamath Falls, Klamath Water Users Alliance, Farmers Conservation Alliance, Klamath County Economic Development Association, Klamath Drainage District, DEQ, and Oregon Water Resources Department for an initial exploratory meeting. There was unanimous support for the idea. The city already understands that such a partnership would require them to increase the treatment of their water. There was also discussion about the potential of such an approach to generate “credits” for future economic development projects. Next step is to clarify legal requirements related to water quality permitting. The group is eager to meet again soon as the city is in the final stages of finalizing their loan and draft permit with DEQ.

## Greater Eastern & Northeast Regions – Courtney Warner Crowell

- **Umatilla Flooding Relief:** RS continues to work on many different projects related to the flooding that happened last month in Umatilla County. This week the emergency board approved \$11.8 million in funding to help with housing, infrastructure and business help. Additionally, Governor Brown sent a letter to the President asking for a federal disaster declaration.
  - **Agency Outreach Meeting for Public:** This week, Senator Wyden’s office led the charge with Senator Merkley, Governor Brown, and Congressman Walden lending help to bring all the state, federal, and local resources for individuals to one location. The idea was to provide all the resources in one location for those affected by the flooding. The need in the community is very dire, particularly for housing and we heard from many frustrated individuals about the time it takes for government help to arrive.
  - **Disaster Housing Task Force:** RS is working with OHCS and OEM to pull together a housing disaster task force to deal with both the immediate need in the community but additionally to work on planning related to the funding allocated this week by the emergency board. We will be having our kick off meeting next week.
  - **City of Weston Flooding Damage:** Department of State Lands was able to do a site visit with the City of Weston regarding the need to fix the creek bed before their sewer line breaks. The city and county were very appreciative of the visit and DSL is now working on allowing the city to move forward with much of what they are hoping to get accomplished before the spring runoff starts.
- **Joint Area Commission on Transportation Meeting:** RS attended the joint Northeast and Southeast Area Commission on Transportation meeting this week. This was a chance to share updates from our Regional Solutions team and provide input on the proposed STIP projects in Region 5.

### Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

- **Northeast Oregon Regional Solutions Advisory Committee** - Monday, March 30, 2020, 10 am-12 pm, Eastern Oregon University, Dixie Lund Boardroom, Inlow Hall 201, La Grande, OR