



RS EXCHANGE REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Monday, May 4th, 2026

Upcoming RSAC Webinar

RSAC Webinar: [Plan for a Resilient Oregon \(PRO\)](#)

Thursday, May 7th from 12:00-1:30pm

[Virtual Link](#)

Regional Solutions is excited to host our next learning opportunity on a topic that is arising in RSAC discussions statewide: community resilience! Please join us for a webinar featuring an overview of the PRO—a people-centered resilience strategy to help communities around Oregon adapt and thrive in the face of increasingly severe disasters. The PRO aims to be responsive to the unique cultures, demographics, histories, and hazards of Oregon's diverse regions.

The PRO will inform the work of Executive Branch agencies and the Governor's recommended budget and legislative work for the next biennium.

The webinar will be a public meeting and will be recorded and shared in a future RS Exchange. Please feel free to share this opportunity with other interested parties.



Regional Updates

South Valley/Mid-Coast – Courtney Flathers

Western University of Health Sciences: The South Valley/Mid-Coast Regional Solutions Team recently visited Western University of Health Sciences (WesternU) in Lebanon, including their two existing facilities and the location of a planned campus development. WesternU opened their



medical school (College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific Northwest or COMP-NW) in Lebanon in 2011. In 2021, they established the College of Health Sciences Northwest which houses the Doctor of Physical Therapy program. Since 2011, WesternU has grown to train over 500 students annually in osteopathic medicine and

physical therapy. WesternU is redeveloping a 115-acre former mill site in Lebanon into a university campus that will also include a College of Graduate Nursing and a new Interprofessional Behavioral Health Institute. They hope to grow the Behavioral Health Institute into a new College of Behavioral Health that will include Doctor of Psychology, Master's in Psychology, and Master's in Social Work programs. The university has been working with DEQ on property cleanup and has applied for a ConnectOregon grant to build a railroad underpass which is needed for improved site access. Our Regional Solutions team looks forward to continuing to partner with the university through completion of this new campus. This development and investment in Lebanon and the region marks a valuable opportunity to continue building a health care workforce dedicated to serving rural and underserved communities.

Fun fact: For the third consecutive year, WesternU's College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific and COMP-Northwest is ranked as a Tier 1 institution for primary care training, based on rankings released in April 2026 by the U.S. News & World Report.



Ollie Court Grand Opening: On a sunny Thursday afternoon at the end of April a large crowd gathered to celebrate the ribbon cutting at Ollie Court, a new affordable housing development co-located with an early learning facility in West Eugene. This project is the first time that affordable housing and child care facilities have been co-located in Oregon. Ollie Court is a

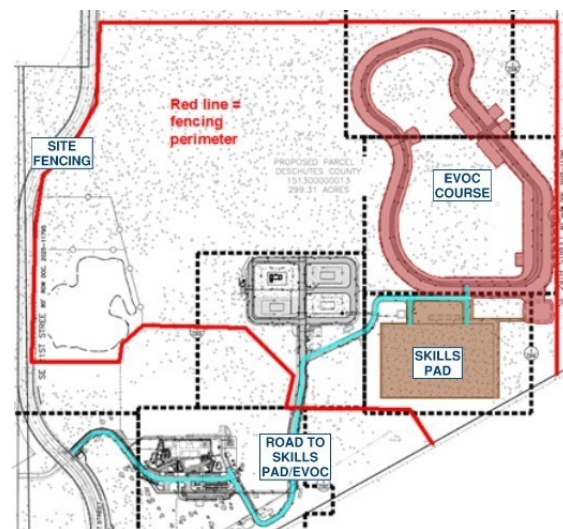


Homes for Good development located on the former Naval Reserve site in Eugene. The project includes 81 units of affordable housing for renters earning up to half of the area median income and an on-site early learning center. Homes for Good partnered with Head Start of Lane County and Early Childhood

CARES on the child care facility which includes six classrooms with the capacity to serve about 100 children. There is an elementary school located across the street. Congratulations to the community leaders, elected officials, and dedicated partners who contributed to this project! It will be a model for others to learn from for years to come.

