

Cottage Grove Museum Disaster Resilience Plan



June 2020

Final Plan

*Photos courtesy of the Bohemia Gold Mining Museum,
Cottage Grove Museum and City of Cottage Grove*

Prepared for
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Territorial Acknowledgement

The City of Cottage Grove is located on Kalapuya Ilihi, the traditional indigenous homeland of the Kalapuya people. Following treaties between 1851 and 1855, Kalapuya people were dispossessed of their indigenous homeland by the United States government and forcibly removed to the Coast Reservation in Western Oregon. Today, descendants are citizens of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians of Oregon, whose relationship with this land continues to this day. Kalapuya descendants continue to make important contributions in their communities, in Cottage Grove, and across the land we now refer to as Oregon.

We offer gratitude for the land itself, for those who have stewarded it for generations, and for the opportunity to study, learn, work, and be in community on this land. We acknowledge that the City of Cottage Grove's history, like many others, is fundamentally tied to the first colonial developments in the Willamette Valley.

We express our respect to the many more tribes who have ancestral connections to this territory, as well as to all other displaced Indigenous peoples who call Oregon home.

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About the Institute for Policy Research and Engagement

The Institute for Policy Research & Engagement (IPRE) is a research center affiliated with the School of Planning, Public Policy, and Management at the University of Oregon. It is an interdisciplinary organization that assists Oregon communities by providing planning and technical assistance to help solve local issues and improve the quality of life for Oregon residents. The role of IPRE is to link the skills, expertise, and innovation of higher education with the transportation, economic development, and environmental needs of communities and regions in the State of Oregon, thereby providing service to Oregon and learning opportunities to the students involved.



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Cottage Grove Museum Disaster Plan

This document provides a disaster resilience plan for the Cottage Grove Museum, developed as a part of the Disaster Resilience Plan for Heritage Resources in Cottage Grove. Emergencies are unplanned events that can significantly impact the Museum’s ability to steward heritage resources and serve the broader Cottage Grove community. This plan considers how the Museum can better prepare for, respond to, and recover from various emergencies. This plan is intended to guide leadership by considering:

1. What the organization does
2. Current levels of disaster preparedness
3. What the Museum needs to accomplish key activities
4. Actionable recommendations to increase resilience

Summary

The Disaster Resilience Plan for the Cottage Grove Museum is the result of a partnership between the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) Oregon Heritage Program and the City of Cottage Grove. The goal of the Plan is to increase organizational knowledge and provide a framework for decision-making about the Museum’s heritage resources in the case of a disaster in Cottage Grove. As an Oregon All-Star Heritage Community, Cottage Grove was an ideal place to pilot this project. Participating heritage organizations included the Cottage Grove Museum, Cottage Grove Genealogical Society, Bohemia Gold Mining Museum, Cottage Grove Historical Society, and Main Street Cottage Grove.



The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus occurred midway through development of this Plan. The lived experience of a global pandemic inevitably shaped the outcomes of the resilience goals and strategies detailed in this plan. The crisis provided a unique opportunity to measure the response of heritage organizations and their unique coping strategies identified in the planning process, alongside statewide mandates in response to COVID-19.

Resilience Goals

The project team developed five goals to improve the resilience of the Cottage Grove Museum. A complete framework, including strategies and action items, is provided at the end of this Plan.

- Goal 1:** Increase accessibility to institutional knowledge by creating and documenting formal policies and protocols using the Emergency Response Plan template.
- Goal 2:** Identify, diversify, and cross-train members of heritage organizations in essential roles.
- Goal 3:** Diversify and secure the location, physical storage, and maintenance of heritage resources.
- Goal 4:** Expand opportunities for education and diverse partnerships that provide expertise, increased capacity, and increased community investment in heritage assets.
- Goal 5:** Increase and diversify current and future funding sources to strengthen the economic resilience of the Museum.

Background

The Cottage Grove Museum is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to serve as an educational resource to stimulate public interest through the collection, preservation, and display of items related to local history. The Museum's collection consists of local artifacts with stories connected to the history of Cottage Grove. Through artifacts, photographs, and historic buildings the Cottage Grove Museum has been preserving history since 1961. They are located at 147 H St. and occupy three separate facilities including the Veley House and Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic church, which are both historic structures, and an annex building, which houses additional exhibits.

