



RS EXCHANGE

REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Weekly Report

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

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

Regional Solutions (RS) Director – Leah Horner

North Coast Region – Jennifer Purcell

- **North Coast Economic Recovery Team** – The North Coast Economic Recovery Team is comprised of local, regional, state, and federal economic and workforce development partners. Convened by Regional Solutions, the team is sharing information about impacts and needs, resources and supports, and planning for recovery.
 - Update – This week the Regional Economic Recovery Team discussed small business relief, workforce training investments, childcare resources, Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) updates, and Phase II reopening.
 - Business Oregon announced awards of \$120,000 to Clatsop County and \$70,000 to Columbia County as matching grant funds for small business relief.
 - NW Oregon Works, our local workforce investment board, provided information and updates regarding disaster recovery funding and employment recovery funding. Members of the Regional Economic Recovery Team discussed changes anticipated in the North Coast labor market and opportunities for retraining in priority sectors and workforce areas that are experiencing skill gaps.
 - The North Coast's Regional Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Director reviewed early learning and childcare supply in Tillamook, Clatsop, and Columbia Counties, acknowledging that the region was working to address barriers to accessing childcare prior to COVID-19. COVID has further complicated the availability of childcare in the region and as counties move into Phase II of reopening and people begin to return to work, the need for childcare resources is escalating. Regional Solutions and members of the Regional Economic Recovery Team will convene a subcommittee to support CCR&R efforts and provide advisory capacity as policies, subsidies, and additional resources become available.
 - Senator Merkley's field representative shared the news that the Senate passed PPP reforms that reduce the percentage of the loan amount that needs to be spent on payroll from 75% to 60%, extend the sunset for PPP expenditures, change the safe harbor period for rehires, and lengthen the loan repayment

period from two years to five years. These are welcome updates and provide much relief to our business community.

- Regional Solutions provided updates regarding Phase II reopening, including updated guidance for Restaurants and Bars and new guidance for Venues, Events, Entertainment, and Gatherings.

Mid-Valley Region – Jody Christensen

Ag COVID Resource June 11 Webinar – Working with Marion County, Regional Solutions (RS) is planning a Mid-Valley Region: Farmer and Farmworker COVID Resources Webinar. In partnership with the Strategic Economic Development Corp (SEDCOR), the webinar will focus on the Governor’s [\\$30M Food Security and Farmworker Safety Project](#) resources including the program criteria and application process. The session will be via Zoom on Thursday, June 11, 2020 from 8:30 – 10 AM. Register for this free webinar [here](#).

The agenda includes:

- Housing/Field Sanitation/Transportation
 - Eric Hartstein, Senior Policy Coordinator, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB)
 - Jonathan Sandau, Special Assistant to the Director, Department of Agriculture (ODA)
- Oregon Farmer Worker Relief and Quarantine Funds
 - Omar Alvarado, Advocacy Organizer, Pineros Y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN)
- Safe Sheltering and Rent Relief Funds
 - Martin Campos-Davis, Executive Director, Oregon Human Development Corp.
- Marion County: Launching a Farm Site Resource Guide
 - Michael Keuler, Ag Coordinator, Marion County

Thank you to our speakers and to Marion County Commissioner Kevin Cameron, Polk County Commissioner Craig Pope, and Yamhill County Commissioner Casey Kulla for their support.

- **Mid-Valley Economic Recovery Team (ERT)** – includes representatives from the Counties, Willamette Workforce Partnership, Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, the Strategic Economic Development Corp (SEDCOR), the Small Business Development Center, early learning hubs, local emergency management, the Employment Department, Business Oregon, chambers, regional destination marketing organizations, utilities, non-profits, tribal government, and federal delegation representatives. The goal is to create robust communication and networks in the response and recovery work.
 - This week, the ERT received a PHASE 2 update, an overview on childcare for migrant families, and summary of Marion County’s resource development for farmers and farmworkers. In addition, Oregon Employment Department’s Tom Erhardt and Pat O’Connor shared data and agency update about the expanded outreach to applicants.

The group will be moving from two meetings a week to one for the next few weeks. The Chamber and Ec. Dev. Alliance weekly meetings will continue as well.
 - **The Mid-Valley Community Outreach** met this week to review the Food Security and Farmworker Safety Project. The group will be expanding in membership to include additional POC representation.
 - RS joined SEDCOR’s Quarterly Board Meeting to share an overview of Oregon’s Reopening process with a deeper look at Phase 2 guidelines.