Central – Scott Aycock

CORE3 – Central Oregon Ready, Responsive, Resilient Approves Phase 1A build: Over the last seven years, 20+ local and state public safety and emergency management agencies have been partnering to develop the [CORE3](#) facility. CORE3 will serve as an interagency public safety training facility and emergency operations center for large events such as wildfire, pandemics, and other disasters. The center is also planned to provide statewide emergency



response and continuity of governance functions in the case of extreme disasters such as the Cascadia Subduction Zone event. To date, Deschutes County has dedicated 300 acres of land valued at \$13M towards the facility, the state legislature has provided \$20M, OR State Fire Marshall invested \$500K, and local agencies have contributed \$1.5M+ towards project development. The Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council has “set the table” for interagency collaboration and has managed all aspects of project development including visioning, land use entitlements, design & engineering, and capital construction. CORE3 will be developed in phases; Phase 1 includes:

- Administration/emergency coordination center/classroom facility
- Emergency vehicle operator course (EVOC) and driver skills pad
- Fire training tower
- Multi-purpose scenario area

Later phases include shooting ranges, additional fire training facilities, emergency supply caching, confined space rescue training facilities, urban search and rescue, etc.

The team has insufficient funding to complete Phase 1, but at their April 30 meeting, the CORE3 Executive Council gaveled down on plans to build Phase 1A – the EVOC, skills pad and training yard, partial site remediation, security fencing, and site prep for the future Admin/ECC building at a cost of approximately \$10M. Groundbreaking is forecast for mid-August and operations will begin 8 months later. Project partners previously funded and are nearing completion of required transportation infrastructure, extension of utilities to the site, and site prep. Regional Solutions has long been at the



table providing a valuable connection to the Governor’s Office and the State Resiliency Officer and facilitating connections to state agencies such as DLCD, ODOT, ODEM, ODHS/OREM, OSFM, and DPSST. We are excited to continue engaging with the project and partners to enhance regional and statewide resilience and public safety training opportunities.

South Central – Scott Aycock

Lake County Quartz Mountain Gold Mine Proposal: Mining company QGold is proposing a gold mine on Quartz Mountain in southwestern Lake County, west of Lakeview and near the community of Bly. Exploration activities will start next month and company representatives are coordinating with USFS and state agencies for further exploration permitting and, if successful, production phases. The company recently completed their Preliminary Economic Assessment which indicated that the mine is commercially viable (good ROI) and further outlines the following benefits over the mine's estimated 14-year lifespan: 270 direct and 540-810 indirect jobs, total capital investment of \$704M, a total payroll of \$1.5B over the life of the mine, and local and state tax revenues of \$912M. These numbers would increase if the mine were to operate over a longer period (14 years is a conservative estimate). Regional Solutions and our state agency partners are working with the company, local communities, and stakeholder interests to ensure that economic benefits are shared locally and are balanced with robust environmental stewardship and rehabilitation/recovery of the site.



North Coast – Nate Stice

Rowena Fire Recovery: The North Central Regional Solutions Team received an update on Rowena Fire recovery, with Wasco County and MCEDD continuing to lead local coordination through the Rowena Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG). The LTRG is coordinating partners across government, nonprofit, business, faith-based, and community organizations, and contracts with MCCAC to provide recovery coordination for survivors. Recovery has moved from emergency response and debris cleanup toward rebuilding, and water and septic infrastructure are now major constraints. Wasco County secured a no-cost Phase 2 debris removal program for affected properties in partnership with DEQ and OEM, but rebuilding will require property-specific utility solutions.

Replacing damaged septic systems is expected to be difficult on some lots because drainfields may be exhausted, some systems were grandfathered in, and some properties may no longer meet current size or siting standards for conventional replacement systems. Willamette Partnership is helping explore clustered septic options as a potential path for harder-to-serve properties. Water service is also a significant recovery issue: the Tooley Water District served about 41–42 homes before the fire, but public reporting found only 15 standing homes remained after the fire, creating both infrastructure and financial viability challenges for a very small district. Ongoing work is focused on stabilizing the Tooley system and evaluating connection to another municipal provider, including Chenoweth PUD, with feasibility work underway. These water and septic issues will be central to whether households can move from cleanup into permitting, rebuilding, and long-term recovery.

Metro – Kathy Hyzy

Dragonberry Produce Visit: I joined First Lady Kotek-Wilson and Business Oregon staff for a very delicious and informative tour of this produce importer/exporter's LEED silver-certified facility. Located in Canby's booming industrial district, Dragonberry has roughly 25 full-time employees, with additional seasonal shifts for packing, labeling and distributing fruit and vegetables to import and export markets around the globe. You can find Dragonberry fruits like longan, dragonfruit and elephant mango at Costco and Wincos throughout the region.



