



RS EXCHANGE REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Monday, September 14th, 2026

Apply for the Regional Infrastructure Fund!

Applications are due by 5:00 pm on Wednesday,
September 16th

Regional Solutions Program Updates

Apply for the Regional Infrastructure Fund by September 16th

It's not too late to apply for the Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF)! The RIF is available to local governments and Tribes with populations of 25,000 or less, and funding can be used for construction projects or research, planning or design projects. We're hoping to see a broad set of applications from around the state. For more information, see the [RIF website](#) where you can view the program [webinar](#), find answers to your questions through the [FAQ](#) and find sample forms to complete your application.

Applications are due by 5:00 pm on Wednesday, September 16th.

If you have additional questions, please reach out to your [Regional Solutions Coordinator](#) and/or the RIF team at RIF.BIZ@biz.oregon.gov.

Upcoming Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meetings

Monday, 10/12

- Central (1-4pm)

Tuesday, 10/13

- Northeastern (10am-12pm)
- South Central (10:30am-1pm)
- Mid-Valley (1-3:30pm)
- Southern (1:30-3:30pm)
- North Central (3-5pm)

Wednesday, 10/14

- South Coast (12-2pm)
- South Valley/Mid-Coast (1-3pm)
- Metro (1-3pm)

Thursday, 10/15

- North Coast (9:30-11:30am)
- Eastern (1-3pm)

Links to join virtually will be provided next Exchange on 9/28/2026

Regional Updates

Central – Scott Aycock

Housing Works Nine Peaks Affordable Rental Housing Grand Opening:

I had the pleasure of attending [Housing Works](#)' Grand Opening celebration for their new Nine Peaks affordable rental housing project. Nine Peaks includes 45 1-3 bedroom units of income-restricted, affordable rental workforce housing on Bend's eastside. Each residence includes air conditioning, a refrigerator, electric range, garbage disposal, dishwasher, patio/balcony access, storage space, and water, sewer, and garbage paid. Nine Peaks' community also features a community room, on-site laundry facility, secured access, and on-site parking. The project was made possible through a myriad of partnerships, including funding from OHCS, the City of Bend, and Deschutes County and financing from the Network for Oregon Affordable Housing and Wells Fargo bank. Speakers included Rep. Janelle Bynum, Bend Mayor Melanie Kebler, and representatives from HUD and the Housing Works board.



SriPonya Expanding to Provide Recovery Services in Madras:

[SriPonya Collective](#) is using OHA-administered Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) funds to support substance abuse recovery services in Madras. The non-profit has hired three recovery and reentry peer support mentors, has soft-launched the Brothers and Sisters In Progress Recovery Community Center, and they are facilitating six recovery and reentry meetings each week, with more coming soon. SriPonya is also working to launch their first Brothers in

Progress transitional home for men returning from incarceration, creating a pathway from reentry to recovery, stability, and community. SriPony's services and facilities are made possible through partnerships with OHA, Jefferson County Public Health, Changing Patterns, Climbing Mountains Counseling, Sponsors Inc., Furnish Hope, Heart of Oregon Corps, Crossfit, Willow Canyon Properties, St. Charles, Mosaic Medical, and Theo's Coffeehouse. I met with Jennifer Eales and Greg Mead, who together lead SriPony, visiting the two facilities and meeting with some of their team - all of whom have lived experience with substance abuse and recovery.



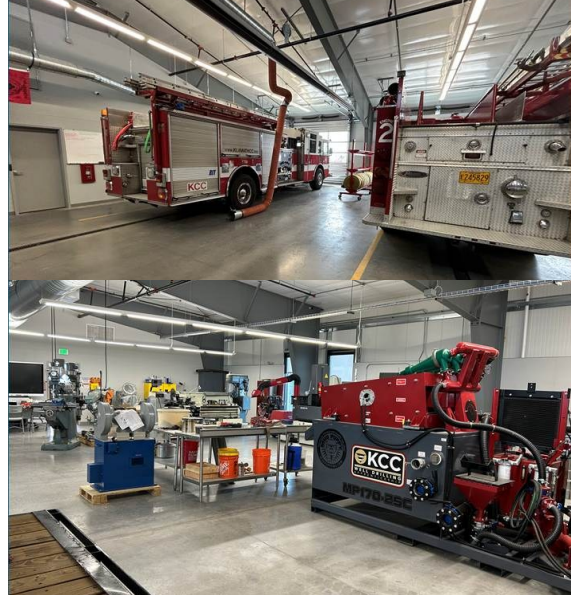
South Central – Scott Aycock

Regional Solutions Tour of Klamath Community College:

