



RS EXCHANGE

REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Weekly Report

Wednesday, August 12, 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** – *Background* – 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* – Regional Solutions meets weekly with economic developers, chambers of commerce and downtown associations, destination management organizations, workforce partners, and ports to better understand the challenges they are facing as they respond to business needs.
 - Regional Solutions has been working with economic development professionals on the North Coast to better understand the impacts of COVID on our region's events economy. The events economy is diverse, including public venues, private and not-for-profit event spaces, community centers, and meeting halls; convention centers and fairgrounds; nonprofit organization fundraisers, community events and festivals. Many of these events are cornerstones of the north coast economy, attracting visitors and visitor spending, expanding cultural opportunities for both visitors and residents, and building community. The multiplier effect for local businesses, including restaurants, retail, and hotel and lodging providers is significant, and while visitors are beginning to return to the north coast, it is evident that this critical tourism driver will be slow to recover.
 - This week, the North Coast Economic Recovery Team was joined by Russ Vandenberg, General Manager for the Seaside Convention Center. Thanks to Russ for sharing their Economic Impact Calculator and providing information about the region's events economy and the Convention Center's direct spending and secondary economic impacts.
- **Salmonberry Trail** – *Background* – Envisioned along a former rail alignment from Banks to Tillamook, the Salmonberry Trail will provide a complete coastal trail system, connecting diverse users from the Portland Metro area to the north Oregon coast. The Salmonberry Trail Concept Plan was completed June 2015 outlining the concept of a mixed-use non-motorized trail along the former Port of Tillamook Bay Railroad corridor. The 84-mile long trail will link the urban

populations of the Willamette Valley through the wooded Coast Range to the beaches of Tillamook County.

- Update – The Concept Plan considers the Trail in four segments – Coastal, Valley, River, and Canyon. Coastal and Valley segment master planning is complete and partners are working to identify catalyst projects and implementation opportunities. The River and Canyon segment planning project is fully funded and currently in progress.
 - **Salmonberry Trail River and Canyon Segments Plan Review Committee** – Regional Solutions and Oregon Department of Forestry have co-convened a diverse group of individuals to inform the next steps of the Salmonberry Trail’s development. Committee members met for the first time this week for introductions and orientation. Oregon State Parks and Department of Forestry provided an overview of the Salmonberry Trail, its history, and planning updates. The committee will meet again in the coming weeks to review a summary of the base conditions for the river and canyon segments.
 - **Salmonberry Trail – Valley Segment** – The Metro Regional Solutions Team hosted Salmonberry Trail partners and agencies to discuss master planning and implementation for the Valley Segment of the Salmonberry Trail, located in Washington County. Strategic alignment of bi-regional Regional Solutions and state agency engagement will further advance this regionally significant trail project. For additional updates, see the Metro RST entry below.

Mid-Valley Region – Jody Christensen

- **Marion County Public Health and People of Color (POC) Leaders Meeting** – In partnership Marion County Commissioner Kevin Cameron, RS convenes the weekly meeting.
 - This week, the health department director gave an overview of the draft Marion County Public Health Testing Strategy. Several areas were highlighted where the county is seeking input for the POC leaders. The group will provide feedback over the next few days and will continue to work on this “living” document.
- **Mid-Valley Community Outreach Alliance**, a Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) group meeting weekly, includes representatives from Pineros Y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN), Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas (MLP), Latino Business Alliance (LBA), Oregon Human Development Corporation (OHDC), Oregon Employment Office – Woodburn, Advanced Economic Solutions, Farmworker Housing Development Corp (FHDC), Unidos Bridging Community, Western Oregon University (WOU) Multicultural Center, Mano a Mano – Salem, Izo Marketing, City of Independence - Community Engagement, Portland General Electric (PGE), Oregon Childhood Development Coalition (OCDC), Oregon Education Association, the Higher Education Coordinating Committee (HECC), Northwest Human Services, AHIVYOY!, Consulado de Mexico en Portland, Micronesian Islander Community OREGON and Capaces Leadership. Strategic Economic Development Corp (SEDCOR), Willamette Workforce Partnership (WWP), the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments (MWVCOG), Business Oregon, and the Chemeketa Small Business Development Center join the meetings as well.
 - This week’s discussion focused on the region’s key industry sectors and economic drivers. RS was seeking recommendations for BIPOC business owners and leaders who could engage with the Equity in Recovery strategy. RS will be following up on the recommendations.