Oregon's Arena Modernization Bill Signing: Governor Tina Kotek joined local and state leaders, community leaders, and representatives from the Portland Trail Blazers and the Portland Fire to commemorate the signing of Senate Bill 1501, which creates a pathway toward shared ownership of Moda Center between the State of Oregon and the City of Portland. The bill also invests in modernizing the arena to expand opportunities for world-class events and strengthen economic growth in the Lower Albina neighborhood. Moda Center draws 1.6 million visitors annually and generates an estimated \$670 million



annually in regional economic impact, including \$113 million in direct visitor spending. Nearly 4,500 jobs are tied to arena operations and tourism. No state bonds will be issued for the modernization project without a binding, 20-year lease commitment from the Trail Blazers, approved project scope, budget, and schedule, and financial commitments from both the City of Portland and Multnomah County. The project will be funded through a dedicated Oregon Arena Fund, which draws on revenues tied directly to venue activities, ensuring no increased tax burden on Oregonians while delivering facility upgrades that will stimulate economic activity statewide.

Governor Kotek Celebrates New Year in the Park: The weather was beautiful and the crowds were having fun, spraying each other with water for good luck at the annual New Year in the Park event at Glenhaven Park in



Portland. One of the largest traditional Southeast Asian cultural festivals in the Northwest, thousands of people attend to enjoy cultural performances and activities, shop the vendor booths, and eat terrific food. The Governor enjoyed watching a papaya salad making contest on stage and meeting many of the volunteers and vendors who make this such a vibrant occasion.

First Family Visits Japanese Gardens: Since the foundation of the Japanese Garden Society of Oregon in 1963, the Portland Japanese Garden has served as the setting for strengthening and enriching the connections between Oregon and Japan. As a follow-up to connections made during the trade mission to Japan and South Korea in October, Governor Kotek and the First Lady were honored to tour the Japanese Gardens with the co-directors of the Japanese Gardens, Lisa Christy and Aki Nakamishi, and board



president Paul Schommer. The First Family enjoyed learning about the history of the gardens and touring the 2017 cultural plaza addition, which includes meeting rooms intentionally designed to offer welcoming spaces for fostering ties between Japanese and American companies and organizations. They especially enjoyed the exhibit of contemporary woodblock prints, currently on display in the Pavillion Gallery through June 15!

Eastern — Courtney Crowell

League of Oregon Cities (LOC) Spring Conference: I attended the LOC Spring Conference in Pendleton last week and was able to represent Regional Solutions throughout the conference. It was a great showing of cities from across the state and they had a great time in Pendleton. In addition to meeting with local cities, I was able to connect with agency representatives, non-profit leaders and other local leaders across Eastern Oregon.

Mid-Valley – Beth Wytoski

Santiam Canyon Long Term Recovery – Wildfire season is quickly approaching and fires are getting more dangerous due to hotter and drier weather, drought conditions, and fuel build-up, putting homes and other structures at greater risk. Creating defensible space around homes can slow the spread of fire, provide space for firefighters to defend property, and reduce exposure to embers, flames, and heat. For homeowners in Mehama, Lyons, Elkhorn, Mill City, Gates, Niagra, Detroit, Idanha, or Marion Forks, there is help available. Residents can apply for a grant to reimburse the costs of recommended alterations to reduce fire risk. More information can be found at: [Defensible Space Grant — Santiam Recovery](#) and the deadline is MAY 15 so please apply soon!

SEDCOR Economic Summit – On April 23, which was Take Your Child to Work Day, my 13-year-old daughter joined me for an economic summit with business, government, and community leaders from across the region. Speakers included: Oregon's Chief Prosperity Officer, Tim Knopp, who spoke on the statewide prosperity agenda and suggested policy shifts to drive economic growth across the state; Tim Duy, from SGH Macro Advisors, who discussed several national trends, key economic indicators, and what the current landscape means for business operations; Damon Runberg of Business Oregon, an economist who took a more focused look at Oregon and Willamette Valley including local growing sectors and place-based challenges; Preston Mann, VP of External Affairs at Oregon Business & Industry, who explained OBI's current priorities as well as practical steps local leaders can take to advance Oregon's economic



development; and Cara Turano (my daughter's favorite speaker), a Futurist from the Oregon Entrepreneurs Network, who talked about innovation and direction, encouraging listeners to consider what changes might be on the way for our leading industries. The slide decks from the speakers are available at: [2026 SEDCOR Mid-Valley Economic Summit - SEDCOR](#)

Regional Solutions Team – I convened an RST visit with several agency partners in Independence to discuss their regional drinking water project, shared with Polk County and Monmouth as well as plans for local development. While there are still questions around funding, regulatory hurdles, and precise technology, we were able to discuss and clarify permits, expected timelines, and some details about programmatic eligibility. The conversation leaned on agency expertise from Business Oregon, DLCD, ODOT, and DEQ. Independence is well equipped with capable staff, an involved community, and willing partners; it was a pleasure to visit the city and hear about their priorities.

