

9. Looking Ahead

This *Oregon Resilience Plan* focuses on Oregon's physical infrastructure, with a special emphasis on business and community continuity following a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami. Because the state's physical infrastructure supplies the foundation for community resilience, we believe that the recommendations proposed here, if implemented over the next 50 years, will enhance our infrastructure, strengthen our communities, and support the growth of the state's economy.

This is a timeframe much longer than typical of government planning efforts, but the *Oregon Resilience Plan* is intended to inform and underpin statewide policies. To affirm Oregon's commitment to sustained action, OSSPAC needs to work with the Joint Ways & Means Committee of Oregon's Legislative Assembly to track and report on progress toward seismic resilience at the beginning of each legislative session, to keep the 50-year goal in view.

Because the level of economic development and the condition of infrastructure varies among Oregon communities, we suggest that local communities use the framework and the gap-analysis methodology presented in this report to conduct more refined assessments of local seismic and tsunami hazards, and develop community-specific recommendations to meet their unique response and recovery needs.

A Cascadia earthquake and tsunami will affect both Oregon and Washington. Both states share common challenges, among them the interstate bridges and the Columbia River navigation channel as well as the regional power grid and liquid fuel supply. In particular, Oregon gets almost one hundred percent of its liquid fuel from suppliers in Washington, delivered via pipeline and river. We believe that it would be beneficial for both states to work together at a regional level to address the common challenge of resilience to a region-wide seismic event. The "Resilient Washington State" initiative, completed this year by the Seismic Safety Committee of Washington State's Emergency Management Division, supplies an opportunity to begin.

The challenges of resilience are not limited to disaster preparedness; they are being recognized in many areas that require foresight and the coordination of public and private sector efforts. We encourage a broader public conversation that will bring other state agencies, businesses, and interest groups to the table for an exploration of resilience with respect to natural hazards, land use, climate change, and other topics characterized by systems interdependencies and long-time horizons. We have much to learn from one another about this new way of thinking.

This planning effort, with its emphasis on seismic resilience, is OSSPAC's first attempt to consider seismic risk from a perspective other than emergency preparedness and response. The report, compiled entirely by volunteers who contributed their skills and expertise, is less comprehensive than we might have wished, due to the limited time and resources available for the task. OSSPAC intends to monitor events around the world, and to update and augment the report as we are able to do so. We already recognize

the need to expand the planning effort in the future to include the following areas: (1) local community planning, (2) human resilience, (3) civic infrastructure, and (4) joint regional planning with Washington State.

The *Oregon Resilience Plan* is fundamentally about people—about preserving our communities and workforce to help businesses bounce back quickly from a natural disaster, so that the energies of commerce can propel recovery. Infrastructure investment will certainly lay a solid foundation to make timely recovery possible. However, human resilience supported by Oregon’s civic infrastructure (community-based, non-governmental, and faith-based organizations) is needed to achieve full community resilience.

From natural disasters around the world, we have learned that civic infrastructure is especially critical during the first weeks after a disaster, before organized government assistance can be delivered. We believe that civic organizations, too, need to conduct seismic vulnerability assessment and to develop mitigation plans to ensure that expected services will be delivered.

On the topic of human resilience, we recognize the paramount importance of public health. We urge a commitment to the education and outreach necessary to keep the state’s population as healthy as possible, so that the citizens themselves are ready physically and mentally to withstand disasters of any form.

Personal preparedness is a cornerstone of human resilience. Private and nonprofit sector leaders including the American Red Cross, drawing on experience with disaster response and recovery in many settings, emphasize a need to design and deliver training that reaches all students and educators in Oregon’s K-12 schools, all local government employees, and all employees and guests of Oregon’s tourism industry. The state, along with business leaders, must do more to support and facilitate these efforts. Everyone will play a role in disaster response and recovery; training must reach beyond those public and private sector employees who have essential response duties.

A resilient physical infrastructure, a healthy population, and a robust government and civic infrastructure to provide services to those in need will equip Oregon to withstand a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami, and to expedite response and recovery efforts. With determination, we can achieve that goal.