South Valley/Mid Coast Region – Sarah Means

- **The South Valley/Mid Coast Economic Recovery Team (SVMC ERT)**– 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. For the last several months, the ERT has met a minimum of weekly. Beginning in July, the meetings have been scheduled for every other week.
 - This week, the group learned about the Equity in Response and Recovery Framework, discussed the status of the ERT moving forward and how to continue to engage as a region with statewide conversations and efforts. ERT members have identified significant value in the meetings and have asked that the group continue meeting on a monthly basis. RS will continue to convene this regional group moving forward with the opportunity to collaborate more closely with the Cascades West Economic Development District (EDD) in doing so.
- Identified needs/challenges/opportunities this past week include:
 - Childcare needs are of significant concern for parent and employers. RS is engaging with groups trying to address the issue throughout the region.
 - Communities are still struggling to find companies that meet the criteria for the business assistance funding. The Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL)/Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) restrictions are causing significant concerns and delaying distribution of funds for many SVMC communities.
 - There are questions related to the Transient Room Tax sunset and the impacts this revenue (or lack thereof) has on many of the SVMC communities.

Southern & South Coast Regions – Alex Campbell

- **South Coast Umpqua Region:**
 - **South Coast Umpqua Economic Recovery Team** – Reviewed childcare availability data and school reopening metrics.
- **Southern Oregon Region:**
 - **Southern Oregon Recovery Team:**
 - Extensive discussions around possibilities for supporting virtual learners through community-based organizations. Grants Pass School District estimates 800-1200 of their students do not have internet access.
 - Recovery planning team shared the idea of a mini-conference or series of webinars on applied creativity in organizational responses to the pandemic— and possible regional strategies to support innovation/creativity. Bill Thorndike suggested exploring possible connections to Oregon Business Council “recovery for shared prosperity” work.
 - Grants Pass schools are developing a “wish list” of possible items for donation to circulate to local businesses.
 - Southern Oregon University faculty have agreed to join classified staff furlough.
 - **Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Enforcement** – A local market was contacted by OSHA regarding several complaints about lack of face coverings. The

issue was dramatized and elevated by several discussions on local talk radio. Oregon OSHA leadership had several phone calls with a Jackson County Commissioner and was able to reassure him that they remain in education first mode.

Metro Region – Raihana Ansary

- **Metro Economic Response Team – Background** – Metro Regional Solutions (RS) is partnering with Greater Portland, Inc. (GPI), to co-convene a Metro Economic Response Team in order to share information and resources related to COVID-19. 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 and elected leaders, community-based organizations, labor, members of the Governor’s Metro Regional Solutions Advisory Committee and workforce development organizations.
 - Update – The group met and the agenda was focused on reopening childcare facilities/programs, K-12 and post-secondary schools. We had an impressive lineup of panelists including Superintendent Don Grotting of the Beaverton School District (BSD) and Superintendent Matt Utterback of the North Clackamas School District (NCSD). Portland Public Schools (PPS) Superintendent Guadalupe Guerrero was unable to join but sent his chief of staff, Stephanie Soden-Back to provide an update on his behalf. Leadership from Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington County Public Health Departments also joined. Schools districts and county public health provided updates on their reopening plans, status update on their health metrics and shared ways in which they are coordinating with one another. At this time, all three public school districts are planning for comprehensive distance learning through at least the early part of November 2020 at which time they will review health and safety metrics and reassess. We were also joined by Clackamas Community College (CCC) President Tim Cook and Mount Hood Community College (MHCC) President Lisa Skari. Portland Community College (PCC) President Mark Mitsui was unavailable but sent Jessica Johnson, PCC’s COVID-19 Reopening Project Lead/Internal Auditor on his behalf. All three community colleges plan to offer remote learning Fall term with the exception of a few classes that will be held on-site where hands on learning is required. These on-site classes will adhere to physical distancing and face covering guidelines. Finally, many thanks to Oregon Department of Education (ODE) Director Colt Gill and Early Learning Division (ELD) Childcare Director, Amy Joyce for providing updates on reopening metrics for K-12 and work that is being done to update childcare and early childhood education guidance. Also, many thanks to Lindsey Capps, Governor’s Chief Education Officer and Alyssa Chatterjee, Governor’s Deputy Education Policy Advisor for joining the discussion. Updates to K-12 guidance includes:
 - Companion guidance for students in special populations (those with disabilities, ESL students, etc.)
 - Outbreak protocols
 - New metrics around safety protocols for in-person instruction
 - Comprehensive distance learning requirements, including for those without internet access
 - Dual credit instruction, where students earn both high school and college credit

Updated childcare and early childhood education guidance will be released August 14 and go into effect on September 1. Providers may implement guidance sooner, provided

they implement all guidance at once. Emergency childcare is still in effect. Licensed providers will still need to apply and be approved to provide emergency childcare. Anticipated changes to childcare and early childhood education guidance includes (subject to change):