Resources and Opportunities

Opportunity Zone Nominations Now Open

Oregon's Opportunity Zone 2.0 program is designed to unlock long-term investment in communities that need it most. This updated program offers enhanced incentives and transparency to ensure that private capital drives real, measurable improvements in housing, jobs, and infrastructure across the state.

According to [Treasury guidance](#) issued on April 6th, 2026, Oregon has 229 eligible tracts and the Governor can designate no more than 58 as Opportunity Zones. Download the complete list of eligible census tracts in Oregon in [Excel format](#) or view the [Opportunity Zone interactive map](#).

Oregon is committed to a transparent, data driven process for selecting Opportunity Zone 2.0 tracts. To be considered for Governor designation, communities must first nominate tracts for consideration through Business Oregon's nomination process. Local jurisdictions — including cities, counties, ports, tribal governments — and regional economic development organizations are invited to submit nomination applications for eligible tracts in their communities.

Nomination Application Process Open through May 22nd

Cities, counties, ports, tribal governments, and economic development organizations are eligible to apply. Only one application will be accepted for each tract. If multiple organizations are interested in nominating the same tract, they are encouraged to collaborate and submit a single, joint application. To receive the application packet, please [Request Application Materials](#).

Submitted applications will be reviewed and evaluated based on the following:

- *Project Viability and Investment Readiness:* Nominated tracts should include identified investable projects, project ready land, or demonstrable steps taken to prepare for future investment opportunities.
- *Local Support and Capacity:* Applications should demonstrate strong local support, including engagement with key stakeholders, alignment with local economic development or land use strategies, and the availability of incentives or tools that can help attract investment.
- *Strategic Alignment:* Projects within the nominated tract should align with local and state economic development priorities.

Only eligible entities may submit tract nomination applications. However, developers, investors, community organizations, and other stakeholders who are not eligible to apply are encouraged to participate in the process. If you would like to provide information, express support, or note concerns regarding a proposed tract nomination, please [Submit Stakeholder Input](#) here.

Tribal Nomination Process Open through May 29th

Tribal nations have a dedicated nomination process for Opportunity Zone designations. Each tribal nation may automatically nominate one eligible census tract that overlaps with its tribal lands. For this process, “tribal lands” include areas within the Tribe’s reservation, lands held in trust by the U.S. federal government for the Tribe, or lands officially pending trust status. To submit a nomination, tribal nations must provide a brief memo with the required information to incentives.program@biz.oregon.gov by Friday, May 29th, utilizing this [memo template](#) and accompanying [detailed guidance](#).

If a tribal nation wishes to nominate more than one tract, any additional tracts must be submitted through the standard nomination application process. For more information, please feel free to contact incentives.program@biz.oregon.gov or contact Business Oregon’s Tribal Liaison, Brian Plinski, at Brian.PLINSKI@biz.oregon.gov.

Rural Health Transformation Project Proposals Accepted through 5/26

OHA is pleased to announce that the Catalyst Awards Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) is now officially open. Through May 26, eligible organizations can propose their innovative projects for this competitive Oregon Rural Health Transformation Program funding pool. OHA expects to grant a total of about \$80 million per year for up to two years, pending federal approval, toward Catalyst Award-supported projects. Up to 80 proposals will be funded by early July through this opportunity.

Catalyst Awards will be given to projects that are ready to launch within two months of receiving funding and address at least one of the following areas: maternal and child health; co-occurring behavioral health conditions; aging in place; and chronic disease. More information about the application process is on the OHA Rural Health Transformation Program [webpage](#).

In addition to the Catalyst Awards, OHA plans to further award federal funding to hospitals, health clinics and local public health authorities to help rural Oregon improve access to critical services during a time of tremendous change and challenge in healthcare. To further support the Rural Health

Transformation Program's goals, OHA expects to direct a total of \$50.4 million this year by late summer.

- Each of the state's 35 [rural hospitals](#) can receive direct grants, with a total of \$35 million expected to be provided this year.
- Each rural health clinic can receive direct grants, with a total of \$10 million expected to be provided this year. Oregon currently has 100 certified [rural health clinics](#).
- Each of the state's 33 [local public health authorities](#) – most of which are county health departments – can receive funding, with a total of \$5 million expected to be provided this year.

OHA also plans to partner with the [Oregon Office of Rural Health](#) to support this statewide effort by facilitating regional collaboration and providing technical assistance to organizations that are planning or implementing rural health projects.

To learn more about the launch of the Catalyst Awards and the broader goals of this funding opportunity, you can view the [Informational Webinar Recording](#) and [Presentation Slide Deck](#).

Visit the OHA website for more information about the [Rural Health Transformation Program \(RHTP\)](#) or read their press release about [Oregon's Immediate Impact Awards](#) and other recent developments.