Risk Profile

This section includes key findings about the current conditions of the Cottage Grove Museum and highlights vulnerabilities that the organization faces from natural and human-caused hazards. Data on current conditions were informed by questionnaires completed by heritage organization representatives, informational interviews, workshops, and board meetings. The following findings assist in shaping the recommended resilience strategies for the Museum.

- **Current protocol relies on the full board to make decisions which will have varying impact on implementing disaster resilience strategies.** The Museum Board indicated that all important decisions are made collectively. During the response and recovery to unexpected events, it is unlikely that all board members will be available to participate, nor would a full board meeting be called for immediate response needs. Disaster resilience strategies that revolve around mitigation and preparedness efforts will continue to need full board support in order to implement.
- **Outdated utility systems increase the Museum's vulnerability to events caused by system failures.** The Veley House and Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church have not had updates to plumbing, electrical, or ventilation systems. Each system presents increased vulnerability and risk to electrical fire, flooding from plumbing failure, and damage to heritage resources from poor ventilation and temperature fluctuations. The Museum annex building is the most updated and houses some of their most valued items.
- **In response to COVID-19, the Board President played an essential role in providing leadership for rapid disaster response.** The Museum Board President made crucial decisions to cancel meetings, communicated those updates to volunteers and board members, and led decisions on next steps for delivering their mission despite closures.
- **The Museum has no written policies, procedures, or protocol to provide guidance in the event of a disaster.** Many of the volunteers serving on the Museum Board hold a long record of institutional knowledge that is not recorded as policy, procedure, or protocol. Lack of ready access to this information can negatively impact communication, duplicate efforts, and lengthen response time in the event of a disaster.
- **A limited volunteer base decreases the Museum's capacity to digitize heritage resources that are at risk to damage or complete loss in a disaster event.** With ten regular volunteers and limited access to scanners there are innumerable hours of digitizing paper records and historic photographs in the Museum's care of which no other copies exist. With the existing volunteer base it would take considerable time to digitize resources, amongst other volunteer duties, leaving resources vulnerable to loss in the meantime.
- **The Museum regularly engages in opportunities to learn new ways of managing heritage resources and updating museum practices.** The Board President receives emails from national and statewide

museum organizations that offer resources for trainings and workshops, best practices in museum management, and examples of museum’s integrating new practices.

- **There is no existing plan for tackling building maintenance projects between the City of Cottage Grove and the Cottage Grove Museum.** The City of Cottage Grove leases city-owned buildings that house the administrative offices and heritage resources of the Museum. Creating a building maintenance plan between the City of Cottage Grove and the Museum can allow for an inventory of building maintenance needs, provide priority for pressing projects, and avoid duplicated efforts.

People, Places, and Things

“People, places, and things” is used as a framework to outline what each heritage organization needs to accomplish what they do. “People” are those individuals needed for day-to-day operations and includes the organization’s main audience and any collaborative partnerships. “Places” include the buildings, facilities, and open spaces needed to carry out an organization’s functions. Finally, “things” are the physical assets each organization stewards.

People

The Cottage Grove Museum is governed by a Board of Directors and employs one part-time Museum Coordinator. The current Board consists of 13 members, plus 2 emeritus members. The Board President is responsible for overseeing museum operations, organizing and coordinating board meetings, and fundraising efforts. The Vice President assists in these activities. The Museum Coordinator is responsible for coordinating museum activities and works at 0.20 FTE, though often contributing more time as a volunteer. Approximately 10 volunteers contribute 110 hours collectively each month. Staff and executive board members have collectively dedicated over 84 years of service to the Cottage Grove Museum.

The Cottage Grove Museum partners with several other heritage organizations in Cottage Grove. The Museum participates in the Partners in History project along with the Cottage Grove Historical Society and Cottage Grove Genealogical Society. This partnership works to increase community and visitor awareness of regional history through monthly exhibits at the local library. Educational programs, such as the travelling trunk show exhibit, are presented to various community groups. This partnership relies on the participation of school classrooms and assisted living facilities.

