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 state, federal, regional, and local economic and workforce development partners. Convened by Regional Solutions, the team is sharing information about impacts and needs, resources and supports, and beginning to shift to a recovery planning framework.

  *Update* – Congresswoman Bonamici joined the North Coast Team meeting to provide updates on Congress’ work on the next stimulus package, with a focus on ensuring businesses are able to be ready for when the crisis ends. The Congresswoman engaged these local economic and workforce development partners to garner input regarding needs and priorities. North Coast Economic Recovery Team members discussed hospital and health care, small business, and infrastructure needs.

  - Hospitals are providing critical services to our rural communities, balancing the loss of revenues associated with canceled elective procedures and preventative care visits.
  - Ports are challenged by lost revenue associated with disruptions to commercial and recreational fishing, air travel, and cruise ship activity, as well as lease forgiveness requests from impacted tenants. Our regional small ports are balancing these hardships while continuing to provide economic development infrastructure to ensure our regional recovery.
  - Small business development centers and chambers of commerce, along with local SBA lenders, are supporting small businesses, sharing information about the Economic Impact Disaster Loans (EIDL) and Payroll Protection Program (PPP) programs, awaiting guidance, and standing up processes and procedures. Business owners are overwhelmed with uncertainties and lack of communication.

Regional Solutions meets weekly with economic developers, chambers of commerce and downtown associations, destination marketing organizations, workforce partners, and ports to better understand the challenges they are facing as they respond to business needs.

  - Business and community morale is waning and there is a growing lack of hope and trust.
Increasing frustration with the PPP process, limited access and funding. A limited number of financial institutions are SBA certified and able to provide SBA lending in our rural communities. This is further restricted by limited lending capacity; with banks already fully committed, customers are forced to establish relationships with other financial institutions, further disadvantaging these business owners.

- **Clamming season** – Local officials have been asking the state to close clamming season. Following the Governor’s “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order, Clatsop and Tillamook counties were overwhelmed by an influx of spring break tourists. Subsequently, local officials passed resolutions restricting tourism and State Parks closed campgrounds and day use areas. While this seems to have tempered tourism activities, clamming season, coupled with low tides and good weather, have brought new pressures on north coast communities. With Washington State closed to fishing and shellfishing statewide, northwest Oregon’s proximity provides an enticement to out-of-state commercial and recreational clam diggers.

Oregon’s Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Parks and Recreation (OPRD), and State Police (OSP) have been monitoring the situation, assessing adherence with social distancing requirements. Over the weekend, there were reports of people not respecting beach access closures; and day trippers have put additional pressure on limited local resources, including public restrooms (of which there are a limited number available), food and other grocery items. North coast communities continue to request that beaches be closed to clamming until COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

- **Transient Lodging Tax** – Several north coast communities are providing transient lodging tax (TLT) relief to local tourism-related businesses. Tillamook County and the City of Rockaway Beach have approved an extension for first quarter TLT payments, now due July 31, also suspending late fees and penalties. The City of Seaside recently approved a waiver of first quarter TLT payments, providing direct tax relief to local lodging providers. The City of Manzanita delivered direct small business relief payments and the City of Seaside is developing a grant program.

**Mid-Valley Region** – Jody Christensen

- **Mid-Valley Economic Recovery Team** includes representatives from the Employment Department, Small Business Development Center, the Workforce Investment Board, utilizes, Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, county commissioners, the Oregon Community Foundation, early learning hubs, city and tribal governments, chambers, state and regional economic development, local emergency managers, destination marketing organizations, Chemeketa Community College, and federal delegation representatives. The team meets twice weekly to coordinate and communicate recovery efforts in the region.

Updates includes:
- Senator Jeff Merkley joined the call at the beginning of the week to provide federal updates. Several team members shared concerns about the Pay Protection Program (PPP) and lender issues. More lenders need to able to process the applications. He did mention that there would be more funding added to PPP.
- Congressman Kurt Schrader participated in the second call of the week. He stated that it is important to start planning for the “rewind” of the restrictions and to determine what it will take to reopen businesses.
Marion County has launched a grant program in partnership with Willamette Workforce Partnership. The grants are for businesses with 5 or less employees and could be up to $5000. In the first hour of the opening, they had received over 700 applications.

It was reported that some employers want to bring employees back, but are finding that some want to stay on unemployment. They are making more on UI then in previous wages.

There is a general anxiousness around the uncertainty of the length the COVID-19 response and concerns of what will be involved in re-opening businesses and public spaces.

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 has met six times in an effort to share information, identify immediate needs and understand impacts. The most immediate impacts continue to be on the region’s retail and hospitality sectors although all sectors, including manufacturing are being impacted.

