

County Funding for County Historical Societies

Key funding issues, 1990-2010

Most Oregon counties have provided no or little funding for their county historical societies. During the past 20 years, those counties that did fund county historical societies have suffered three ways financially.

1. Ballot measures 47/50 in 1996 overturned previous special property tax levies
2. Loss of Oregon and California RR funds (sometimes referred to as Federal Forest Funds). Elimination occurs 2013.
3. Formation of other local historical societies

County	O&C	Prior to 1990: History, \$	After 1990	FY 2009 \$ From county	FY 2010 \$ From county
Benton	Yes	County provided some operating funds for Philomath museum building owned by BCHS.	Voters approved 6.5 cent-per-thousand levy in 1992. Moved to General Fund in 1997 with reductions; provides about 56 percent of annual BCHS operating budget.	\$238,374	\$238,350
Crook	Yes	Voters approved first levy in 1976 for \$10,400, in 1988 increased to \$41,500.	Voters have approved 4-year special 6 cent-per-thousand levies since 1998, most recently in 2010. Non-profit Crook County Historical Society has raised \$1.6 million to expand and enhance museum.	\$166,307	\$178,400
Douglas	Yes	County department since 1969.	Museum is a “non-mandated” county department.	\$260,910	\$217,745
Hood River	Yes	Historical society formed in 1949 and transferred its collection to county in 1954. In 1989, county provided about \$10,000 in funding.	Museum is a county department. County in FY 2010 provided about 57 percent of museum funding, with the remainder in grants and funds provided by local historical society. County’s FY 2011 funds reduced to \$51,385. Building is county owned. Property is owned by Port of Hood River.	\$76,208	\$74,944

Jackson	Yes	Voters approved levy in 1948. At peak, SOHS had 40 employees, \$2.2 million budget.	County continued some funding after 47/50. Began 2004 to discontinue funding over three years. Historical society paid county \$1 rent for county-owned historic buildings until moving out of them in 2010. The county plans to give society \$1 million from the sale of the US Hotel and has already advanced \$200,000.	0	0
Klamath	Yes	Anecdotes indicate a small percentage of proceeds from property foreclosure auctions was allocated to museum in 1940s or 1950s.	General fund allocation to the museum peaked at \$215,304 in FY 2000. In 2006, voters approved a hotel-motel tax increase. Originally, museum expected \$120,000 per year from it, but the amount has been closer to \$100,000. County owns buildings. In FY 2011, the county provides no general funds.	\$62,360	\$28,470
Lane	Yes	Museum opened 1951. Museum staff reduced to one, 1982. Partial staff restoration, 1985.	County operated until 1996; Friends of the Museum until 2006; Lane County Historical Society, 2006-present. Society receives 10 percent of the tourism-designated hotel-motel tax proceeds. (The visitors bureau receives 70 percent.) Formula adjusted (reduced) in 2008 to provide money to Lane County Parks. Loss of half-time staff member (educator) followed. Room tax moneys = 75% of society budget. County provides building.	\$210,401	\$182,160
Lincoln	Yes	Lincoln County Historical Society formed 1948. Voters created a county historical tax fund in 1964.	County supports both Lincoln County Historical Society and three other historical societies.	\$339,624	\$305,662
Linn	Yes	County acquired museum and Moyer House in 1971 from historical society.	O&C funds account for about one-quarter of county budget in FY 2009. Historical society and donations additionally provide \$14,000-\$17,000 annually for operations. Figures at right exclude	\$31,344	\$33,409

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