Places

The Cottage Grove Museum operates out of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church, built in 1897 and included on the National Register of Historic Places. The City of Cottage Grove leases the Church to the Cottage Grove Museum at no cost, including the annex building and the Veley House, a locally listed historic landmark, which sit adjacent. Administrative offices, photograph display, and storage are located at the Veley House, across the street from the Church and annex building. All three buildings are located in Cottage Grove’s Historic Northwest Neighborhood, just a quarter mile from Cottage Grove’s Historic Main Street.

The Cottage Grove Museum has experienced damage to its historic structures from both weather events and vandalism. Protective plastic coverings for the Church’s stained-glass windows were installed in 1980 to prevent future damage. The natural decay of these buildings led to some updates over time. The Church roof was recently replaced after reports of leaks which led to several years of grant writing to support the project. The City of Cottage Grove repaired the first floor of the Veley House prior to relocating the Museum’s administrative offices and artifact storage to the building. Despite recent

updates, the plumbing system in the Veley House caused damage to some materials in storage. There were no heritage assets affected in the incident. The Cottage Grove Museum responded by discontinuing the water to the back room and disconnecting the toilet and sink. Extra measures were taken to protect the pipes in the other bathrooms from damage due to cold weather.

Things

In addition to historic buildings, the Cottage Grove Museum manages the exhibit *She Survived the Titanic*, which features the coat worn by Cottage Grove resident Marion Wright Woolcott during her rescue from the Titanic. Another draw to the Museum is the exhibit on Buster Keaton, featuring photographs taken during the filming of *The General*. The Cottage Grove Museum identified the Titanic Coat, the church building, and the stained-glass church windows as the highest priority heritage resources.

Resources for exploring digitized assets are available online through the Museum's website and include photographs, file clippings, old phone directories, and yearbooks from the local high schools. Digitizing records has been an on-going process, funded through sporadic grants, and is mostly conducted by staff and volunteers.

Essential Functions

The Cottage Grove Museum's primary mission driven activities include preservation of historic artifacts, education and outreach programming, research, and tourism. Educational programming, preservation, and research are the most important activities in bringing in new people to the organization and promoting preservation of the Museum's heritage assets. Educational programming is geared towards engaging local residents in the stories of Cottage Grove. Visitors have access to the Museum's resources to conduct their own research. Preservation activities, such as exhibit curation and digitizing records, is mostly conducted by the Museum Coordinator and volunteers and serves to create strong relationships amongst the group.

The Museum identified preservation and tourism as the most important activities for the annual operating budget. The annual operating budget in 2019 was \$18,000, with approximately 80% generated through a private financial endowment, 17% by grant funding, and 3% by donation. Grant funding is typically secured for special projects, such as preservation of the Titanic Coat or the purchase of archival products for storage. Visitation to the Museum on average produces \$50-\$100/month.

Business Operations

Visiting hours to the Museum are Saturday and Sunday from 1pm to 4pm and upon special request. Visitation increases to the Museum between June and August. Annual events include the Stained Glass and Candlelight event held each year on December 6. This event draws between 50-75 visitors. The Museum holds special events such as an opening for the Titanic Coat exhibit, a bridal gown exhibit, or birthday parties. These events generate additional funds for the Museum.

Impacts

Impacts to tourism and visitation would have minimal effect on the business operations of the Museum. The Museum would be vulnerable to economic impacts in the event of a disaster or emergency that was significant enough to interrupt the Museum's financial endowment. Currently, this endowment funds the operation and maintenance of the Museum's buildings, regular preservation activities, educational outreach, and the Museum Coordinator position.

Grant funding plays an important role in the special projects of the Museum. Restricted grant funding supported the Passport to History youth program for two consecutive years. Without a strategy for sustainable funding, the program ceased. Grants are currently written by one volunteer. A disaster or emergency event could impact the ability of this volunteer to contribute their skills.

The Museum's essential functions are carried out by volunteers, board members, and one part-time Museum Coordinator. The Museum Coordinator fulfills duties related to volunteer coordination and management, coordination of preservation activities, and educational programming. In the context of a global pandemic such as COVID-19, many of the Museum's volunteers are more at risk to exposure of the virus and it poses a significant hurdle to the response and recovery of disaster.