Klamath Community College has been very busy developing new services and facilities to better serve their students, regional businesses, and communities! Last week I toured a variety of impressive facilities at KCC: the Apprenticeship Center, the (under construction) Childcare Learning Center, and the site for KCC's future Cosmetology Center. The 29,000-square-foot KCC Childcare Learning Center will provide a high-quality, secure, and nurturing environment for children in OCDC's care and education programs, as well as state-of-the-art educational and training spaces for KCC's Early Childhood



Education and Education program students. The Apprenticeship Center was funded through grants and donations and is the home of numerous trade skill and apprenticeship programs, including manufacturing-related apprenticeship programs, plumbing, fire and emergency response, criminal justice and law enforcement, well drilling, commercial truck driving, and heavy equipment training programs. The center is expected to serve as a hub of workforce training, a key to regional growth and infrastructure development for the Klamath Basin and beyond as demand continues to grow for skilled labor. The Cosmetology Center will offer a purpose-built facility for KCC's growing cosmetology program, which offers cosmetology/barber technical training packaged with business coursework and general studies classes to support graduates to proficiently operate their own business if they so choose. KCC, like the rest of our state network of community colleges, is a fantastic example of what can happen when educators offer student, business, and community-responsive programming.



Mid-Valley – Beth Wytoski

Preparing for Detroit Drawdowns: The city of Stayton has been an example of leadership; of planning, collaboration, and responsibility. The regular meetings to plan for the drawdowns, expected to take place late-fall/early winter, include many Stayton officials, Marion County Emergency Management, representation from the Santiam Hospital, Salem Fire, ODHS, and Regional Solutions. Conversation stays focused on putting contingency plans into place in the event that the drawdowns increase turbidity in the water system beyond what their water intake can tolerate. Marion County is

working on an event specific campaign related to the drawdowns. The city and county are developing a plan to take inventory of available retail bottled water, in case the need emerges. Marion County is looking into available mobile water tank and water hauling resources including a water buffalo that OREM may be able to mobilize as redundancy. The group is still looking into resources for mobile showering, pursuing additional opportunities to construct interties, and developing communication plans for key partners.

Reworld Incinerator: The incinerator site formerly known as Covanta is beginning to mobilize demolition equipment onto the project site in Brooks. The public may see related materials moving around the site as early as this week. The demolition is planned through mechanical methods including cutting apart the main structural pieces and removing them with a crane. Further dismantling will occur at the ground level with water spray to control for dust. Contaminants such as asbestos will be removed before dismantling begins. Environmental cleanup of the site is scheduled for the summer of 2027 and Reworld Marion continues to work with the Oregon DEQ Voluntary Cleanup PrograPrem to develop sampling and remediation strategies for the site.

South Valley/Mid-Coast – Courtney Flathers

Elm Park Project in Florence: At the end of August, the City of Florence celebrated a momentous occasion with a ribbon cutting for the Elm Park affordable housing development and co-located early learning child care center. Elm Park will be home to 32 families and the neighboring child care facility will provide quality care for approximately 60 children. This project was made possible with significant state support. The City of Florence received \$1.9 million through Senate Bill 1530 (2024) for infrastructure investment needed to open this area to housing development. Other state support for this project included nearly \$12 million in LIFT funding through Oregon Housing and Community Services, \$1.43 million from the Department of Early Learning and Care's BuildUp Program, and a \$2 million grant from Business Oregon's Childcare Infrastructure Program. Congratulations to the City of Florence, the local housing developer, and other project partners who worked steadfastly to

bring their vision to reality. This project helps to address two critical needs in the community – affordable housing and child care. Well done!

