



RS EXCHANGE

REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Weekly Report

Wednesday, May 27, 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, Sean McCormick, the State's COVID Disaster Recovery Coordinator, introduced himself to the North Coast Regional Economic Recovery Team. Recovery Team members learned about activation of Oregon's Disaster Recovery Plan, the state's recovery functions, and what role Regional Economic Recovery Teams might play in informing the state's economic recovery. Sean also shared information about Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s Public Assistance reimbursements for qualifying COVID-related expenses. To inform our recovery planning, the team also heard from Oregon Employment Department, Business Oregon, and the Columbia Pacific Economic Development District (Col-Pac).
 - Erik Knoder, Regional Economist with Oregon Employment Department, provided a NW Oregon Economic Update. This week's jobs and unemployment report reveals unprecedented job losses. Preliminary estimates show Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook County unemployment rates at 24.4%, 15.3%, and 18.4% respectively. Significant job losses in Leisure and Hospitality are driving unemployment on the north coast, most notably in Accommodations and Food Services.
 - Melanie Olson, Business Oregon's Regional Development Officer, provided updates on a several funding opportunities and reported on the state's Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) supply connector.
 - Mary McArthur, Col-Pac's Executive Director, facilitated a discussion regarding the region's economic recovery priorities for capacity and technical assistance.
 - 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.

- Communities shared that Memorial Day weekend visitation was generally manageable; however, businesses and communities consistently reported that visitors are not adhering to physical distancing nor wearing face coverings. Regional Solutions is receiving requests for shared messaging, particularly as the state relaxes travel restrictions.
- Businesses continue to be slow to reopen, particularly restaurants. Many restaurants are staying with a takeout or delivery model, while others are waiting to assess how the reopening process unfolds. Regional Solutions is hearing the costs associated with reopening restaurants with limited seating requirements are unsustainable, particularly for very small establishments. Local small business and economic development partners, and chambers of commerce, are working with local businesses to encourage creativity and adaptation and providing business supports, such as driving online traffic and social media campaigns.
- **Tillamook gateway property** – Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) completed a traffic improvement project through the heart of downtown Tillamook at the intersection of US101 and OR6. Construction was substantially complete in the Fall of 2018. The North Coast Regional Solutions Team was involved with a number of issues important to the community and the overall success of the project, including the disposition of the former Shell gas station property at the north end of the US101 couplet. Regional Solutions provided agency coordination, ensuring technical assistance and resources were prioritized, collaborative, and efficient in corresponding to the needs of the project and the community.
 - Update – The vacant former Shell station property, located at the gateway to downtown Tillamook, remains in ODOT ownership following completion of the transportation project. In support of the City’s vision, ODOT is issuing the city a landscaping permit to allow for aesthetic improvements to the site. The site received a Conditional No Further Action (NFA) report from Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in April 2019, ODOT coordinated removal of all structures at the site, and the City rezoned the parcel from Central Commercial (CC) to Parks (P) in August 2019. The proposed landscaping plan is consistent with DEQ’s NFA, complimentary to the nearby Hoquarton Slough trail and park, and provides a welcoming entry to the city’s downtown main street district.

Mid-Valley Region – Jody Christensen

- **The Mid-Valley Economic Recovery Team** (M-V 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:
 - Sean McCormick, Chief Financial Officer, Legislative Coordinator State Disaster Recovery Coordinator (DR-4499), Oregon Military Department, shared the statewide response and recovery work including economic recovery planning. Sean asked the group to keep him informed on the primary impacts in the region and what the region needs from

state level. What kind of support to restart the economy? What are key factors in success?

The information provided included:

- First time the full recovery plan has been activated. Six of seven recovery functions have been activated and lead by appropriate state agencies.
- May 14th – first statewide partner call resulted in great information sharing
- Needs assessments on recovery functions taking place by state agencies
- Weekly reports are being developed
- Oregon’s participating in the FEMA Region 10 economic recovery task force
- Jeff Rhoades, Governor’s Policy COVID-19 Response: Administrative Rules, Enforcement Coordination (Policy Areas: OLCC, Gaming, & Opioid Epidemic), discussed the state agency enforcement for COVID sector guidance.
- **Community Outreach** – RS participated in several strategic planning meetings including:
 - The Marion County Farm Bureau and Public Health discussion,
 - Latinx Community Outreach meeting,
 - Marion/Polk Early Learning Hub’s conversation on migrant child care, and
 - Indy Commons’ business webinar on Phase 1 guidelines.
- **ODOT/Polk County Project Update** – ODOT met with Polk County to give a detailed update on several projects including OR51@Hwy22, Doaks Ferry Rd-Riggs Ave, and OR99@Bethel Road.

