



RS EXCHANGE

REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Monday, March 10th, 2025

Regional Solutions Program Updates

- **Upcoming Regional Solutions Advisory Committee (RSAC) Meetings:**

RSAC Childcare Webinar Lunch and Learn; March 20, 12-1pm

Regional Solutions is hosting another webinar to provide a learning opportunity on a topic that is arising statewide. This webinar will feature guests from Business Oregon, the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELCD), and Department of Land and Community Development (DLCD) outlining the work happening across the state enterprise on childcare and highlighting funding opportunities and other resources for communities. We will also hear about a local case study, highlighting several ways communities can meaningfully engage in childcare issues. This virtual meeting will be recorded and shared in a future RS Exchange. We hope you'll join us!

- [Childcare Webinar Virtual Link](#)

Additional RSAC meeting dates are as follows:

- [Southern](#) (Jackson and Josephine Counties): March 24, 1-3pm
- [South Coast](#) (Coos, Curry, and Douglas Counties): April 9, 3:30-5:30pm
- [Mid-Valley](#) (Marion, Polk, and Yamhill Counties): April 10, 12:30-3:30pm
- [South Valley/Mid-Coast](#) (Benton, Lane, Lincoln, & Linn Counties): May 21, 10am-12pm

- **Recruiting Applicants for Regional Solutions Advisory Committees:**

Nearly one year in to our refreshed Regional Solutions Advisory Committees (RSACs), we are again opening the opportunity to serve on these community-centered committees. Though there are only a few current vacancies across the state, applications are open for every role – we are always eager to build a strong bench and identify potential committee members who can step in if a need arises.

RSACs determine regional priorities for community and economic development, identify resources and funding, utilize their local connections to advance regional efforts, and provide a strategic link between the Governor's Office and local communities. Each committee is composed of the following roles: Convener, County (recommended by AOC), City (recommended by LOC), Business, Philanthropic, Tribal and Community Based Organizations. As always, we seek balance from around each region, building committees who together represent the geographic and cultural diversity that exists across Oregon.

Please consider applying, and share this opportunity with others who might be interested in lending their energy and expertise to this collaborative program. For more information about our regions and committees, visit the [Regional Solutions website](#) or contact your local RS Coordinator. Details about the application process, and the links to apply, can be found on the Governor's [Executive Appointments website](#). **Applications are due by May 30th.**

Regional Updates

Northeast – Courtney Crowell

- **Northeast Oregon Area Commission on Transportation (NEACT):** Courtney gave a presentation on Regional Solutions and an overview of the program and regional project updates to the NEACT last week. It was a great discussion about how Regional Solutions can help communities and a good opportunity for communities to flag transportation issues for our office. There was a robust discussion about the impact on both ODOT and local communities of the mega-loads that travel through Eastern Oregon and ideas for how to account for that impact.

Additionally, the small city allotment program is now open for cities with populations less than 5,000. The next Small City Allotment Application period which will run from March 3rd through April 30th. The application form can be accessed here: [2025 Small City Allotment Grant Application](#) (cognitoforms.com).

Please review the [SCA Application Instructions](#) prior to completing the application form.

- **Baker City Maternity Issue:** Double good news on the Baker City Maternity front this week. Oregon's Kitchen Table finalized and released their report on health care issues in Baker County. As a reminder, Regional Solutions help to connect Oregon's Kitchen Table with Baker County to do community engagement on health care needs within the community considering the maternity center being closed in the summer of 2023. The final report is included [here](#).

Also, news broke recently that St. Alphonsus is committed to working with community doctors to reestablish the maternity center in Baker City. This is great news and hopefully we will see some traction with getting OB services back in the community after an almost two-year gap. Here's the [news article](#).

- **Rural DMV Issues:** Regional Solutions met with DMV this week to talk about the issues that Wallowa County Commissioner Lisa Collier raised with the Governor recently about the challenges that local youth are having in getting drive tests at local DMV's. DMV shared their perspective about the challenges with staffing DMV's across the state but particularly in Eastern Oregon. It was good to connect with DMV and learn about the staffing challenges across the region and the ways in which they have tried to alleviate the problem. I'm planning to connect back with both Commissioner Collier and other county commissioners who have raised this issue and then continue to work with DMV to see if we can find some solutions. Sen. Nash also dropped legislation this week (SB 9) that would require DMV to prioritize rural citizens in rural Oregon.
- **Tiger House Grand Opening:** Regional Solutions attended the grand opening of the new Tiger House project in La Grande. This was a collaborative effort between La Grande school district, local contractors and industry partners and the Grande Ronde Hospital. The start-up costs for the project came from congressionally directed spending from Congress a few years ago. The school district started a homebuilding project where high school students work directly with local contractors to construct townhomes which are then sold to help fund the next project. For the first townhomes that opened this week, Grande Ronde Hospital purchased the homes to help with the housing challenges that they are experiencing. It was great to see the finished project and the start of the next set of townhomes. This is a great program that La Grande school district has been able to get off the ground and excited to see how the program will continue to grow in the future.



