



Local Focus

The Magazine of the League of Oregon Cities

Q4 2024

FINAL EDITION – SEE PAGE 3



2025

Legislative Priorities

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

LOC Conference Recap

Elected Essentials

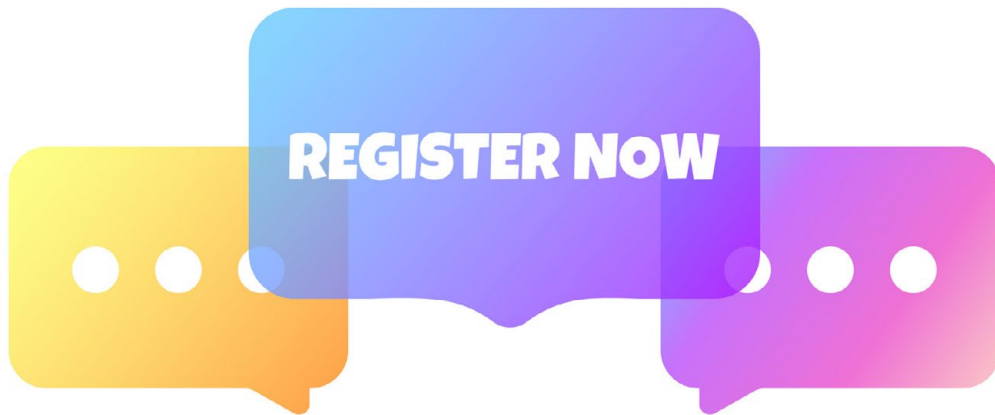
President's Regional
Meetings

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Final Edition

To Our Readers,

This edition represents our final production of *Local Focus* as the LOC's quarterly magazine.

Earlier this year, the LOC partnered with consultant NP Strategies to conduct a comprehensive analysis of our current communications practices, and the feedback from our members indicated the strongest preference for content that was more concise and efficient, such as the weekly *LOC Bulletin* or social media posts. As a result, a magazine, a more long-form delivery mechanism, was deemed less effective and no longer necessary.

We would like to thank the countless city officials who have contributed content to this publication over the years, as well as our many staff and contract writers. A special thanks as well to our many Business Partners who have provided advertising support.

Moving forward, look for the LOC to provide you with news and information that you need in a timely fashion through our Friday *Bulletin*, our website, targeted emails, and our social media channels, including a more concentrated emphasis on LinkedIn as an effective channel.

We look forward to hearing from you as we strive to meet your communications needs!



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Local Focus



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The Worthy Cause

It has been an honor to serve as your LOC President in 2024 and as a member of this amazing board of directors for six years. During my involvement with the LOC, I've made many deep connections and friendships that I'm certain will last long after my term is done. My friends have provided insight, guidance, laughs and corrective comments that have all been done with the best intentions of making me a better leader and a better person. For that, I'm extremely thankful. Their kindness and friendship will forever be remembered.

I also want to acknowledge the work of LOC Executive Director Patty Mulvihill, who has been an amazing leader these past three years. She stepped up in a difficult position when the LOC needed leadership and served with dignity, strength and intelligence that is well respected amongst our member cities, state agencies and across the United States. I want to thank Patty for her leadership and most importantly her friendship. She was very gracious, kind and thoughtful and always had my back!

In addition, a special shoutout to two of my esteemed colleagues on the LOC Board: retiring Hillsboro Mayor Steve Callaway and Central Point Mayor-Elect Tanea Browning. I couldn't have asked for a better leadership team to be a part of. We were often seen as the Three Amigos, or the Three Musketeers—and sometimes the Three Stooges! Of course I was the middle child, always being guided by the oldest child (Steve) and entertained by the youngest (Tanea). Thank you both—your friendship will forever be cherished.

To the rest of my colleagues on the board, past and present, and to the LOC staff: you too were patient and kind and always made

sure I was properly prepared and informed. You answered all of my questions and you built me up (so that it made it impossible to let you down). Thank you.