Identified needs/challenges include:
  - Unemployment Insurance coverage – specifically for those that are self-employed.
  - Access to unemployment insurance coverage – many haven’t been able to apply for benefits.
  - Immediate access to flexible capital – many organizations are standing up funds.
  - Additional guidance on CARES Act as it’s available – there have been many questions on the Coronavirus Relief Fund.
  - Assistance for businesses to complete applications (SBA.)
  - Layoff Aversion Funds are extremely popular and need to be recapitalized.
  - Exploration of TLT and Urban Renewal funds to help where there are gaps.
  - Concern over individuals actually observing EO to stay home. Particular concerns are being voiced in the coastal communities, but it did come up elsewhere in the region this past weekend.
  - Translation of information so that all populations are informed of requirements, guidance, opportunities, and other important information. This is becoming critically urgent with regard to housing.

Best practices include:
  - County based webinars/conference calls with local partner organizations to do information sharing and bring in subject matter experts on relevant topics. Conveners range from SBDC’s, County Economic Development staff, or City staff.
  - WIB’s are partnering with local jurisdictions to leverage additional funding for Layoff Aversion efforts. Lane Workforce Partnership and Lane County just announced their partnership to provide additional funds to the Layoff Aversion program.
  - Cities and Counties are partnering with DevNW/CLW or other financial institutions to provide bridge loans.

Southern & South Coast Regions – Alex Campbell

- **South Coast Umpqua Recovery Team:**
  - Lots of concern regarding financial condition of hospitals, particularly on the south coast.
  - Local governments still bidding construction projects.
Re-scheduling meeting at legislators requests to remove conflict with OHA legislative meeting.

Key Bank may still be accepting non-members seeking PPP forgivable loans

Oregon Employment Department reported lowest call volumes to UI lines are Tue.-Fri., 9-11 AM.

**Southern Oregon Recovery Team:**
- A lot of discussion of value to adjust Work Share program to allow smaller companies to work with the program.
- Some commercial property fire sales may be beginning. Appraisal/valuation will be a challenge.
- Will recovery provide an opportunity to catch up on housing deficit?
- City of Grants Pass has established small business grant fund, up to $3K per business.
- Fuel reduction/prescribed fire crews are struggling with both finding Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and figuring out ways to maintain social distance (particularly in transport). Could be a MAJOR issue for fire season.

**Metro Region – Raihna Ansary**

**Metro Economic Response Team:** *Background* – The Governor’s Metro Regional Solutions 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* – The Team had its third meeting and received partner updates from Clackamas County Commissioner Martha Schrader, Multnomah County Commissioner Lori Stegmann’s Chief of Staff, Rebecca Stavenjord (Commissioner Stegmann had a conflicting Commission meeting) and Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington. At this time, Clackamas County and Washington County are considering establishing small business relief funds, but they may not have the funding to do so. All three counties continue to provide public health/social services to vulnerable populations and are serving as a centralized hub for information on COVID-19 including of resources that are available.

We also received partner updates from a sampling of local economic development practitioners from throughout the region. The cities of Beaverton, Hillsboro, and Portland highlighted their respective small business relief programs. They all shared that demand for their programs far exceeded the funds available. Some of them will be reopening a second rounds of grants and or loans.

Finally, a sampling of community-based organizations including the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), Coalition of Communities of Color, Latino Network, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) and the Urban League shared the challenges facing their communities and made recommendations in response. A number of them strongly recommended the urgent need for the Oregon Employment Department (OED) to collect demographic data on race, ethnicity, gender, etc. to ensure an equitable response to the COVID-19 crisis. Their feedback was elevated to the Governor’s Workforce and Labor Policy Advisor, Christian Gaston. As a result, OED is working to compile and disaggregate demographic data for
the first time. Other feedback included the need to establish a worker relief fund for individuals who are ineligible for unemployment insurance. While an appreciation for the residential and commercial eviction moratoriums were also expressed, there is concern that back rent will ultimately come due and be difficult for individuals and businesses to pay. A request to provide some rent assistance/relief as a part of these moratoriums was made.

- **Oregon Museum of Science & Industry (OMSI):** *Background* – OMSI’s campus includes over 11 acres of undeveloped acres and over a quarter-mile of river frontage (one of the largest remaining riverfront parcels in Portland’s central city). The total project is estimated to cost about $70 million at full build out.

  *Update* – A master planning process is underway for the redevelopment of OMSI’s campus. There are several Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) facilities within the redevelopment area and OMSI has expressed interest in purchasing at least one. They would also like to better understand ODOT’s plans for the Marquam Bridge so they can redevelop around it. The Marquam Bridge has been seismically retrofitted, however, and ODOT does not currently have funding in place for upgrades to the viaduct that passes over OMSI’s property. If ODOT were to rebuild the viaduct in the future, the alignment would be shifted east and the current viaduct would be removed. Vanessa Vissar, Metro RS team member and ODOT representative, has been doing an excellent job coordinating between OMSI and ODOT. She will consult with ODOT Region 1 Leadership to identify ODOT’s facility needs and continue to collaborate with OMSI to identify a path forward.