- **Blues Intergovernmental Council:** Regional Solutions attended the quarterly meeting of the Blues Intergovernmental Council (BIC) which is a collaborative group aimed at trying to find common ground on the Blue Mountain Forest Plans that the USFS is tasked with developing. This has been a council that I've been the Governor's office representative for over six years along with ODFW and ODF. The state has been engaged over the years, however, in the past couple of years the USFS has been working directly with the Eastern Oregon counties as they develop the draft forest plan. The USFS is now in the process of sharing the proposed actions of the forest plan and is asking for feedback from BIC participants. I've been making sure that both ODFW and ODF are sharing their thoughts and working to ensure that our state feedback is not in conflict with each other. The USFS was planning to have several public comment events in Eastern Oregon, however, those have now been pulled down and postponed.

Greater Eastern – Courtney Crowell

- **Greater Eastern Oregon Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting:** Recently, the Greater Eastern Oregon Regional Solutions Advisory Committee (RSAC) met to discuss in more detail the locally identified priorities of Energy Resilience and Childcare. We first had an overview of a number of projects that the Regional Solutions team is working on related to housing production, community resilience and infrastructure and then transitioned into conversations that focused on energy resilience and childcare. The team from the Oregon Department of Energy gave an overview on energy security and energy resilience and outlined several grant programs that are available to communities to address energy resilience. We had a great discussion about what the committee might be able to elevate and educate throughout Eastern Oregon. Then we had great presentations from leaders across Eastern Oregon who have been working on childcare projects to hear firsthand about their insight into childcare in the region. Kathryn Brown from the Pendleton Childcare Center, Debbie Radie who founded the Families First Childcare Center in Boardman and Theresa Martinez with the Childcare Resource and Referral in Malheur County all presented and helped to engage with the committee on great ideas that the committee can pursue or elevate to the state and across the region. I'll be reviewing the discussion and distilling down the ideas that they identified.
- **City of Dayville Wastewater Project:** We had our first monthly coordination call with the City of Dayville, DEQ and Business Oregon as we try to help this very small community work to get into compliance with DEQ. Unfortunately, the city doesn't have the funds nor the capacity or expertise to address many of the issues that are required. The main thing that DEQ is requiring is a certified operator to oversee the compliance with the wastewater system. The city could contract out for a certified operator but no one is interested due to the remote location, age and quality of the system and the liability they would incur. We've also tried to have conversations to see if we could look at a regional approach but the cities are so far apart that it's hard to make it work. We have a number of ideas that folks are working on to address the enforcement fines that DEQ is requiring but I'm still struggling to find a solution for the ongoing compliance issues. We'll continue to try and tackle this within our Regional Solutions team.

- **Hermiston UGB Expansion:** DLCD and Courtney met with the city of Hermiston recently to get an update on their upcoming UGB expansion. The city has completed and adopted an economic opportunities analysis (EOA) that identified the need for additional industrial land for new industry. The EOA identified a need of up to 1400 acres of new industrial land. The city is planning to move forward with a UGB expansion of 900 acres that would meet the needs for 4-6 new data center sites.
- **Eastern Oregon Flooding:** With the rain over the past few weeks and the increase in temperatures, we saw rising water levels in creeks and rivers across Eastern Oregon. The most damaging was in Vale where there were serious concerns about a levee failing and having to evacuate half of the town. Highway 20 in Malheur County was closed for long periods of time due to flooding around Juntura and between Cairo and Vale. Malheur County issued an emergency declaration and I'm continuing to work closely with the OEM regional representative and help assist with what I can.