Metro – Kathy Hyzy

The Oregon Cultural Trust Awards: The Oregon Cultural Trust just announced their grant recipients this year and wow, it's inspiring how many communities are benefitting from this uniquely Oregon program! A record \$4.5 million is being distributed to over 450 organizations supporting arts, culture, heritage and the humanities around the state. These funds are thanks to the over 10,000 Oregonians who gave to the Oregon Cultural Trust last year. For the last 25 years, the Cultural Tax Credit has allowed Oregonians who donate to a qualifying cultural nonprofit to also claim a 100-percent matching tax credit by giving an equal amount to the Cultural Trust. This redirection by Oregonians for Oregonians provides stable, ongoing funding to strengthen culture in Oregon. See the list of recipients [here](#).

Lam Research Groundbreaking: In late August, the Governor's Office and Regional Solutions team members joined hundreds of other excited attendees to celebrate the groundbreaking for Lam



Research's latest investment at its Tualatin campus. Lam plans to make the new facility one of its most advanced labs in the world, increasing capacity and capabilities for side-by-side innovation with customers and compressing product development cycles across its global lab network. Once completed, the expansion is expected to represent the company's biggest investment in Oregon to date, creating more than 400 direct, high-wage jobs at Lam and supporting thousands of indirect jobs. The

expansion will strengthen regional economic growth and bolster

Oregon's established and growing advanced manufacturing industry. In 2024, Lam Research [received](#) \$22 million in funding from the Oregon CHIPS Act to support the construction of this expansion. The state's Strategic Investment Program was also critical to secure a portion of this significant expansion, which is in the final stages of state approval with the Oregon Business Development Commission.

tumwata village Presentation to Metro Council: Willamette Falls, the second-largest waterfall in the US, is nested below steep bluffs and has spent over a century hemmed in by industry. It's also a cherished site of great significance to tribes across the Northwest, where people came to fish and trade for generations before settlers arrived and forced their removal. tumwata village is the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's effort to reclaim and restore a 32-acre former mill site that was once and is again a place they call home. Plans for the village include housing, mixed-use commercial, parking, and extensive restoration of natural areas. The Riverwalk is the crown jewel of this vision: a 14 foot wide bike/ped pathway that connects with Oregon City's existing promenade along the river and McLoughlin Boulevard to provide public access along the river to a viewing platform hovering next to the falls.

Last week I joined other supporters of the tumwata village project in Metro Council chambers as the project team presented both the tumwata village plans and the Riverwalk concept to the Council. The presentation was part of the work to identify the way forward for this project to benefit from a \$20 million investment of Metro's Large-Scale Vision Parks & Nature bond funds in the Riverwalk. This would build on the state's investment of \$12.5 million in Block 2 of the Riverwalk; Block 1, funded by the Grand Ronde, is already under construction. The Metro funding would support the completion of the final piece of the Riverwalk by 2031. Oregon City is partnering closely with the Grand Ronde on the Riverwalk and will own and maintain the structure once completed; the Grand Ronde will retain ownership of their land. I have been privileged to help with this work, and it was a joyful occasion to witness! Metro Council will vote on a resolution regarding the investment later this fall.

North Coast – Nate Stice

OMIC R&D 10-Year Celebration: Regional Solutions team members joined OMIC R&D, Oregon Tech, industry partners, and community leaders in Scappoose to celebrate a decade of work building Oregon’s advanced manufacturing capacity. The anniversary highlighted both the progress OMIC has made and the long-term partnerships required to get there, including the early leadership of former Senator Betsy Johnson. Regional Solutions has been engaged with OMIC and Columbia County partners throughout that work and continues to support OMIC-related priorities, infrastructure needs, workforce and business development efforts, and other projects aimed at strengthening the broader Scappoose–St. Helens manufacturing corridor. Congratulations to the OMIC team and all of the partners who have helped turn the original vision into a significant regional and statewide asset!

North Tillamook Water Regionalization: Regional Solutions participated in an in-person meeting in Manzanita with the North Tillamook water collaborative, building on earlier Regional Solutions convening that brought local water providers together around shared supply and infrastructure challenges. The collaborative is now moving toward an update of the region’s more than 30-year-old water supply plan, with initial work focused on water rights and supply, aging infrastructure, emergency interties and redundancy, and the relationship between water capacity and future housing and development. Regional Solutions will continue supporting the effort by connecting local partners with state agencies and helping identify pathways to address regional infrastructure needs as the work develops.