South Valley/Mid Coast Region – Sarah Means

- **The SVMC Economic Recovery Team** – includes representatives from the Employment Department, Business Oregon, local and regional economic development professionals, Workforce Investment Boards, ports, and federal delegation representatives. The Team meets regularly to share information, identify immediate needs and understand impacts. Impacts as a result of COVID-19 are impacting all industry sectors in the region.
- Identified needs/challenges/opportunities this past week include:
 - The ERT received an update from Business Oregon on the small business fund and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and from Sean McCormick regarding the State Disaster Recovery Plan. Many thanks to Sean for joining the call.
 - ERT members want to provide feedback on the Business Oregon funding that is coming out, particularly before Round 3 is issued. They believe the feedback is necessary so that the intent behind the funds can match what is actually happening on the ground.
 - Georgia-Pacific (GP) Toledo reopened as of May 28 after their week-long shut down.
 - Cascades West and University of Oregon (UO) provided an update on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) work that is being done and the resiliency component that has been incorporated. The groups are looking at doing a gap analysis, structural evaluation and make recommendations on the strategic resilience element of the CEDS.
 - RS continues to field a number of questions from businesses (primarily restaurants and childcare facilities) underscoring the financial challenges they face because of the guidelines. Unemployment claims and business liability are also significant concerns that continue to be articulated.

Southern & South Coast Regions – Alex Campbell

- **South Coast Umpqua Recovery Team:**
 - CCD Business Development Corp is applying for \$1.4M from USEDA to establish a new revolving loan fund for COVID-19-impacted businesses.
 - CCD is also collecting priority infrastructure projects; ERT group agreed to work on broadband project development together.
 - Oregon Health Authority (OHA) & Coos public health are doing outreach to test members of fishing fleet and processors. Concerns about lost wages is limiting number of volunteers for testing.
 - Bandon Chamber reported positive results from referring local businesses with hiring needs to Department of Human Services (DHS), Jobs Plus program.
 - Concern about outreach raised in ERT has led to Secretary of State Office including an item about available business assistance in upcoming June newsletter to all registered businesses.
- **Southern Oregon Recovery Team:**
 - Coos Curry Electric broadband project manager gave presentation on Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) up-coming reverse auction; about \$70M is available over 10 years to subsidize rural broadband provision in Jackson County.
 - Occupancy is bouncing back; about 55% of visitors are from California. Tourism/hospitality sector hoping travel guidance is relaxed/clarified for Phase 2.

- Oregon Employment Department (OED) reinvention could be a model for the country. A modern system with real-time visibility would be an asset to the state and helpful to employers as well.

Metro Region – Raihana Ansary

- **Metro Economic Response Team Meeting** – Metro Regional Solutions (RS) Team is partnering with Greater Portland, Inc. (GPI), to co-convene a Metro Economic Response Team. In addition to state agencies (Business Oregon, Oregon Employment Department, Bureau of Labor & Industry, Small Business Advocate, Oregon Housing & Community Services, and Travel Oregon), a number of partners in the Portland-metro region have been invited to participate including business associations, city and county economic development practitioners, community-based organizations, labor, members of the Governor’s Metro Regional Solutions Advisory Committee and workforce development organizations.
 - Update: Mark McMullen, the state’s economist presented the quarterly budget and revenue forecast to 94 known participants in the meeting. Jeff Rhoades, a Senior Policy Advisor with the Governor’s Office also presented on COVID-19 administrative rules and enforcement. Regular state agency updates and a regional economic forecast were also provided. Highlights from the state quarterly budget and revenue forecast included the following:
 - \$2.7B deficit in current biennium, a large change from pre-COVID outlook. A revenue gap of this size – unless the governor fills it with across-the-board cuts – will require legislative action. Possibly a special session late June.
 - A typical recession sees 5-10 percent job loss before recovery starts. Current recession does not look normal. Much more sudden drop, which is expected to persist more than a drop associated with past natural disasters. There will be some kind of immediate bounce associated with the loosening of restrictions.
 - The economic forecast is tied to the public health forecast. It’s not public health vs. the economy; the two things come together.
 - This forecast uses broad assumptions:
 - Restrictions continue to be lifted through this summer.
 - Public health risk is addressed (vaccine, treatment, herd immunity) at some point in 2021.
 - Once the public health risk is addressed, our economy can resume a more traditional recession trajectory, and between a third and half of jobs lost will return. However, despite that, around the beginning of the next biennium, recovery looks rocky.
 - Weak demand starts to reach industries largely unaffected now, like manufacturing and professional services.
 - A surge in infections could lead to a double-dip recession.
 - This recession will accelerate large structural changes to the economy already underway in retail and manufacturing sectors, which will suffer most long-term. While leisure and hospitality are seeing huge losses now, they should rebound well, and be one of the least-impacted sectors long-term.
 - Good news: for the first time ever, the state has a cushion in the form of reserves. Between the Education Stability Fund and the Rainy Day fund, Oregon is projected to have \$1.75 billion of cushion at the year’s end.
- **Venture Portland/Prosper Portland Listening Session with Restaurateurs:** Participated as a panelist during a listening session hosted by Venture Portland and Prosper Portland with 68