Metro – Kathy Hyzy

- **Multifamily Housing Workgroup Kickoff:** This week, Governor Kotek and Mayor Wilson convened a workgroup comprised of elected leadership, city and state agency staff, and private developers who work in multifamily housing. The workgroup will focus on identifying near-term barriers at the city and state to getting specific multifamily projects into construction in Portland. While the work is Portland-specific, the state-level barriers are likely also affecting multifamily developments around Oregon. Regional Solutions is supporting the Governor's Office housing team in this work, which is expected to take place over a series of meetings the next several months.
- **Clackamas CDBG-DR PIER Funding:** In 2021, the US Housing and Urban Development Dept (HUD) announced it was awarding funds to Oregon to help rebuild after the 2020 Labor Day fires. Administered by Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), this money will pay for new programs to help individuals, households, and communities continue to recover. This effort, which is called ReOregon, will provide funds to rebuild and create new housing, infrastructure, economic revitalization, and planning opportunities to areas impacted by the fires. \$2.4M in CDBG-DR grant funds was allocated to Clackamas County, and the community-led Selection Committee set up to direct those funds to projects is up and running! The committee recently met to discuss scoring criteria and timelines, and established a 3/31 deadline for applications, with the goal of making final recommendations for projects to OHCS on May 8th. The minimum award size is \$500,000; tribes, state agencies, counties, municipal governments, and other public or quasi-public entities are all eligible to apply. Please email PIER@hcs.oregon.gov for more information.

Mid-Valley – Beth Wytoski

- **MWVCOG Annual Meeting:** The Annual Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments (MWVCOG) Annual Meeting, held at the historic Willamette Heritage Center, was a celebration of collaboration and progress in the region. Nearly 200 esteemed guests, including elected officials, government staff, and community members, convened for an evening to share a meal and present the prestigious MWVCOG Annual Awards. The presented awards included the Gwen VanDenBosch Regional Leadership Award, Regional Cooperative Project Award, Wes Kvarsten Professional Service Award, and the MWVCOG Chair's Choice Award (selected by Chairwoman Ian Davidson).

John McArdle was honored with the Gwen VanDenBosch Regional Leadership Award for his passion for community and the indelible mark he has left on the City of Independence, the State of Oregon, and the Olympic Movement. His leadership is marked by his commitment, perseverance, and vision. As mayor of Independence, he laid the groundwork for the city's growth, bringing forward innovative solutions for local development, infrastructure, and fostering community engagement.

The Regional Cooperative Project Award recognizes exemplary partnerships in local governance, spotlighting initiatives that promote intergovernmental collaboration and community benefit. This year's recipients include the North Marion Business Service Alliance and the group who collaborated on Zoning Code Digitization Across Cities in Yamhill County.

The North Marion Business Service Alliance was spearheaded by Jamie Johnk, Woodburn Economic Development Director, and brings together the cities of St. Paul, Donald, Aurora, Hubbard, Woodburn, Gervais, Scotts Mills, Mt. Angel and Silverton. The Alliance was established to foster a sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem and support small business development throughout the region. In Yamhill County, thanks to a group of dedicated individuals, zoning codes are now streamlined through an easy-to-use website, improving access and permit application quality and saving time for applicants and reviewers alike. Both these projects showcase the transformative impact of regional cooperation in supporting local economies and reducing barriers to housing development, exemplifying the spirit of the Regional Cooperative Project Award.

Mark Daniel, Mt. Angel's City Manager and Chief of Police, received the Wes Kvarsten Professional Service Award for his exceptional leadership and dedication to strengthening communities, empowering others, and ensuring safety and well-being of countless residents. His leadership spans a 39-year career in law enforcement and roles such as president of the Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police and president of the Oregon Executive Development Institute.

Salem-Keizer Safe Routes to School was honored with the MWVCOG Chair's Choice Award for their transformative impacts in teaching pedestrian and bicycle safety to school children and encouraging students to walk, bike, or roll to school. The collaboration between MWVCOG and Salem-Keizer Public Schools is fueled through a partnership network made

from public and community groups and dedicated volunteers, all showing up for students. This recognition underscores the power of collaboration and a commitment to schools as the heart of our communities.

Congratulations to all award winners!



North Coast – Nate Stice

- **City of Scappoose Outreach:** The North Coast Regional Solutions Team met with the City of Scappoose for an outreach meeting. Special thanks to Oregon Water Resources Staff Adair Muth and Gabriela Ferriera for joining to discuss the city ongoing efforts to development water sources for residential and industrial uses. OHCS and the team more broadly discussed funding sources and partnership on their basalt well project and other water related projects. The team also discussed there wastewater needs and plans to consider a One Stop for the city to move to phase II of their wastewater system improvement project.