Clatsop County Industrial Symbiosis: The Columbia-Pacific Economic Development District (Col-Pac) convened Regional Solutions, local governments, the Port of Astoria, Business Oregon, Oregon State University and area businesses to advance Clatsop County’s industrial-symbiosis work. Industrial symbiosis connects businesses so that the waste, wastewater, heat or other byproducts from one operation can become a useful input for another, reducing disposal costs while creating opportunities for new investment and

jobs. Current work includes testing innovative approaches to treating seafood- and brewery-related wastewater, evaluating potential new uses for existing industrial facilities and exploring an innovation center at the Port's 42 Gateway property. Partners are now surveying business inputs and outputs, mapping available infrastructure and developing criteria for selecting the most promising projects. Regional Solutions will help coordinate state-agency participation and address regulatory, infrastructure and funding barriers as projects move toward implementation.

Columbia County Transmission Task Force: Regional Solutions joined utility, local government and economic-development partners to review the draft final report of the Columbia County Transmission Task Force. The group was formed to address limited electrical transmission capacity in central and southern Columbia County, which constrains the ability to serve new industrial and other large power users. The report identifies a potential upgrade of an existing Bonneville Power Administration transmission line from 115 to 230 kilovolts as the likely long-term solution, while recognizing that the project will require additional technical analysis, funding and community support. Task Force members discussed a second phase focused on public education, broader community engagement and alignment around the region's economic-development goals. Regional Solutions will continue supporting the local partners and explore funding for this next phase as Columbia River PUD works with BPA and Portland General Electric to refine the technical solution and determine how costs could be shared.

Southern – Jessica LaBerge

Rogue Workforce Partnership Celebrates First BUILD Rogue Valley Cohort: Rogue Workforce Partnership hosted a community celebration this week highlighting the launch of the [BUILD Rogue Valley construction training program](#) and the completion of its first student cohort. Partners from education, industry, state and local agencies, and community organizations gathered to recognize progress and momentum in expanding construction career pathways for youth in Southern Oregon.



The event also spotlighted a recent \$750,000 Governor's Statewide Activities Grant supporting workforce development across five Southern Oregon counties, with a focus on housing-related construction careers. Two additional

BUILD cohorts will begin this fall in Jackson and Josephine counties.

While the event emphasized accomplishment and collaboration, partners raised important questions about insurance requirements, OSHA/BOLI safety considerations, apprenticeships, and workers' compensation — key issues that must be addressed to ensure youth training programs remain safe and sustainable.

With strong alignment among educators, employers, workforce boards, and state and local partners, Southern Oregon is well positioned to expand its construction talent pipeline. This investment represents a strategic step toward meeting regional workforce needs and supporting long-term housing production across the Rogue Valley.

South Coast — Jessica LaBerge

LOC Small Cities Meeting Highlights - Port Orford: The League of Oregon Cities (LOC) held its Small Cities meeting in Port Orford on August 20th, bringing together local leaders from across the region to share what's working in their communities and discuss ongoing challenges around public engagement amongst other topics. Several cities shared local success stories:

Gold Beach shared the successful rebuild of the Buffington Park playground—a major community win made possible through a \$500,000 grant. With a small staff and strong support from the Public

Works department, the city delivered a much-needed replacement after the previous structure was destroyed. The new playground has been a hit with local kids and stands out as a clear example of how targeted investments can create meaningful community spaces.

[Reedsport](#) highlighted momentum through its Main Street Program, closely tied to Urban Renewal efforts. Revitalization events, expanded outreach, and strategic collaboration have helped energize previously vacant downtown areas. Grants have been intentionally scaled to stretch resources, complemented by a Main Street coordinator, urban renewal funding, and tourism dollars. The result is a more vibrant, active downtown district, though continued grant support will remain important.

[Port Orford](#) used Main Street grant funding to open a new visitor center that doubles as a community hub, supporting holiday events and broader community activities. With Curry County home to only one chamber, their Main Street program is filling a vital role locally. The city also updated codes and [transient lodging tax \(TLT\)](#) to strengthen its tourism revenue.