I will leave you with a final reminder as we all lead our communities forward to greater heights. In the famous words of Theodore Roosevelt:

“It is not the critic who counts; not the person who points out how the strong person stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the person who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends themselves in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if they fail, at least fails while daring greatly, so that their place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

Go valiantly into the storm, daring greatly. Be the leaders your community needs and deserves. ■



Dave Drotzmann
LOC President; Mayor,
Hermiston



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From the Executive Director

100 Years of Service to Cities

As 2024 comes to a close, so too does the first century of the League of Oregon Cities. A lot has changed in this country, the state, and even the LOC in the last 100 years. And while not all changes are good, or welcomed, I think the LOC and its cities have reason for optimism.

The LOC, at its core, foundationally provides four types of services to its members: advocacy, professional development, technical assistance, and networking opportunities. In each service area, the LOC's past successes shine a positive light forward into the future.

The LOC's advocacy efforts, be they legislative or legal, have been noteworthy and commendable over the years, but especially in the recent past. During the last legislative session, LOC: secured \$65 million for shelter gap funding; secured \$100 million for local government housing infrastructure; restored accountability to Measure 110; restored recreational immunity; and secured speed photo radar for all communities. Over the summer, the LOC filed an amicus brief in *Johnson v. Grants Pass*, a brief that was specifically relied upon and referenced multiple times in the United States Supreme Court's majority opinion, a majority opinion that resulted in a win for Grants Pass and cities across the Ninth Circuit.

In its quest to provide all city officials with necessary and effective professional development opportunities and technical assistance, the LOC has invested heavily in its training and event offerings. When the LOC was established 100 years ago, 25 cities gathered together once per year to discuss issues of the day. Next year, the LOC will host: City Day at the Capitol in January, an event that typically sees at least 200 city officials participate; the Local Government Spring Conference in April, an event that should see more than 250 officials attend; and, the Annual Conference in October, where more than 500 city officials will gather. In addition to these major LOC events, the organization now provides regular webinars, supports the professional development events of the Oregon City Attorneys Association, Oregon City/County Management Association, Oregon Latinos in Local Government association, and the Oregon Mayors Association. As this final edition of *Local Focus* magazine goes to publication, the LOC is in the midst of hosting 13 different Elected Essential training events across every region of Oregon.

Networking efforts have only increased and improved over the last 100 years. The events and training previously described lead to networking, but do not ignore the intentional networking

avenues the LOC has built or supported. Each major training or conference now has dedicated time for city officials to network. The LOC proudly supports networking opportunities hosted by the Local Government People of Color Caucus, Women's Caucus, and Oregon Latinos in Local Government. With the LOC's assistance, the Oregon Mayors Association has invested in an app so that members can stay better connected. Listservs for all major affiliate groups exist and are used daily to allow municipal professionals, from all over the state, an opportunity to connect and learn from one another.

If I consider what the LOC must have looked like in 1925, it is difficult to imagine how its gatherings looked. But if I dig deep and look hard for the optimism I seldom possess, I can see a brighter future. I see local government officials who are becoming more engaged in the legislative process, working hand-in-hand with LOC lobbyists to restore, strengthen, and protect home rule. The future is full of different city officials—all of whom are energetic and eager to leave positive marks on their respective communities and this state.

A quick look back, and then a glance into 2025, shows two simple things that speak volumes about how long of a road we have traveled. Twenty-five cities created the LOC in 1925. Now the organization proudly supports 241 cities. The first LOC Board of Directors was comprised of all male officers, none of whom were a person of color. The five officers on the 2025 LOC Board of Directors includes three woman, and two persons of color.