The team continues to work with the city and the Columbia Economic Team on build-out and recruitment for the Columbia Commerce Center, a significant industrial site contiguous of the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center and about 30 minutes from Portland International Airport. We also discussed the city's efforts on housing, parks, and downtown redevelopments. Many thanks to the city for hosting.

South Valley/Mid-Coast – Courtney Flathers

- **Timberlab Groundbreaking:** On February 27th, Governor Kotek attended the groundbreaking ceremony for Timberlab's new cross-laminated timber (CLT) manufacturing facility in Millersburg. This 190,000 square foot facility is anticipated to create up to 100 new living wage jobs at peak operation and will be one of the largest CLT production sites in the United States. The South Valley/Mid-Coast Regional Solutions team has been working on this project for many months helping to navigate state permitting requirements and

leverage state incentive programs in support of this project. This new facility will be a significant economic driver for the region and an anchor for the mass timber industry in the southern Willamette Valley. Congratulations to the many partners that have contributed to the project reaching this milestone, including the City of Millersburg and Linn County!



- **Regional Solutions Team Visit to Albany:** The South Valley/Mid-Coast Regional Solutions Team visited Albany on March 4th to learn more about the East Albany Plan and the East Albany Town Center project. The East Albany Plan is a long-range planning document designed to help the city plan for future residential, employment, and commercial growth and associated utility, facility, and transportation needs for approximately 2,800 acres of land located within the Albany Urban Growth Boundary east of I-5. The vision for the East Albany Town Center is for mixed-use residential and commercial development on approximately 30 acres of land that will be well-integrated with services, transportation options, and the surrounding community. The city has applied for a Quick Response grant through the Transportation and Growth Management Program (a joint program of DLCD and ODOT) to support the next phase of land use and transportation planning for the project area. The Regional Solutions Team will continue partner with the city and project supporters to explore solutions to transportation, infrastructure, and wetland issues related to the project.



- **Cascade West Innovation Hub Kickoff:** Last month I attended the kickoff event for the Cascades West Innovation Hub. [Regional Innovation Hubs](#), funded by Business Oregon, will provide technical assistance, capital, networking, mentorship, and talent development to innovation-based entrepreneurs across the state. Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments is serving as the lead organization for the Cascades West Innovation Hub that will serve Linn, Benton, Lincoln, and Lane Counties. The purpose of the kickoff event was to gather information from business owners, economic development practitioners, higher education institutions, and other interested parties from across the region to help inform the development of the hub's operating framework and governance structure. Two pilot activities are planned for later in 2025.

Resources and Opportunities

- **Governor's Office Seeking Summer Interns – Apply by March 23, 2025**

The Governor's Office is hiring for full-time, paid summer interns for motivated, civic-minded students. Students in Community College, College/University, and Law Schools are eligible. Interns will work full time for 10-12 weeks over the summer months. Please share this opportunity with community college/college/ law students eager to gain real-world experience, develop professional skills, and see how government works behind the scenes.

- Internal Candidates (current State of Oregon employees) can apply here: [https://wd5.myworkday.com/oregon/d/inst/15\\$392530/9925\\$204921.html](https://wd5.myworkday.com/oregon/d/inst/15$392530/9925$204921.html)
- External Candidates can apply here: https://oregon.wd5.myworkdayjobs.com/SOR_External_Career_Site/job/Salem--GOV--State-Library/Student-Internships--Oregon-Governor-s-Office_REQ-176124-1

- **Legislators to Hear Statewide Budget Priorities at Community Budget Hearings**

The Joint Committee on Ways and Means will tour the state for six public hearings to hear directly from Oregonians regarding the 2025-2027 budget. Oregonians are encouraged to sign up to testify about which projects and programs the state should prioritize this budget cycle. Members of the committee and legislative leadership will attend six public hearings across the state over the next two months as the upcoming 2025-2027 biennial state budget begins to take shape. Individuals interested in testifying before the committee should sign up in advance for the hearing they plan to attend. This year will be the first time since at least 2005 a community budget hearing has occurred on tribal lands when the committee visits Warm Springs on April 4. The April 16 public hearing will prioritize virtual testimony so everyone in the state has an opportunity to testify on their budget priorities. In the days before the first community budget hearing on March 22, the co-chairs will release their budget framework, which will outline the state's budgetary outlook and what resources might be available to use.

