



RS EXCHANGE

REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Monday, October 16, 2023

Regional Solutions Team News

Regional Solutions Attends League of Oregon Cities Conference: Several members of the Regional Solutions Team were glad to attend the League of Oregon Cities Conference in Eugene last week. Cities from around the state gathered to discuss timely and challenging topics including behavioral health, housing and homelessness, managing within city revenue limitations, and resolving conflict to move toward collaborative governance. Additional discussions covered UGB expansions, cybersecurity, social media, broadband development, and funding public projects including leveraging grants and advocating for federal funds. Of course, many wonderful conversations were had on the edges as well, and we all appreciated the chance to meet and reconnect with city leaders across our regions. Thanks to LOC for presenting this opportunity and for including our team in these key discussions!

Regional Updates

Eastern Oregon – Courtney Crowell

- **Baum Industrial Park Road Development:** Regional Solutions met with Union County Commissioner Donna Beverage this week who shared that they have some businesses within Union County that have expressed interest in moving to the Union County industrial park to expand their businesses. Between the two businesses they would potentially add eight new jobs to the county. However, there is need for some additional road development within the industrial park. Our Regional Solutions team shared the loan options that are available to the county. Our Regional Solutions team has another meeting with Commissioner Beverage in the next few weeks to explain some options for how the loan funding might be able to be used.
- **City of Echo Outreach:** The Regional Solutions team (Courtney and Sean Maloney from ODOT) visited the City of Echo to talk about two transportation related projects that the

community is working on. It was a great opportunity to strengthen relationships and talk about important projects in the community.

- One is related to the ongoing flooding that the city experiences each year during the summer and the reality that the flooding is now starting to compromise the ODOT road. ODOT did some emergency measures to address the situation this past summer and is working on some design and engineering for a more permanent solution. ODOT applied for some Protect funding through the agency and wasn't successful this year but hopes to apply again next year. Regional Solutions will stay in communication with the city as they move forward and keep lines of communication open.
- Additionally, we talked about the pedestrian safety issue that the city has with the trains that remain parked in the community for sometimes days at a time. ODOT has allocated \$2 million for a solution but the city continues to prefer a pedestrian bridge from the school to the other side of the tracks and is not in favor of the fence and multi-purpose path to the next rail crossing area. The city asked the legislature for an additional \$4 million for the bridge project but were unsuccessful this year. We talked about connecting the city with ODOT's Safe Routes to School funding to see if it might be a fit for some funds. Additionally, we talked about using the \$2 million from ODOT to start on some of the design and engineering so they can continue to find additional funding sources.

Mid-Valley - Beth Wytoski

- **Oregon Economic Development Association Conference:** I attended the OEDA conference last week in Eugene and came away with some great information to share with the region. From sessions on the Ag supply chain, AgTech, value added products, food and processing, the economy of outdoor recreation and the value of professional sports, concerts, theatrical performances, and other crowd-drawing uses of venues, to tax increment funding and the use of technology, including artificial intelligence. Business Oregon was also there to explain regional innovation hubs, which nurture a regional innovation ecosystem, offering capital access and mentorship for tech-driven entrepreneurs and some agencies who have recently been awarded grants to develop these hubs. If anyone would like more information on these conferences or sessions, please feel free to reach out to me or the host organizations to share information.
- **Community Connections:** In the last few weeks, the theme of capacity has been a shared topic while visiting many area cities. Our cities are working to develop housing, facilitate economic growth, and provide reliable, affordable services, but they're hitting limits. Drinking water, wastewater, and transportation top the list of physical infrastructure needs, but even small projects are costly and challenging to coordinate with one city struggling to get a flashing beacon crosswalk to protect the safety of neighborhood children as they travel to schools and another working through sewer line replacements in one area of town while most of the city remains on septic tanks. Other common local issues include concerns regarding measure 110, continued funding for sheltering and case management, and the intersection of measures 5 & 50 with revenue shortfalls.

- **Mid-Valley Regional Solutions Team:** Asset mapping is helping to build a picture of what the Mid-Valley Regional Solutions Team can offer to advance local projects and with new or expanding funding programs. We are excited about the improvements we will be able to help coordinate. I am also using this data to get to know the background of our team members so we can leverage every opportunity brought to the table.
- **North Santiam Sewer Authority:** The NSSA is grappling with the long-term costs of maintaining a new sewer system, as designed, in addition to the high costs of construction. Even if the construction was funded with 100% grant dollars, and all residents in all cities were contributing to the rate paying base, the minimum sewer bill would break \$100/month. The next conversations will be centered around what the impact of that reality for the projects and what other options might be possible.