[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.
- **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.
 - Childcare and restaurants can’t make operations profitable with the current restrictions. Childcare was problematic prior to the pandemic, and that situation has only been exacerbated. Lincoln County is particularly feeling the challenge with childcare.
 - Liability concerns continue to be a top question from businesses as they plan for (or do) reopen.
 - The Workforce Investment Board’s have received emergency grant funds. They are working on identifying the needs in the community. In Lane County, they are working with public health on the unhoused populations and contact tracing.
 - Cascades West is planning for the Technical Assistance (TA) grant funding from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). This will be for COVID response and resiliency. RS is playing a role in this work at the request of the Council of Governments (COG).
 - Lincoln County has the highest unemployment rate in the state at 26.2%.

- Chinook Winds opened last week and the reopening is generally going well. Mobile queuing has helped significantly to keep the facility within capacity limits. Masks have been the most challenging factor to regulate, but most visitors are complying.
- **Best practices include:**
 - Lincoln County has a team working on recovery planning. This team has identified three areas of focus: 1) Economic Vitality; 2) Healthy Communities; and 3) Livable Communities. Lincoln County has partnered with Oregon State University (OSU) Extension to complete the recovery planning efforts.

Southern & South Coast Regions – Alex Campbell

- **South Coast Umpqua Recovery Team:**
 - Held abbreviated meeting, focused only on questions about Phase 1.
 - Comments/concerns were raised about fraternal organizations, bowling alleys, swimming pools, small theaters, faith-based organizations -- and when those types of venues can open.
 - Rep. McKeown discussed a proposal that Rodger Craddock had put forward and is being discussed at League of Oregon Cities (LOC)/Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) regarding the possibility of allowing some local flexibility in these areas if local public health has the capacity to monitor.
 - Seven Feathers will be open by the end of the month.
- **Southern Oregon Recovery Team:**
 - Southern Oregon University Small Business Development Center (SOU-SBDC) is offering a training on June 1 on accounting practices for Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) forgiveness applications.
 - Southern Oregon occupancy rates are up. Several Neuman group hotels sold out over Memorial Day weekend. (Rates are down.)
 - Rep. Marsh reported from budget work by the general government sub-committee. One of their primary principles is to avoid cost-shifting to local government.
 - Recovery work group is reaching out to SOU on possible collaboration on the annual "Creativity Conference."

Metro Region – Raihana Ansary

- **Metro Economic Response Team** – 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 – Tri-County Chairs Deborah Kafoury (Multnomah County), Jim Bernard (Clackamas County) and Kathryn Harrington (Washington County) presented their respective county's status for reopening. At the time, Clackamas County had just submitted their application for entering into Phase 1 (which has since been approved)

and Washington County explained that they would submit an application to enter Phase 1 on Friday, May 22. Multnomah County has a COVID-19 dashboard showing how close the county is to meeting the prerequisites for reopening: <https://multco.us/novel-coronavirus-covid-19/reopening-multnomah-county-amid-covid-19>. At the time, Multnomah County had met several prerequisites with the exception of contact tracing. They plan to continue to scale up contact tracing staff including of staff who reflect the demographics of Multnomah County. Multnomah County has included additional equity standards for reopening including reduced impact of COVID-19 on communities of color and sufficient testing sites accessible to underserved communities.