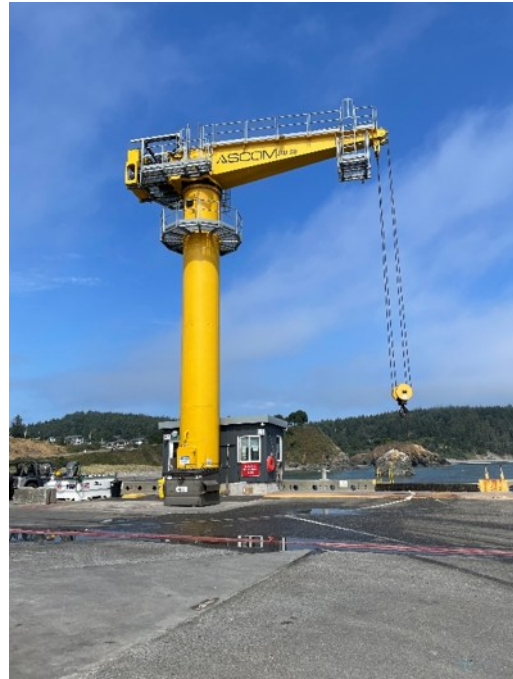
[Brookings](#) reported strong community participation during its housing study. The city partnered with a consulting firm, issued a survey, placed QR codes on water bills, tabled at community events, and used Facebook and radio spots to broaden outreach. Their combined approach—mixing digital, print, and in-person communication—resulted in a solid response from residents.

These conversations highlight the creativity and resilience of small cities across the region. Whether rebuilding key community spaces, revitalizing downtown districts, or finding new ways to involve residents in decision making, each community is navigating its own challenges with determination and collaboration. The shared experiences from this meeting underscore the continued importance of strong partnerships, flexible engagement strategies, and sustained investment in local priorities.

Port of Port Orford Working Waterfront Update: During my recent visit to Port Orford, I met with Port advocate and project manager Tom Calvanese, who also serves as Executive Director of the Oregon Kelp Alliance (ORKA). Thanks to Tom for the detailed update he shared on the Port's ongoing work to strengthen and modernize its working waterfront.

The Port is in the middle of several major federal and state investments aimed at supporting existing businesses and opening the door for new ones. A few projects have already been completed, including:

- New Ice Machine on the Dock: Funded through a \$50,000 grant from the Oregon Coast Visitors Association, the fleet can now ice fish directly at the dock instead of hauling ice in. This has already created efficiencies for local fishermen.
- Installation of Two High-Capacity Cranes: The Port recently completed a \$4.25 million upgrade with the addition of two new heavy-lift cranes. These upgrades allow the dock to safely handle larger and heavier loads—an important step for long-term economic resilience.



Several other projects are underway, and the [Port's website](#) is the best place to track ongoing progress. A few highlights include:

- Dock Road Slope Stabilization Assessment: Field testing is scheduled to begin in September, marking a key milestone in ensuring stability and future access.
- Seawater Delivery System: Stage One preliminary design work is in motion for upgrades to the seawater delivery system—an asset that supports a range of waterfront activities.
- Economic Analysis: findings from the Port's economic analysis are expected to be presented to the Commission in the coming months.

A big thank you to Tom for taking the time to walk me through all the exciting developments. [The Port of Port Orford](#) continues to show how strategic investments can strengthen local industry and support a vibrant, resilient working waterfront.

Governor's Marketplace – North Bend Recap: We had a truly successful Governor's Marketplace on August 27 at the Ko-Kwel Casino in North Bend. This year's theme, "Pathways to Partnerships," really came through in the conversations and connections throughout the day. Nearly 70 participants joined us to learn more about state contracting, available business resources, and the programs that can help navigate opportunities or support employers.



One of the highlights was hearing from North Bend Mayor Jessica Engelke during lunch. She offered a thoughtful and engaging snapshot of the workforce development and regional collaboration happening along the South Coast. Mayor Engelke clearly captured both the challenges local

governments face and the power of partnering with organizations that take a long-range, community-minded approach. Her message reinforced why events like Marketplace matter.

We also provided continuing education credits for eligible licensed contractors and hosted several educational sessions to support professional development.

Overall, the event brought together a strong mix of agencies, businesses, and community leaders — all focused on building better pathways to partnership across Oregon.

