

2020-2025 Oregon Heritage Plan

Oregon's Heritage

Oregon's heritage is the evidence of our past found in the ideas and things we have created, the traditions we keep, and the environment we have inherited. It is the brick of a historic downtown building, hand-hewn beams in a homestead barn, and sounds from a community celebration.

Oregon's heritage holds great value. Sharing stories of the individuals and groups that have come before enables Oregonians to discover our place in the world. Exhibits and programs that examine freedom and achievement as well as injustice and struggle help provide critical awareness of where Oregonians came from and where we want to go. Preserving the character of historic downtowns creates vital places to live and work and acts as a catalyst for economic development. Participating in traditions and commemorations inspires engaged citizens. Unraveling how past challenges were met gives new leaders wisdom to confront the challenges of our time. Oregon's heritage links us to the past, while it influences how we think about the future. *adapted from History Relevance Project

About the Oregon Heritage Commission

The Oregon Heritage Commission is a group of leaders from across the state that works collaboratively to champion resources, recognition, and funding for preserving and interpreting Oregon's past. Founded in 1995 by the Legislature, the Heritage Commission is comprised of nine gubernatorial appointments and nine ex-officio members. The Commission is designated the primary agency for coordination of heritage activities in Oregon.

In 2018, the Heritage Commission reviewed the progress of the 2014 Oregon Heritage Plan and recent statewide surveys. Paired with ongoing engagement with the heritage community through the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's grant programs, feedback from Oregon Heritage MentorCorps participants, discussions at the Heritage Conference, and recognition of cultural trends, the Heritage Commission identified four opportunities to strengthen heritage in the state.

The Heritage Plan

The 2020 Heritage Plan is a call to action for heritage efforts to unite around common goals. The Oregon Heritage Commission invites individuals and organizations to discuss these goals, consider how they align with institutional and regional opportunities, and join the Commission in this work. Together, individual steps will add up to important outcomes for the state resulting in more stories told, more people served, and more sustainable heritage organizations. The Heritage Commission provides grants, incentives, technical assistance, and recognition programs to support this work.

2020 Heritage Goals

- 1) Include more voices.** Expand the narrative of history told and preserved in the state to capture previously excluded or marginalized voices for a more complex and accurate depiction of Oregon's historical events.

***Desired Outcome:** More stories from previously excluded or marginalized voices are developed and shared.*

- 2) Increase access to heritage.** Strive to engage more community members and visitors in local heritage by increasing awareness of resources and making them available to diverse audiences and potential stakeholders.

Desired Outcome: Heritage organizations evaluate who's in their community and take intentional steps to decrease barriers and increase access.

- 3) Promote the value of heritage.** Share the economic, cultural and educational value of heritage with the public and decision makers to inspire awareness, funding, and respect for long-term preservation of Oregon's heritage.

Desired Outcome: Heritage organizations recognize and communicate the value of their work.

- 4) Pursue best practices.** Pursue professional standards and best practices related to heritage processes, standards, and organizational management to ensure healthy, sustainable heritage organizations.

Desired Outcome: Heritage organizations increase organizational capacity.

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