Also, thanks to Dan Hafley and Rebecca Wells-Albers at the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for providing cost estimates to OMSI for potential DEQ oversight of the project. DEQ oversight of the project would include coordination meetings to discuss previous environmental site investigations, data gaps, and proposed redevelopment scenarios as well as the development of a consent order and scope of work. DEQ and Metro RS will wait to hear back from OMSI to see if/when they would like to proceed with DEQ oversight. Metro RS will continue to coordinate state agency work.

**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](https://www.mcedd.org/). This emphasis of the team this week has been two-fold: 1) supporting PPE efforts led by Business Oregon; 2) getting information to businesses and employees on federal aid. The chambers, ports, and Small Business Development Center are collaborating on trainings for businesses and have held six webinars over the last two weeks. Chambers and Ports are pushing information and helping to push information; 3) launching a core team to start to think about phases of this event with an eye to recovery.

**PPE Story:** North Central Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Convener, Maui Meyer, after caring for his own employees, helped to launch a grassroots efforts to source PPE: [hmb50.org](https://hmb50.org). He also pulled in production from another advisory committee member, Nicole Bassett, at Renewal Workshop: [https://renewalworkshop.com/](https://renewalworkshop.com/). Their current goal is 1000 gowns a week, and with some increase production capacity, they hope to reach 2000. Maui and friends are engaged with Business Oregon and were connected to OEM through Business Oregon, and the work of Michael Held, the Regional Development Officer on the Governor’s team in the Gorge.
Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **Central Oregon Recovery Team:** The team was fortunate to be joined by Senators Wyden and Merkley who provided overviews of the CARES Act. The bill includes programs to replace wages by keeping workers attached to their employers as an alternative to traditional unemployment. Additionally traditional unemployment insurance has been increase by $600 /week for four months. This includes gig workers, self-employed, independent contractors, etc… (Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program). The Oregon Employment Department is still working on standing this program up. The senators also stressed that there are resources for rural areas and communities of color. Some funds have been appropriated for rural broadband projects. There was also discussion about the need for more testing.
  - The team also heard an update on unemployment numbers. Top sectors for claims are: food services, healthcare/social assistance, manufacturing, construction (Crook and Jefferson County hit proportionally harder than Deschutes), and retail trade.

- **PPE:** We are working with Bend Outdoor Worx to identify outdoor recreation equipment manufacturers who can make PPE. Focus is on masks right now and companies with sewing capacity. One Bend based company, Blackstrap, will be fulfilling large orders for the State of Oregon and St. Charles.

- Deschutes County Commission banned vacation rentals under 30 days late last week; this week the commission added a $1000 penalty for violators.

South Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **South Central Oregon Recovery Team:** The team heard about the latest unemployment numbers for the region. Key impacted sectors are restaurants, hotels, healthcare/social assistance, retail trade and construction. The team also heard an update from Discover Klamath; survey data shows most people are planning to travel in the fall, not the summer, as there is a lack of confidence that COVID-19 issues will be resolved in time for summer travel season. There were also updates from higher education institutions in the region; Oregon Tech and Klamath Community College (KCC). Both have moved their learning online. KCC is adding workforce training programs in anticipation of a growing need once restrictions are lifted. Oregon Tech has seen some decline in enrollment. Both are reviewing the CARES Act for assistance.

Greater Eastern & Northeast Regions – Courtney Warner Crowell

- **Eastern Oregon Regional Economic Recovery Team:** The Eastern Oregon Regional Economic Recovery Team continues to meet weekly to discuss what is happening across the region and share resources. This week Senator Merkley joined our meeting to talk about the issues we are seeing as the CARES Act is rolled out, particularly with the Paycheck Protection Program. We have also had a small subcommittee of the RERT meet over the past week to come up with key resources for communities and businesses as they begin to navigate the federal CARES act and the unemployment insurance process (See links below). Our group is trying to provide as much real time information as possible even though there is new information coming out almost daily. The Eastern Oregon RERT is also working on creating a small subcommittee that will begin to discuss economic recovery planning efforts across the region and how we can partner together.
  - **Key Messages for Small Businesses and Individuals**
  - **Federal Resources for Small Businesses**
Umatilla Flooding Disaster Housing Taskforce: This week, FEMA issued a disaster declaration for Umatilla County both for public assistance and individual assistance. This is great news for the homeowners that were affected in this disaster. This means that individuals whose homes were damaged in the flooding will receive direct assistance from FEMA. Our housing taskforce is now working with FEMA as they begin their process in working directly with homeowners affected. We also continue to work with the local community on their planning efforts for the money allocated by the emergency board in March.