participants from the local restaurant and bar industry. Presented the Governor's Reopening Plan and restaurant industry-sector guidelines. Metro RS was followed by Multnomah County who provided an update on their reopening status. Among the restaurateurs / bar owners were Naomi Pomeroy of Beast and Expatriate and Ricky Gomez of Palomar in addition to others including the Independent Restaurant Alliance. Questions and concerns expressed included the following:

- An inability to make a profit with a 10 PM shut down requirement and the need to expand the curfew to at least midnight.
- The need for lease negotiation/payment flexibility.
- Commercial eviction moratorium extension.
- The likelihood that the majority of restaurants and bars will need to close even if allowed to reopen under limited capacity/guidelines. As a result, the urgent request for a restaurant stabilization fund to provide restaurateurs an ability to stay open until there is a reliable treatment or vaccine.
- The need for statutory changes to allow for "cocktails-to-go." The sale of alcoholic beverages is significant for restaurant/bar revenue under normal conditions. Having the ability to sell "cocktails- to-go" would be a helpful tool in making a profit.
- **Wilsonville Chamber of Commerce:** Participated as a panelist with Rob Campbell of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Jordan Vance, Economic Development Manager with the City of Wilsonville, and Willie Fisher at Clackamas Community College's Connections with Business and Industry (CBI). Presented the Governor's Reopening Plan. Questions posed were largely around phase two of which details were unknown at the time of the meeting.
- **Hispanic Chamber/Hacienda/Prosper Portland Listening Session:** Presented Governor's Reopening Plan to 30 participants (largely Latinx business owners) during a listening session hosted by the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Hacienda and Prosper Portland. Questions/comments raised included the following:
 - Liability concerns for business owners who are reopening.
 - A desire for a face covering policy template for business owners who would like to require their customers to wear face coverings.
 - Questions about whether OSHA may provide technical assistance to businesses in Spanish.

North Central Region – Nate Stice

- **North Central Oregon Recovery Team** – The Mid-Columbia Economic Development District and Region Regional Solutions stood up the bi-state Columbia Gorge/Mid-Columbia Bi-State Economic Resilience Team. The structure for the team was outlined in a 2019 report produced by [Mid-Columbia Economic Development District \(MCEDD\)](#), based on work Regional Solutions led efforts around fire recovery for the 2017 Eagle Creek Fire and 2018 Grass Fires. This emphasis of the team this week has been three-fold: 1) helping to connect state and regional efforts to protect farmworker and prepare for harvest; 2) coordinating on outdoor recreation; 3) communicating on phase 2.
- **Highlights:**
 - We hosted The Next Door, One Community Health, Oregon State University (OSU) extension, and a local producer at our weekly ERT meeting to discuss plans to protect farmworkers as harvest begins. Community partners have been working for several months to prepare to look after the health and safety of these critical workers in the face of COVID. There are many unanswered questions around housing supply and transportation. There is also a big concern about stigmatization of workers. The Next Door has launched a campaign to combat this stigma. Any thanks to the Oregon

Department of Agriculture, Oregon Housing and Community Services, and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board for their statewide work to help communities care for these critical workers.