The lack of utility renovation of Museum buildings poses a risk of damage or loss of the heritage assets from electrical fire, ruptured plumbing, and moisture and heat damage. The annex building is the most updated in terms of temperature control and security, and as a result houses some of the Museum's most valued items. Items that are on exhibit in the church or the Veley House are subject to damage from the fluctuation of temperature and moisture.

Current Coping Strategies

Executive board members and staff attended disaster and emergency readiness workshops hosted by the City of Cottage Grove and Oregon Heritage Program staff in 2016. This workshop provided some tools to create contact lists and disaster preparation kits. The Cottage Grove Museum solicits the fire marshal to conduct an inspection of their buildings once a year. This practice led to maintaining fire extinguishers in each building and moving items off the floor.

The default strategy for coping with unexpected events is to call the Board President or Museum Coordinator who live in close proximity to the Museum. In the past, the Museum has relied on support from neighbors to react to disaster events, such as wetting the outside of the building during a fire in the Northwest neighborhood.

The Museum relies on the full Board of Directors to make decisions. Current decision-making strategies will be less effective in response and recovery stages of a large-scale disaster or emergency. Board members may be unavailable to participate in decision-making during an emergency or might have different priorities in a large-scale event. In the event of an emergency, the Board President would continue board governance, volunteer management, and fundraising. The current Board Treasurer has served on the board for 30 years and is charged with accounting and financial management. The Museum identified this role as essential to operations in the event of a disaster. Other key roles are fulfilled by the Board President and staff and include communication, accessing network support, and building access.

In Response to COVID-19

- **The Board President was essential in providing leadership to make rapid decisions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.** Immediate response included cancelling volunteer and board meetings prior to announcements of statewide executive orders to shelter in place. Communication through emails were made to volunteers and Board Members of cancellations and operation changes. Next steps in disaster response were made by the Board President, Museum Coordinator, and one other volunteer. This meeting resulted in a temporary closure sign on the Museum buildings and updates to the webpage on building closures and available research tools. The Museum made the decision to close their doors before receiving directives from Lane County Public Health and the Governor's office, though the Museum's decision coincided with the city

closing all non-essential buildings under their ownership. Their ability to make rapid decisions is supported by the long-term investment of volunteers, strong social bonds, and their connectedness to national and statewide networks for museum associations.

- **The Museum Coordinator is monitoring the Museum buildings and continuing to provide community access to heritage resources online.** The Museum Coordinator is regularly monitoring the buildings, catching up on maintenance, and continuing to digitize heritage resources. In addition, the Museum has continued to deliver their mission through pivoting to community engagement through social media with video tours of exhibits.
- **The Museum is working towards mitigating increased vulnerability to other hazard events during the continued response to COVID-19.** In addition to regular monitoring of the Museum buildings by the Museum Coordinator, the Board President had previously scheduled routine maintenance to fire extinguishers. Unknown to the Museum, the City of Cottage Grove had duplicated their efforts through their schedule of fire extinguisher maintenance of city-owned buildings. Given both the Board President and Museum Coordinator’s close proximity to the Museum, they were able to give guidance to fire staff and ensure all three of the Museum buildings were checked.
- **The Museum plans to follow county and state recommendations on re-opening their doors to the public.** Current ideas will be adapted to the guidance provided by Lane County Public Health and the Governor’s office, including requiring the use of face masks, physical distancing, providing hand sanitizer, and spreading out visiting groups amongst their buildings.

Resilience Action Plan

This section identifies specific strategies and actions for the Museum to prepare for and respond to an event. This is provided in a framework that translates key findings to main goals, each with strategies and actionable items. These goals are nested within a broader resiliency framework that includes the following four core principles:

- **Diversity and Redundancy:** A variety of components that make a system stronger. Several components perform the same function and can absorb and adapt to unexpected changes.
- **Manage Connectivity:** Managing the relationships and links between heritage organizations and community partnerships. Strengthening systems of information sharing.
- **Broadening Participation:** Including a variety of people from different perspectives and background to information practices and decision-making.
- **Encouraging Learning:** Reflecting on existing knowledge and having a commitment to incorporating new ideas and trying new ways of operation.