- Returning to normal licensed group size, according to provider type (formerly limited to groups of 10)
 - Face coverings required for all childcare staff and children kindergarten and up.
- **Salmonberry Trail – Background – [The Salmonberry Trail](#)** is a rail-trail project that seeks to enhance physical connections between communities with a new 86-mile mixed-use, non-motorized path. The railway spans Washington and Tillamook Counties, between the town of Banks through the Tillamook State Forest and private landowners' properties, connecting to the Port of Tillamook Bay. The rail line encompasses a large number of jurisdictions, owners and uses, each with strong interests in revitalizing the path. The trail will strengthen social and cultural relationships among rural, suburban and urban residents, provide world-class outdoor recreation opportunities, and help residents forge new ties to our past and future. The project has long been on the North Coast Regional Solutions (RS) Team priority project list and is now also on the Metro RS priority project list as the Valley Segment of the trail (about 25 miles) is in Washington County.
 - Update – Metro RS met with Jon-Paul Bowles, Interim Executive Director at the Salmonberry Trail Foundation and Washington County Transportation Planner Dyami Valentine for an overview of the project and to discuss potential state technical and financial resources that may be available for the Valley Segment of the Salmonberry Trail, which is in Washington County. Several state agencies were present and will likely be involved (if they aren't already), including the Department of Land Conservation & Development (DLCD), Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Department of State Lands (DSL), Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW), Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Since the project is of regional significance, meets multiple Metro RS priorities including inclusive economic development and infrastructure and involves multiple state agencies it will now be a Metro RS priority project in addition to a North Coast RS priority project. Metro's counterpart, Jennifer Purcell for the North Coast RS team and I will coordinate on this exciting bi-region project. The Metro RS project team will help with the 25-mile Valley Segment of the Trail, which as mentioned earlier is in Washington County. The North Coast RS project team will work on the other three segments of the trail that fall within their region. Many thanks to North Coast RS Coordinator, Jennifer Purcell, for joining our initial Metro RS meeting with Salmonberry Trail project team members. In addition, many thanks to Anne Debbaut, DLCD representative on Metro RS team for helping to pull the first meeting together. Metro RS will participate in Salmonberry Trail Intergovernmental Agency (STIA) as an ex-officio member. The next STIA meeting is scheduled for November 2020. Meantime, Metro RS team members will review Valley Segment Master Plan for the Salmonberry Trail and develop a list of action items i.e. permitting/regulatory items that would be required by their respective state agencies for implementation of the Master Plan.
 - **Willamette Falls Legacy Project – Background** – Project to provide public access to Willamette Falls via a public river walk for the first time in more than 100 years and to spur redevelopment of the 23-acre former Blue Heron Paper Company site. The project is guided by four core values: public access, economic redevelopment, healthy habitat and historic and cultural interpretation.
 - Update – Metro RS met with Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde representatives about potential financial resources that may help with their demolition of the former

Blue Heron Mill Site. Thank you, Karen Homolac of Business Oregon, for providing an overview of the different brownfield funding resources available including through Business Oregon and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Metro RS will have a follow-up meeting with the Grand Ronde in October after they finalize their master plan for the former Blue Heron Mill site. The Master Plan will inform eligible funding sources and strategies.

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 [MCEDD](#), based on work Regional Solutions led efforts around fire recovery for the 2017 Eagle Creek Fire and 2018 Grass Fires.
 - The emphasis of the team this week has been three-fold: 1) understanding the current economic situation in the region; 2) implementing the second round of continuity training; 3) coordinating on childcare efforts.
- Highlights:
 - Christa Rude of the Four River Early Learning Hub and Nancey Patten for Child Care Resource and referral led a conversation with the ERT to help the group think about ways it can help on the childcare front. The group discussed potential opportunities and concerns for meeting the demand and increasing the number of slots for childcare, including rethinking operations for family child care providers who want to stay in business, mobilizing displaced workers to provide care or supporting unemployed parents in becoming certified providers (which would require training, licensing and potential incentives to address start up barriers), finding appropriate and affordable space for home-based care providers to expand services to a childcare center model with additional capacity (there are a number of churches open to hosting childcare in their spaces), working with employers to sponsor slots in childcare for employees to ensure employees have access to quality care and providers receive reasonable wages, supporting groups who would like to set up alternatives for their children on days they will not be in school (such as tutoring programs, clubs, etc.), and working with schools to discuss what resources they might have to engage in the topic (ex. space, programming, professional development, etc.).
 - At last Friday's ERT meeting, Kale Donnelly (Oregon Employment Department) reported that June employment data has been released (monthly report statewide [link](#), Columbia Gorge [link](#)). Employment in the north central region is down about 13% from pre-COVID employment. There have been \$3.6 billion in benefit payouts as of August 1. You can see initial claims data for the Columbia Gorge [here](#). Kale also shared survey data from the [Household Pulse Survey Interactive Tool](#).

Greater Eastern & Northeast Regions – Courtney Warner Crowell

- **Umatilla Flooding Recovery Housing** – This week the Legislature approved \$4.5 million that was allocated for Umatilla County housing recovery after the devastating flooding in February to be reallocated and used to develop affordable housing in Pendleton. Originally, the funding was designated for rapid response and manufactured housing replacement, but after working with community stakeholders, an affordable housing development project emerged. Luckily, this project will now be able to move forward and will create over 80 new affordable housing units in Umatilla County and help assist the flood-impacted individuals.