For all those who participated in the LOC's first 100 years: Thank You! I thank you for your service to your respective cities, regional communities, the state as a whole, and to the LOC itself. And as we move forward into the next 100 years, I encourage each city official to keep their heads up, shoulders back, and continue to do the hard work of governing. Optimism is a choice, and I challenge each of you, and myself, to look into our next century together with optimism. ■



Patty Mulvihill
Executive Director

2025 LOC Board Elected

The LOC membership selected its 2025 board of directors October 19 during its 99th Annual Conference and Business Meeting, which was held at the Riverhouse on the Deschutes.

The following are the city officials that were named to the LOC’s governing board for the calendar year 2025. Officials new to the board appear in bold text.

- President:** Jessica Engelke, Mayor, North Bend
- Vice President:** Carol MacInnes, Councilor, Fossil
- Treasurer:** Travis Stovall, Mayor, Gresham
- Past President:** TBD
- Directors:** Rod Cross, Mayor, Toledo
 Aaron Cubic, City Manager, Grants Pass
Tamie Kaufman, Mayor, Gold Beach
Melanie Kebler, Mayor, Bend
Adam Marl, Commissioner, Oregon City
 McKennon McDonald, Councilor, Pendleton
 Tita Montero, Councilor, Seaside
 Rochelle Roaden, City Manager, Dayton
 Tim Rosener, Mayor, Sherwood
 Mark Shepard, City Manager, Corvallis

LOC Board of Directors Meets in Bend

The LOC Board of Directors met in Bend on October 16 and took the following actions:

- Appointed Oakridge Mayor Bryan Cutchen to the LOC Board of Directors, filling a vacancy;
- Adopted the Resolution Establishing Legislative Policies for the 2025/26 Legislative Sessions;
- Adopted the Resolution Establishing Eight Key Legislative Priorities for the 2025/26 Legislative Sessions;
- Adopted the Resolution Establishing LOC’s Organizational Priorities for the 2025/26 Legislative Sessions;
- Adopted a ninth legislative policy priority in which the LOC seeks to secure modifications to ORS 195.530 with a range from full repeal to modifications that include, at a minimum, the: (1) defining of the phrase “objectively reasonable”; (2) the creation of a safe harbor provision that provides specific examples of restrictions that are deemed objectively reasonable; and (3) the elimination of the attorney fee provision within the statute;
- Adopted the executive director evaluation process as proposed.

The next LOC Board meeting will be December 13 in Hermiston.

Contact: Jasmine Jones, Administrative Assistant – jajones@orcities.org

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President's Regional Meetings



Join Us for 2025 President's Regional Meetings

Please join LOC's 2025 President, Mayor Jessica Engelke of North Bend, as she leads a discussion on the difficulties cities face in maintaining sufficient and stable revenue sources and the work LOC is doing to try and identify solutions to bring cities needed relief in maintaining their fiscal health. For the majority of cities within Oregon, property taxes remain the primary source of consistent revenue to fund basic and needed services. Unfortunately, Oregon's current property tax structure does not provide enough funding for cities to meet even the most essential needs of its residents and business owners. As cities look to alternative resource streams, the LOC will be discussing the successes and failures from across the state. Join your regional colleagues in a statewide conversation looking for solutions that may bring beneficial relief to you community.

All meetings will be 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Registration opens in January at orcities.org.

Northern Willamette Valley (Region 3)

February 13 – Independence

Southern Willamette Valley (Region 4)

February 14 – Philomath

Central Coast (Region 5)

February 19 – Florence

South Coast (Region 6)

February 20 – North Bend

Northeastern Oregon (Region 11)

July 16 – Island City

Eastern Oregon (Region 12)

July 17 – Ontario

North Coast and Columbia County (Region 1)

August 1 – Tillamook

Southern Oregon (Region 7)

September 11 – Jacksonville

South Central Oregon (Region 10)

September 12 – Klamath Falls

Columbia Gorge (Region 8)

September 18 – Hood River

Central Oregon (Region 9)

September 19 – Sisters

Metro (Region 2)

December 17 – Lake Oswego



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LOC Welcomes New Staff



The LOC is pleased to welcome **Claire Wilson** to our Member and Administrative Services Department as our Training Coordinator. Claire holds a master's degree in public policy and has spent the past five years serving communities throughout Washington County as a victim advocate. She is excited to serve Oregon cities within the scope of LOC's training program and overseeing the Small Cities Program. She can be reached at cwilson@orcities.org.