Each strategy aligns with a step in the emergency management cycle. These steps are indicated by a color-coded key shown in the figure to the right. For a full description of the cycle, please see the Disaster Resilience Plan for Heritage Resources in Cottage Grove - Chapter 2: Cultural Resilience Framework.

Key	
	Mitigation
	Mitigation and Preparation
	Preparation and Response

Goal 1: Increase accessibility to institutional knowledge by creating and documenting formal policies and protocols using the Emergency Response Plan template.

Strategy 1A: Record procedures for mission-driven activities to ensure institutional knowledge is maintained. (Mitigation)

1A1 Record procedures for preservation and research activities.

1A2 Record procedures for educational programs.

1A3 Record procedures for annual events, volunteer outreach, and other visitation related activities.

Strategy 1B: Develop and update an emergency-response communication plan. (Preparation and Response)

1B1 Complete the Emergency Response Plan, including a phone tree, identifying a response team and contacts, and creating a "chain of command" for emergency events.

1B2 Share the Emergency Response Plan with the Board of Directors, key volunteers, and other partners as needed. Post in several accessible locations, as well as keeping an updated digital copy.

1B3 Establish an outreach strategy to communicate plans for reopening after periods of closure.

1B4 Attend semi-annual meetings as an All-Star Heritage Community with the City of Cottage.

Strategy 1C: Create and share disaster response protocol both on-site and on a digital platform. (Preparation and Response)

1C1 Regularly use the incident report log in the Emergency Response Plan to record current and future incidents, including: 1) Building failures or damage, 2) Damage to heritage resources, 3) Medical emergencies of staff, board, or volunteers, 4) Actions taken in response to the incident.

1C2 Create a facilities directory that includes location of emergency response supplies, first aid kits, contact information, and evacuation routes.

1C3 Train staff, board, and volunteers on utility shut-offs, emergency response protocols, and communications strategies outlined in the Emergency Response Plan.

Goal 2: Identify, diversify, and cross-train members of heritage organizations in essential roles.

Strategy 2A: Cross-train heritage organization members in essential roles. (Mitigation)

2A1 Cross-train 2+ members in financial and accounting management skills.

2A2 Cross-train 2+ members in grant writing skills.

2A3 Cross-train 2+ members in technological skills.

Strategy 2B: Clarify and diversify decision-making on business responsibilities in the event of a disaster. (Preparation and Response)

2B1 Establish a pathway for communication between the City of Cottage Grove and heritage organizations to provide guidance for business operation plans during an emergency, either as a representative who acts as a liaison or a central place to source information such as an email list-serve or Facebook page.

2B2 Create a procedure for emergency response business operations within each heritage organization.

2B3 Create spending thresholds for disaster situations that can be made without being approved by the entire board.

Strategy 2C: Develop and cross-train All-Star Heritage members in emergency management practices. (Preparation and Response)

2C1 Representatives from each heritage organization participate in FEMA's Incident Command Series online training course.

2C2 Representatives from each Heritage Organization attend City of Cottage Grove's annual Emergency Preparedness Fair.

Goal 3: Diversify and secure the location, physical storage, and maintenance of heritage resources.

Strategy 3A: Clarify responsibility of and increase resources for building maintenance. (Mitigation)

	3A1	Clarify building maintenance responsibilities between the City of Cottage Grove and heritage organizations occupying city-owned buildings.
\$	3A2	Install security systems in buildings that house heritage resources.
	3A3	Create and enact routine check-ins on the status of buildings during weekends, slow seasons, and closures.
\$	3A4	Secure funds for updates to the buildings' electrical, plumbing, ventilation systems, fire alarm and suppression systems, sprinkler systems, and/or seismic updates.

Strategy 3B: Diversify the location of heritage assets to lessen the spread of disaster impacts. (Mitigation)

\$	3B1	Move the digital back-up of heritage assets to an online platform (Google Drive, Dropbox, iCloud, etc.)
	3B2	Duplicate digitized items on CDs, thumb drives, hard drives or servers and move at least one copy to a separate physical location.
	3B3	Move irreplaceable heritage assets to the building's most secure location.
	3B4	Establish the Cottage Grove Armory as secure off-site storage and move priority heritage assets to the space.

