

Heritage Impacts Statement

Heritage in Communities

An Oregonian's dress, food, language, material goods and music are the tangible remnants of heritage transmitted to them from previous generations of Oregonians and from those new to Oregon.

There are nearly 200 history-related museums across the state. In addition, more than 800 other non-profit organizations gather our heritage and/or make it available to the public.

There are 1,943 individual properties on the National Register of Historic Places – every county is represented.

There are more than 31,000 recorded archaeological sites that help us understand previous Oregonians and the lives they led.

Heritage and the Economy

There are more than 1,100 properties designated Century Farms and Ranches, many of which are the foundation of their community's economic, cultural and educational vitality.

Historic buildings are often the core of community revitalization. The Main Street redevelopment program exists in 80 Oregon communities and neighborhoods and re-energizes historic business areas. In just 25 of these districts, private investment from 2010-2012 totaled \$24.5 million, resulting in a net gain of 163 businesses and 856 jobs.

The 2008 Legislative Task Force on Historic Property found evidence that every \$1 million spent in historic rehabilitation creates 36.1 jobs, compared to the 24.5 jobs generated by that same \$1 million in production by the average manufacturing firm.

A special assessment tax benefit program through the State Historic Preservation Office provides 479 commercial building operators and homeowners with a reduced tax rate that encourages the rehabilitation of historic buildings. These projects involve buildings with assessed values totaling \$306 million.



Heritage Tourism

Eighty-three percent of the leisure travelers in Oregon say they travel to experience the places, people, activities and things that authentically represent the past and present, including cultural, historic and natural resources. This is higher than the national average of 78 percent. Leisure and hospitality employment accounts for 10 percent of jobs in the state.

Cultural and heritage travelers in Oregon spend on average \$1,618 per trip, nearly 60 percent more than the national average. They spend nearly \$4 billion annually in the state.

Cultural heritage travelers like to engage in a range of activities – everything from culture to nature outings – they also like to partake of regional foods and wines and brews, appreciating the authenticity of what Oregon has to offer.

A 2012 exhibit at The High Desert Museum in Bend attracted 40,000 visitors: 78 percent were from outside Central Oregon, resulting in longer stays and a significant impact on lodging and dining establishments, retail stores, attractions and service sector businesses. In Astoria, more than 90 percent of the heritage travelers are from outside the North Coast area.

Heritage Funding

There is no single system for providing public funds to heritage organizations. The vast majority of the nearly three-dozen county historical societies, often considered the backbone of Oregon heritage along with the Oregon Historical Society, operate without regular public funding.

Nearly half of Oregon museums charge no admission fee. Some heritage groups provide funds so that schools can afford buses to bring students to museums to learn about their community.

Oregonians volunteer tens of thousands of hours of work for cultural heritage organizations and projects. If the value of these volunteer hours were calculated, it would total hundreds of thousands of dollars given to Oregon's communities.

The two leading recommendations of the 2011 Legislative Task Force on Heritage Vitality were to reauthorize the Cultural Tax Credit and to appropriate at least \$2.5 million to the Oregon Historical Society.

In 2011, the Cultural Trust granted \$1,543,002 to 60 organizations, 42 county and tribal coalitions, and five statewide partners.

Funding from the Cultural Trust helped organizations provide more than 500,000 Oregonians experiences with heritage, arts and humanities organizations.

The Cultural Trust leverages more than \$3 million a year in matching donations to Oregon cultural nonprofits.



Information in this statement has been compiled from the 2011 Oregon Heritage Vitality Report, the 2012 Legislative Task Force on Heritage Vitality, The 2008 Legislative Task Force on Historic Property, the 2012 Oregon Cultural Trust annual report, the 2012 Cultural and Heritage Traveler Study, the 2006 Oregon Museums Survey, the Oregon Century Farm and Ranch Program, the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, the Oregon Main Street Program, the National Park Service report "Economic Benefits to Local Communities from National Park Visitation, 2011". This statement was prepared by the Oregon Heritage Commission and updated in April 2013.