- **Native Business Listening Session** – Metro RS presented the Governor’s Reopening Plan to 40 people, of whom were primarily Native Business owners during a listening session co-hosted by the Oregon Native American Chamber, Native American Youth and Family Center and Prosper Portland. Multnomah County Public Health also provided an update on the progress that they are making toward meeting the prerequisites required to enter phase one. Native business owners had questions and concerns about the following:
 - The need for advanced notification of reopening different sectors so that businesses can have adequate time to prepare.
 - The need for the state to help small businesses procure personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - It is difficult to find personal protective equipment, face coverings, and sanitizer.
 - The need for financial assistance to incorporate e-commerce into existing businesses.
 - An appreciation for the reopening of childcare in Phase 1. In addition, there is a concern that there will be an insufficient number of childcare spots due to limited cohort sizes.
- **Oregon City Business Alliance** – Metro RS presented the Governor’s Reopening Plan to 59 people at the Oregon City Business Alliance. Metro RS was on a panel with City of Oregon City Mayor Dan Holladay, Representative Christine Drazan (District 39), Small Business Development Center Director Rob Campbell and former city of Oregon City Mayor and Abernathy Center Business Owner, Dan Fowler. Concerns and comments were made about the backlog and lack of responsiveness at the Oregon Employment Department, the need to reopen the economy quickly, and the need for business classification clarity to understand which industry-sector guidelines apply to a particular business.
- **Kellogg Creek Dam** – 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 \$20M is prohibitively expensive and has no funding strategy to move forward. The City of Milwaukie and the North Clackamas Watersheds Council would like to work with the Governor’s Metro Regional Solutions Team (RST)—specifically the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), the Department of State Lands (DSL) and the Governor’s Natural Resource Office (GNRO)—to examine the viability and pros and cons of potential lower-cost fish passage alternatives that meet the needs of all state agencies and the City of Milwaukie.
 - Update – Metro RS convened interagency state partners including the ODFW, ODOT, Oregon DSL, Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD), DEQ, and the Governor’s Natural Resource Office (GNRO) to receive a presentation on the background/history of the site from the City of Milwaukie and the North Clackamas Watersheds Council and discuss respective state agency criteria and desired outcomes for a potential redesign and or removal of the dam. As an immediate next step, Vanessa Vissar, ODOT Region 1 liaison on the Metro RS Team, will look into potential funding sources, if any, for a \$80-100,000 hydraulic study of the dam. Metro RS will follow-up

with the North Clackamas Watersheds Council to discuss other potential next steps. The North Clackamas Watersheds Council and the city of Milwaukie would like to get this project in the que for potential federal stimulus infrastructure funding, which may become available sometime this fall 2020.

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) developing a MCEDD-led framework for regional recovery.
- **Highlights:**
 - Made connection for MCEDD to invite WA governor’s office to weekly meeting.
 - With leadership of Lynn Burditt, Gorge Tourism Alliance, and Hood-Gorge, produced shared messaging around outdoor recreation for provider in the Gorge for different phases of reopening. Lynn’s shop also produced a dashboard of sites to share with local decision makers.
- **Next week:**
 - 1) Preparing communications framework for further phases;
 - 2) Convening smaller meeting on recovery;
 - 3) Pulling together sector specific trainings;
 - 4) Working with OWEB on farmworker housing and sanitation implementation.

Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **Redmond Economic Development Inc.** – Annual “virtual” luncheon featuring a timely speaker on purposeful leadership. Great opportunity to self-assess why we do the work we do, key practices for purposeful leaders and designing jobs for meaningfulness.
- **Jefferson County** – Commissioners are gathering data to pursue a drought declaration.

South Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **South Central Oregon Response/Recovery 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 – This week participants were asked to provide feedback on what two or three changes to the Phase 1 restaurant protocol would be most meaningful in Phase 2. Commissioner Minty-Morris mentioned that there is confusion in the restaurant sector, with people thinking that the health precautions required in Phase 1 will not exist in Phase 2. As a result, she said some people are simply waiting for Phase 2. Commissioner

Minty-Morris also mentioned that she has heard from numerous restaurant owners that they would like to see the 10 p.m. curfew removed. The team also discussed the newly released Business Oregon funding programs and opportunities to support critical business needs and sectors such as, childcare facilities. Many thanks to Sean McCormick, OMD who joined the team to provide an overview of the Oregon Disaster Recovery Plan.

Greater Eastern Region – Courtney Warner Crowell

- **Eastern Oregon Regional Economic Recovery Team** – This week the Eastern Oregon Regional Economic Recovery Team met to provide feedback for possible tweaks to current guidance for Phase 2 as well as provide suggestions for possible industry sector guidance for Phase 2. The team had a number of suggestions and some great ideas.
 - **Union County Business Summit** – RS presented Phase 1 guidance and gave a preview of what Phase 2 might look like to Union county businesses this week. The Union County Chamber put together a webinar with local public health, emergency management, Regional Solutions, county commissioners, Business Oregon, and the North East Oregon Economic Development District. It was a good opportunity to explain the guidance and answer questions for businesses.
- **Harney County SB 2 Project** – RS participated in the first Technical Advisory Committee meeting for the Harney County Economic Opportunity Analysis as part of the SB 2 legislation that was passed in 2019. Harney and Wallowa County are the two counties that are planning to move forward under the SB 2 legislation to, potentially, add up to 50 acres of employment land outside the UGB. Each county received \$50,000 from DLCD to move forward and Harney County is excited about the possibility to identify land outside the UGB for future development. It was a good kickoff meeting and will continue over the next few months.