Strategy 3C: Update the storage of heritage assets. (Mitigation)

\$	3C1	Secure funds to purchase fireproof and/or waterproof display cases, filing cabinets.
\$	3C3	Secure funds to purchase a high-quality scanner to increase the capacity for digitizing heritage assets.

Strategy 3D: Create a procedure for the inventory of individual organizations' heritage assets. (Mitigation)

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|-----|---|
| 3D1 | Create a procedure for tracking existing inventory, including items loaned to other heritage partners. |
| 3D2 | Transfer paper records of inventoried items to online system. |
| 3D3 | Include image/description-based components in the inventory to ensure that damaged assets can still be identified after a hazard. |
| 3D4 | Establish a procedure for a routine inventory of heritage resources, including adding new items, and noting those in poor or vulnerable conditions. |

Strategy 3E: Create policies and protocols for the physical maintenance of buildings (Mitigation and Preparation)

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|----|-----|--|
| \$ | 3E1 | Conduct annual building checks with the fire marshal to adhere to fire safety codes and regulations. |
| | 3E3 | Annual maintenance to fire extinguishers, disaster preparedness kits, and supply of first aid kits. |
| | 3E4 | Adhere to best practices for hazard mitigation: items off the floor, securing shelves, etc. |

Goal 4: Expand opportunities for education and diverse partnerships that provide expertise, increased capacity, and increased community investment in heritage assets.

Strategy 4A: Establish new partnerships that can provide expertise in preservation techniques and practices. (Mitigation)

4A1 Contact local Tribes for accurate representation and stewardship of resources.

4A3 Partner with other cultural heritage organizations such as Oregon Black Pioneers, the Oregon Historical Society, Maxwell Heritage Interpretive Center, or Portland Chinatown Museum to provide expertise and resources in historic preservation.

Strategy 4B: Maintain and create new partnerships that provide support for organizational capacity-building. (Mitigation)

\$ 4B1 Identify and attend Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion trainings to support partnership building and heritage preservation of underrepresented groups.

4B2 Partner with the University of Oregon to provide technical assistance and expertise in grant writing.

4B3 Partner with local schools to increase the volunteer base for digitizing of records, allowing for students to build transferrable skills.

Strategy 4C: Increase community awareness and investment in the disaster resilience of heritage resources. (Mitigation)

4C1 Partner with local schools to increase the volunteer base for assistance with the maintenance of organizational websites, and social media accounts, allowing for students to build transferrable skills.

4C2 Increase media presence of heritage resources and work of heritage organizations.

4C3 Publicize annual events and regular visitation hours of heritage organizations through Travel Lane County

4C4 Establish new collaborative events, such as seasonal parties or silent auctions

Goal 5: Increase and diversify current and future funding sources to strengthen the economic resilience of the All-Star Heritage Partners

Strategy 5A: Identify and participate in passive revenue collection. (Mitigation, Preparation)

5A1	Identify and partner with local businesses that operate a community rewards program for nonprofit organizations.
5A2	Set up heritage organizations to receive benefits from micro-donation programs such as Amazon Smile.
5A3	Strengthen or create membership programs in order to spread donation contributions across the year to provide revenue in slow seasons.
5A4	Create annual virtual fundraising for disaster preparedness projects using platforms like Facebook or GoFundMe.
5A5	Identify opportunities for pooled funding and resources, such as volunteer or interning networks through the Elkton Community Education Center's summer tour program

Strategy 5B: Develop a contingency plan for organizational operations to support economic resilience. (Preparation, Response)

5B1	Create and maintain contingency plans for in-person events.
5B2	Identify Main Street as the central point of contact for economic resilience and recovery resources: marketing, support for grant applications, support for online platforms and online messaging.

Strategy 5C: Identify and catalog relief funds for nonprofit organizations and/or heritage resources to provide aid during response and recovery phases. (Preparation, Response)

5C1	Identify grants and funding sources that can support the heritage organizations through periods of closure.
5C2	Identifying foundations, charities, and government programs that each heritage organization qualifies for in order to diversify revenue stream.