The dates and locations of the community budget hearings are:

Gresham | Saturday, March 22 (10:00am – 12:00pm)

Mt. Hood Community College, College Theater, 26000 S.E. Stark Street, Gresham

[Members of the public can register to testify here](#)

Astoria | Friday, March 28 (5:00pm – 7:00pm)

Liberty Theatre, 1203 Commercial Street, Astoria

[Members of the public can register to testify here](#)

Warm Springs | Friday, April 4 (5:00pm – 7:00pm) Old Warm Springs Elementary School
1112 Wasco Street, Warm Springs

[Members of the public can register to testify here](#)

La Grande | Friday, April 11 (5:00pm – 7:00pm)

Eastern Oregon University, Hoke Union Building #339, 1 University Boulevard, La Grande

[Members of the public can register to testify here](#)

Salem, Virtual Testimony Prioritized | Wednesday, April 16 (5:00pm – 7:00pm)

Oregon State Capitol Building, Hearing Room F 900 Court St NE, Salem

[Members of the public can register to testify here](#)

Klamath Falls | Friday, April 25 (5:00pm – 7:00pm)

Klamath Community College, Building 4 Commons 7390 South 6th Street, Klamath Falls

[Members of the public can register to testify here](#)

- **Pacific Northwest Cohort for Charging Smart Program Launches in April**

[Charging Smart](#) offers free, structured, and customized technical assistance to help jurisdictions enhance their electric vehicle (EV) charging strategies. In partnership with the Interstate Renewable Energy Council, [Forth](#) is bringing this training opportunity to a select group of Pacific Northwest communities, with the cohort set to begin in April.

Cities, counties, or Tribes that would like to learn more can participate in an informational call on **March 26 at 10:30 a.m.** Cities should reach out directly to Forth by contacting Stu Green at stuartg@forthmobility.org, or by emailing charging.smart@forthmobility.org for additional information. More information on the Charging Smart program is available [here](#).

- **Oregon Cultural Trust Hosting Conversations with Funders**

The Oregon Cultural Trust's 2025 Conversations with Funders events have kicked off this month. If you're a grant seeker, these informal events are a great opportunity to discuss your projects with Oregon grant makers who offer more than \$5 million in 2025 funding.

Participating funders include: [Oregon Cultural Trust](#), [Oregon Arts Commission](#), [Oregon Heritage](#), [Oregon Humanities](#), [Travel Oregon](#), the [State of Oregon Library](#), the [Marie](#)

[Lamfrom Charitable Foundation](#), the [Nonprofit Association of Oregon](#), the [Spirit Mountain Community Fund](#), [Regional Arts and Culture Council](#), the [Multnomah County Cultural Coalition](#) and the [Oregon Community Foundation](#), among others. Check each location for participating funders. Registration is strongly encouraged.

- March 11: [Conversations with Funders: Portland](#)
- March 13: [Conversations with Funders: Pendleton](#)
- March 18: [Conversations with Funders: Coos Bay](#)
- March 19: [Conversations with Funders: Ashland](#)
- March 21: [Conversations with Funders: Sisters](#)

[Register here for Conversations with Funders](#)

- **Oregon State Fire Marshal Seeking Nominations for 2025 Sparky Awards**

The Oregon State Fire Marshal is accepting nominations for the 2025 Golden and Silver Sparky Awards. The Golden Sparky recognizes a fire service member or fire agency for outstanding fire prevention or public safety education achievement. The Silver Sparky recognizes a civilian or civilian agency for outstanding achievement in fire prevention or public safety education. Nominations are open until May 1. Please submit your completed Sparky nomination form with an explanation and examples of your nominee's achievements. To nominate someone, fill out and submit the form on the OSFM's website. <https://www.oregon.gov/osfm/about-us/Pages/sparkyawards.aspx>

- **Lowe's Foundation Gable Grants Program Accepting Applications**

The [Lowe's Foundation's](#) Gable Grants program is accepting applications for community and technical colleges that offer innovative skilled trades training programs. The application window is open until March 31, 2025. This round of Gable Grant applications is for community and technical colleges only. The next Gable Grant cycle for community-based organizations and nonprofits will open later this year.

The Lowe's Foundation Gable Grants program is a 5-year, \$50 million commitment to train 50,000 job-ready skilled tradespeople to build a stronger infrastructure that supports communities for the long term. From 2023-2028, community and technical colleges and community-based nonprofit organizations across the country can apply for grants to recruit, train and employ the future skilled trades workforce.

Helpful Links:

- [Gable Grant Eligibility Guidelines](#)
- [Gable Grants FAQs](#)