- With leadership of Lynn Burditt, convened over 50 bi-state recreation partners in what is developing into a “recreation insights” forum that may have long-term value. Many sites along in the Gorge and further east and south have reopened. Providers are still concerned about keeping places safe especially in the face of limited staff capacity and in “high-touch” areas. One particular area that RS will be digging into is Columbia River Cruise lines.
- **Process Highlight** – In designing the recreations insights forum, we stole a model from the workforce world, in which employers sit at the table and partners sit around the outside to listen and think about how they can help. We put the decision makers (land managers and counties) at the center of the table and invited supporting actors (stewardships group, etc.) to sit around the virtual “table” to listen and think about how the support.
- **Next week:**
 1. Communicating on Phase 2;
 2. Implementation on farmworker housing;
 3. Pushing forward ongoing projects.

Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **Disaster Declarations** – Crook and Jefferson County were hit by sever windstorms Saturday, May 30th. The storm knocked over trees and power lines, and damaged crops. RS is working with Oregon Emergency Management (OEM) and Senator Merkley’s office on whether a wind event qualifies as a natural disaster under federal aid programs. If so, counties will make disaster declarations and forward to OEM.
- **Drought** – Jefferson County made a drought declaration on June 3rd. Water levels in Wickiup reservoir are the lowest on record. Agricultural producers in Jefferson County are getting only a fraction of the water they would get otherwise; irrigation water deliveries may end in early July. The Deschutes Basin Board of Control is asking Deschutes County Commission to issue a drought declaration.
- **Central Oregon Economic Response Team** – Central Oregon Regional Solutions (RS) Team along with county commissioners, city leaders, chambers, economic and workforce development, downtown organizations, local legislators, federal congressional delegation representatives and the Regional Solutions Advisory Committee have been meeting weekly since mid-March.
 - Update: RS convened the team to seek feedback on the Phase 1 restaurant guidance; what two or three changes could make the biggest impact for this sector? One request was to eliminate the mask requirement for kitchen staff. Due to public health concerns, this requirement remains in the Phase 2 guidance. RS is working with Deschutes County to prioritize delivery of face shields for restaurant kitchen staff. The team also discussed Business Oregon funding opportunities as well as, the latest employment data and efforts to reduce the UI backlog.

South Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **South Central Oregon Response Team** – South Central Regional Solutions (RS) Team along with county commissioners, city leaders, chambers, economic and workforce development,

downtown organizations, local legislators, federal congressional delegation representatives and the Regional Solutions Advisory Committee have been meeting weekly since mid-March.

- *Update:* RS convened this meeting to share information about the state agency coordinated enforcement and to hear more about the state's economic projection. Many thanks to Jeff Rhoades and Josh Lehner for joining. Jeff walked the group through the coordinated state agency enforcement response on the COVID-19 Executive Orders and protocols. Jeff emphasized where people are making their best efforts, the first response will always be to try to reach out and educate the business on the protocols. However, if this doesn't work, various state agencies have additional tools available. Jeff also directed complaints to Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) who is triaging and forwarding to the appropriate agencies.

[Greater Eastern](#) & [Northeast Regions](#) – Courtney Warner Crowell

- **Eastern Oregon Regional Economic Recovery Team** – This week the Eastern Oregon Regional Economic Recovery Team met and RS provided an overview of Phase 2 and answered questions for the group about some of the new guidance. Overall, most people are pleased with the additions in Phase 2 and all of the counties are hoping to be able to move into Phase 2 this weekend. Additionally, Martin Campos-Davis with the Oregon Human Development Corporation provided an overview of the funding that his organization received to help with farmworker housing in the COVID response. RS also provided an overview of the \$30 million package that the Governor announced last week.
- **Umatilla Flooding Housing Recovery** – RS convened the Umatilla Housing Disaster Task Force this week and we went through all the progress that has been made over the past few months and the plans moving forward. It is clear that the community is interested in repurposing the money to partner with a developer to create an 80 unit affordable housing project that would be completed within a year. This would allow them to spend the money by the end of the biennium and would fill a huge need in the community. The city is working on developing their plan to send to Legislative Finance Office (LFO), which should be complete soon. Additionally, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) presented their plan to LFO for using \$1 million of the funding to redevelop the Lucky 7 manufactured housing park. This park would create 18 new manufactured housing slots for both tribal and non-tribal members on the reservation.