Cow Creek Umpqua Tribe of Indians Secures Housing Funding:

Regional Solutions celebrates the news this week that the U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development is awarding the Cow Creek Umpqua Tribe of Indians nearly \$5million to build more affordable housing for tribal members. The Tribe says it's one of just 31 across the nation to secure this funding. They plan to break ground soon on seven single-family two-bedroom homes in Myrtle Creek. The homes are expected to be completed in the fall of 2029. "Affordable housing

for our Cow Creek Umpqua Tribal citizens is such a crucial component to self-sufficiency. It helps families and individuals feel a sense of security, stability, tradition, and provides a place for lasting, living memories. We are thrilled to receive this generous grant and look forward to the positive contributions it will make in Douglas County,” said Cow Creek Umpqua Tribal Chairman Carla Keene in a press release. [Link here for more information.](#)

Eastern — Courtney Crowell

City of Adrian Water Project: Our Regional Solutions team is beginning to work with the City of Adrian to address their drinking water issues. We met this week about available state resources to begin to assess the problems and look for funding opportunities to address the challenges. This is another example of ongoing challenges that very small communities (less than 300 people) in Eastern Oregon face with both capacity and funding.

Ontario Community Food Center Opening Next Week: After many years of planning and hard work the new Ontario Community Food Center will opening on Wednesday, Sept. 16th in Ontario. In collaboration with the Western Treasure Valley Food Systems Partnership, the Ontario Community Food Center (OCFC) brings together fair housing, food justice, and accessible healthcare. Co-locating the OCFC with River Bend Place affordable housing and the Valley Family Health Care clinic on one innovative campus, they can now offer the Ontario community an integrated suite of services. Our Regional Solutions team has been watching the progress of this project over the years and helping to make connections and find solutions as issues came up. This is a welcome service as Harney and Malheur Counties face some of the highest rates of food insecurity in the state. Trucks travel up to 300 miles to deliver food to this very rural region. According to a 2023 report issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, residents often drive several hours to a grocery store or rely on gas station convenience stores, which tend to stock less nutritious foods.

Wallowa Lake Dam Project: We recently got the final permits for the Wallowa Lake Dam Rehabilitation Project and construction will start on September 8th! There's still work ahead but it's a project that is almost 30 years in the making and our Regional Solutions team has personally been working on for 9 years. This project will not only create a safer dam for the community but add water for both streams and agricultural use and allow fish to once again reach Wallowa Lake after being locked out for over 100 years. Here's a great [website](#) that Trout Unlimited put together that talks about the importance of this project.

Eastern Oregon Economic Summit: I attended the annual Eastern Oregon Economic Summit in Ontario and had the opportunity to connect with many leaders from across the region and state. This was one of the largest gatherings for the event and a great chance to catch up with folks and talk about projects and opportunities across Eastern Oregon.

NEOEDD Grant Opportunities for Baker and Union Counties: NEOEDD announced recently that their \$15 million grant from the US Department of Energy is moving forward. The grant is part of the USDOE Transmission Siting & Economic Development Program which provides funds to state, local, or Tribal governmental entities for activities that promote economic development and mitigate impacts in communities that may be affected by the construction and operation of a covered transmission project, in this case the Boardman to Hemingway transmission line in Baker and Union counties.

Funds were originally approved for NEOEDD to conduct a community engagement process and set up a subgrant program with a committee of community representatives making shared decisions on grant awards. Those activities are no longer allowed. Under the new administration's direction, NEOEDD has until December to identify proposed subawards for public and non-profit entities. In January 2027, NEOEDD will submit proposed subaward agreements to USDOE and political appointees will review them and have the final say on which are approved or denied.

Information on the subaward scoping process is available [here](#) including a recorded information session, FAQs, and Preliminary Information Form. NEOEDD will host Strategic Priority meetings on zoom by CEDS focus area: Workforce Development, 3-4:30 pm, September 10; Housing, 3-4:30 pm, September 15; Small Business Development, 3-4:30 pm, September 21; Infrastructure 3-4:30 pm, September 24th. Non-profits and local governments interested in a potential subaward should submit a Preliminary Information Form by September 27 and register to attend a Strategic Priority [meeting](#).

Resources and Opportunities

DEQ Pre-approved Supplemental Environmental Projects Information Session

Are you a nonprofit or government organization with a public health or environmental project that is in need of funding? DEQ is launching a new opportunity this fall, and you may want to [attend a virtual listening session on September 17 at 10 a.m.](#) to find out more. Supplemental Environmental Projects are public health and environmental projects that are funded by a person or entity that has been assessed a civil penalty by DEQ for environmental law violations. SEPs are negotiated during settlement of a specific enforcement case - each person or organization that is subject to a civil penalty can decide if they would like to pursue a SEP. The funding for these projects can range up to 80% of the civil penalty, depending on the project's cost and the types of benefits derived from the project. Projects must be pre-approved by DEQ.