North Coast – Nate Stice

- **Columbia Memorial Hospital Foundation:** The Team received good news out of Clatsop County. Mark Kujala, director of the Columbia Memorial Hospital Foundation, shared that the hospital received a \$14 million Building Resilient Infrastructure Grant from FEMA for the overall \$175 million project. The current hospital, similar to much of the downtown area of Astoria, sits on fill and in the tsunami inundation zone. The grant will a vertical evacuation tower and safe refuge area, deep pile foundations, elevated infrastructure and utilities above the tsunami inundation zone, and elevator service and helistop on the roof.

The project was adopted as a RS project in September of 2022, and we provide a letter of support for the application in December. The hospital has engaged the RS Team in finding the needed match and working through the regulatory process.

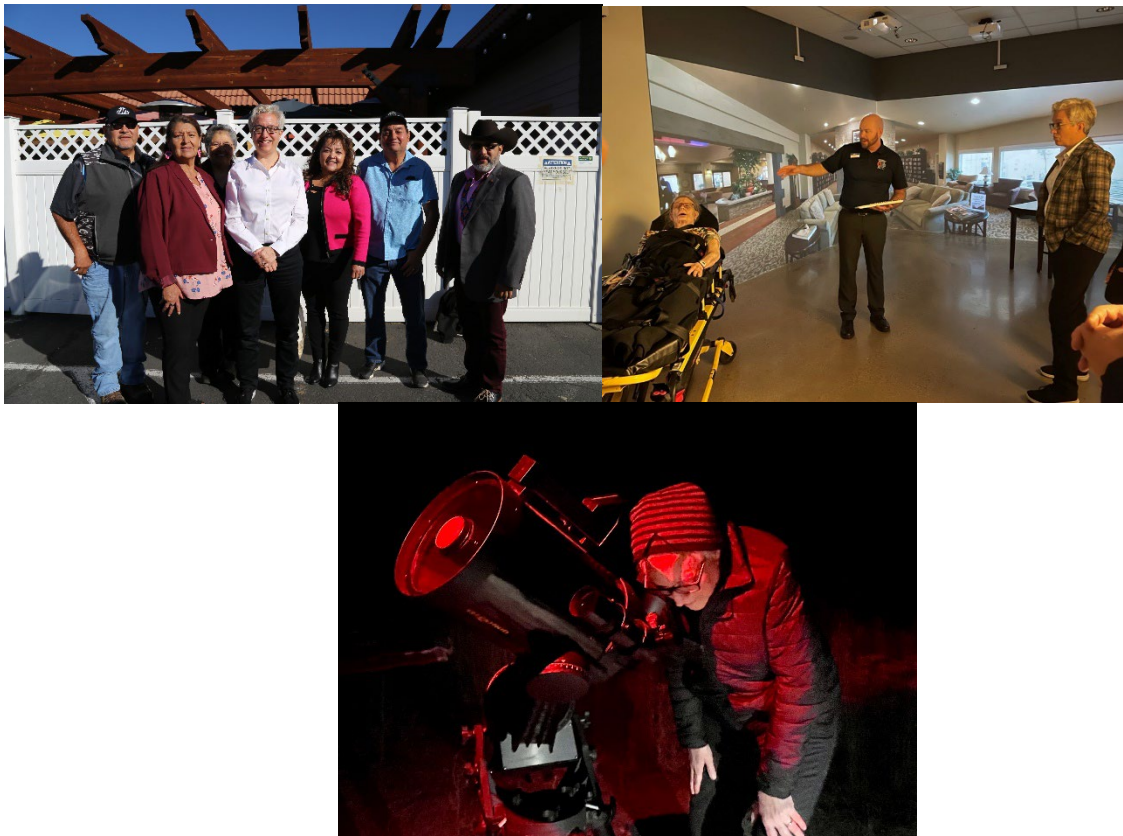
- **Tillamook Housing Commission:** The team was invited, and in particular OHCS and Business Oregon, were invited to present to the Tillamook Housing Commission. The Tillamook County Board of Commissioners created the Housing Commission in 2019 to create, maintain, and implement a strategic housing plan for the entire county based on housing needs data for the identified workforce population. Through collaborative work with jurisdictions and industry in Tillamook County and the implementation of incentive programs, the commission continues to drive the housing conversation in the county. Team members Kim Travis and Melanie Olson presented on their agencies' current programs, and in particular any new programs based on the 2023 legislative session.

Housing is a “Regional Initiative” on the team’s work plan, and the team continues to engage with jurisdictions in moving housing projects and efforts forward.