OPRD Funding Opportunities

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department administers a variety of grant programs that support outdoor recreation, historic preservation, conservation, and more.

The **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** is a Federally funded grant program administered by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. The program generally receives approximately \$4 million annually to award to qualified projects. Since 1964, this national grant program has awarded over \$80 million in grant funds for Oregon recreational areas and facilities. **The 2026-27 grant cycle opens September 14th**, with applications due on November 16th. For more information, visit their website [here](#).

The **Recreational Trails Grant Program (RTP)** opened on **September 1** for application. Letters of intent are due on [OPRD Grants](#) by **September 30** and completed applications are due **November 16**. RTP is a federally funded reimbursement program that

provides matching grants to develop, improve, and expand public recreation trails for motorized and non-motorized use. Eligible applicants include government entities (local, state, federal, tribal) and nonprofits. For more information, including the recording of a webinar held last week, visit the RTP website [here](#).

For additional OPRD opportunities, click the links below:
[Heritage and Recreation Grants Program Summary \(PDF\)](#)
[Recreation Grants Program Summary \(PDF\)](#)

Ford Family Foundation Hiring Director of Community Strategies

The Ford Family Foundation is hiring for a Director of Community Strategies to provide strategic leadership for the Foundation's efforts to support community-driven system change through community engagement, leadership development, and rural capacity-building efforts. This role helps shape how the Foundation listens to, learns from, and partners with rural communities to strengthen local leadership, increase community influence, and support systems-level change. This field-based position must be currently based in a rural Oregon community. The deadline to submit applications is Friday, September 25th. For more information, see their website [here](#).

2027 Community Storytelling Fellowship

Applications are open for Oregon Humanities' Community Storytelling Fellowship, an annual fellowship awarded to Oregonians who belong to communities that are underrepresented in Oregon media. Each fellow receives \$5,000 to support the creation of true stories—journalism, creative nonfiction, video, audio, and other media—about those communities. Stories are shared in *Oregon Humanities* magazine and other publications. Applications are due October 1.

Community Cultural Participation Grants

Multnomah County Cultural Coalition's grants support work that makes culture accessible and affordable to Multnomah County residents, promotes cultural diversity, encourages new cultural activities, and fosters partnerships and collaborations. Applications for 2027 grants of up to \$3,000 are due by October 12, 2026.

Business Oregon Seeks Input on Future Centers of Innovation Excellence Funding

Business Oregon issued a Pre-Application Inquiry (PAI) inviting organizations, partnerships, and institutions across Oregon's innovation ecosystem to share input that will help shape the agency's next Centers of Innovation Excellence (CIE) funding opportunity, anticipated for release in Spring 2027. The Pre-Application Inquiry is an information-gathering process only. It does not award funding, create a grant agreement, pre-qualify respondents, or limit eligibility for any future funding opportunity. Responses will be reviewed to help Business Oregon understand where the greatest opportunities and gaps exist before the agency designs the next solicitation.

Through the PAI, Business Oregon is seeking information about:

- Sector and technology opportunities, in both established and emerging areas
- Needs and gaps within Oregon's innovation ecosystem
- Current activities, partnerships, and geographic reach of potential future applicants
- Organizational readiness for a future CIE or CIE-type role
- Considerations that should inform the structure and scope of the Spring 2027 funding opportunity

The Centers of Innovation Excellence program supports organizations that strengthen Oregon's innovation ecosystem in strategic technology and industry sectors. CIE activities can include startup and business support, commercialization assistance, sector strategy and coordination, mentorship and advising, access to specialized facilities or expertise, industry engagement, and connections to private capital and federal funding opportunities. The current CIE portfolio includes organizations working in bioscience, advanced manufacturing, deep tech, unmanned systems, and semiconductors.

PAI materials, narrative response instructions, and the online response form are available on Business Oregon's Centers of Innovation Excellence webpage [here](#). PAI responses are due October 5th. Questions about the PAI should be directed to Danielle Alexander, Innovation Strategist, at Danielle.Alexander@biz.oregon.gov.