South Central and Southern Oregon – Xavier Borja and Jessica LaBerge

Governor Kotek Visits Lake, Klamath, Jackson Counties on One Oregon Tour

During the first week of October, Governor Tina Kotek and First Lady Aimee Kotek Wilson visited communities in Lake, Klamath and Jackson counties on stops 30, 31, and 32 of the One Oregon Listening Tour.



"Each of the communities we visited has unique strengths and challenges. My job as Governor is to help every community be successful," Governor Kotek said. "Hearing from people directly, in their home communities, is a key first step to strong partnerships."

In Lake County, the Governor and First Lady started with a visit to Christmas Valley to discuss economic development and renewable energy with local leaders. They were then on to Lakeview, where they met with local leaders and participated in a roundtable discussion about behavioral health care hosted by Lake Health District. They also enjoyed viewing the night sky in the [Dark Sky](#) sanctuary being proposed for parts of Lake, Harney, and Malheur counties.

In Klamath County, they had lunch at The Bread Wagon in Bly and discussed natural resource issues with Becky Hatfield-Hyde, the co-founder of the Upper Klamath Basin Agriculture Collective, and Paul Simmons with the Klamath Water Users Association. Hatfield-Hyde also serves on the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission.

The Governor and First Lady then drove to Klamath Falls, where they were briefed on the Swan Lake Energy Storage Project, met with early childhood leaders at Klamath Family Head Start, and toured the local Oregon Department of Human Services office to meet the staff and thank them for their work. The day wrapped up with a dinner with local elected leaders. The next day started off with a breakfast with leaders of the Klamath Tribes.

In Jackson County, the Governor and First Lady began with a visit to Rogue Community College's workforce training campus in White City, focusing on their programs for EMTs, nurses, and dental assistants. After lunch with local government leaders, they attended a behavioral health roundtable with community partners in Medford where they discussed successes and challenges to serving youth and families experiencing addiction or mental health crises. They then drove to Ashland for some First Friday shopping, a tour of a state-of-the-art memory care facility, and dinner.

Before heading back to Salem, they stopped in Talent for a 2020 Labor Day wildfire recovery discussion with Latino residents and community organizations. The visit wrapped up with a cheesemaking tour at Rogue Creamery in Central Point.

Resources and Opportunities

- **Join Us! DEQ Hiring Regional Solutions Representative:** The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is seeking applicants for the full-time position of "Western Regional Solutions Representative" based in Medford or Eugene. The position will entail working as the Western Region Liaison to the Jackson/Josephine and Coos/Curry/Douglas Regional Solutions Teams and partnering with businesses, communities, and local, state, and federal government partners to identify and assist in resolving problems and removing obstacles in regional and community-based projects that address regional priorities. **Applications are accepted through October 19th.** If you are interested in learning more about the application process, job description, or qualifications, please [click here](#).

- **New Handbook for Local Governments Identifies Funding to Cut Transportation-Related Climate Pollution**

The State of Oregon has created a handbook called "[Every Mile Counts Funding Handbook for Local Governments](#)." The state's goal is to help local governments find federal and state money for projects aimed at reducing transportation pollution.

Recently, Congress set aside a historic series of investments to help the country transition to clean energy and tackle climate change. More than \$369 billion is available. Oregon also has its own programs to support local governments with climate solutions.

Since transportation is the biggest contributor to greenhouse gases in Oregon, causing more than over one-third of emissions, the state is taking steps to reduce pollution from transportation, while improving equitable outcomes.

"Every Mile Counts" is a partnership between the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, Oregon Department of Transportation, and Oregon Department of Energy. Their mission is to put into action Oregon's [Statewide Transportation Strategy](#), a plan for reducing transportation pollution.

The new funding handbook provides information for local partners. It includes the various resources available, including funding amounts, which federal or state agency is in charge, when to apply, who to talk to, and where to learn more.

Read or download the [handbook](#) at the [Every Mile Counts web page](#).

- **ODEM Cybersecurity Grant Program**

The Oregon Department of Emergency Management (ODEM) recently released Round 1 of the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP)

Eligible applicants for competitive awards include local and tribal units of government. “Local unit of government” means “any county, city, town, port authority, transit authority, intercity rail provider, commuter rail system, freight rail provider, water district, regional planning commission, council of government, Indian tribe with jurisdiction over Indian country, authorized tribal organization, independent authority, special district, or other political subdivision of Oregon.”

Eligible projects must have a demonstrated nexus to achieving target capabilities related to improving, preventing, preparing for, protecting against, and responding to cybersecurity incidents and best practices.

To apply for SLCGP funding, complete a grant registration by **November 15, 2023** and submit a completed SLCGP project application by **January 10, 2024**.

For more information on the grant opportunity, visit: [Oregon Department of Emergency Management : State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program \(SLCGP\) : Grants : State of Oregon](#)