The LOC has also hired lobbyist **Jenna Jones** to manage its tax, finance, and economic development portfolio. Jenna previously spent five years as part of the LOC's advocacy team from 2017-22, taking on several roles, including lobbying, before leaving to take a position with Metro Regional Government as their State and Regional Affairs Advisor. The LOC's IGR team is now at full staffing capacity and looking forward to the next session. She can be reached at jjones@orcities.org.

LOC Wall Calendars Coming Soon

The League's annual wall calendar will be mailed to cities in late December. As usual, this poster-sized calendar features a wide range of high-quality photographs submitted by our member cities. The calendar also contains information on key events and dates to remember in 2025. Cities can obtain additional copies by emailing loc@orcities.org.

Membership Drives will Begin in Mid-December

Membership drives for the Oregon Mayors Association, the Oregon City/County Management Association, the Oregon City Attorneys Association, and the Oregon City Planning Directors Association will begin in mid-December. Be on the lookout for an email from LOC staff on how to renew and/or sign-up. Regular reminders will also be included in the weekly *LOC Bulletin*.

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ELECTED ESSENTIALS WORKSHOPS

**New to city government? Need a refresher on government fundamentals?
Plan now to attend a FREE training in your area.**

LOC is thrilled to offer our signature Elected Essentials training in person again this winter. The LOC’s Elected Essentials program provides newly elected officials, experienced elected officials, and city staff with free training on the basics of municipal governance in Oregon.

Topics include:

- How to Achieve a High Functioning City Council
- What City Officials Need to Know About Oregon’s Public Records Law
- Public Meetings in Oregon – What the Law Says & Best Practices
- Understanding Your Legal Obligations Under Oregon’s Ethics Laws
- Legal Powers & Impediments Affecting Elected Officials
- Lobbying 101

Registration is FREE and lunch is included. Sign up now at www.orcities.org.

Remaining Dates and Locations:

Pendleton – Convention Center	Region 11	Dec. 19, 5 p.m. - 9 p.m. and Dec. 20, 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Redmond – City Hall	Region 9	Jan. 8, 8:15 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Klamath Falls – Council Chambers	Region 10	Jan. 14, 8:15 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Phoenix – Civic Center	Region 7	Jan. 15, 8:15 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Baker City – Armory	Region 12	Jan. 31, 8:15 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Salem – Local Government Center	Catch All	Feb. 5, 8:15 a.m. - 5 p.m.



Local Government Spring Conference

May 1-2, 2025 in North Bend

The LOC's 2025 Local Government Spring Conference will be held at the Mill Casino in North Bend. This two-day event will be a great opportunity for public officials from around the state to network and learn about issues impacting all cities. Registration opens **February 2025** at www.orcities.org.

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ARPA Deadline Approaching

By December 31, 2024, cities will need to obligate **ALL** of their American Rescue Plan Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (ARPA SLFRF).

As stated in the [final Treasury rule](#), obligation means “an order placed for property and services and entering into contracts, subawards, and similar transactions that require payment.” This means it is not enough for local governments to simply budget the money, they need to go a step further and place an order for property or services that requires payment. If a municipality has not obligated its ARPA SLFRF funds by the end of 2024, they will have to return the funds to Treasury.

The National League of Cities has produced the following resources on ARPA that may be useful to help your city finalize obligating the funds:

- [LOC’s American Rescue Plan Hub](#)
- [Obligate it or Lose it! Preparing for the Upcoming ARPA SLFRF Obligation Deadline](#)
- [Preparing Your City for ARPA SLFRF Obligation Deadline \(Webinar\)](#)
- [Local Government ARPA Investment Tracker](#)

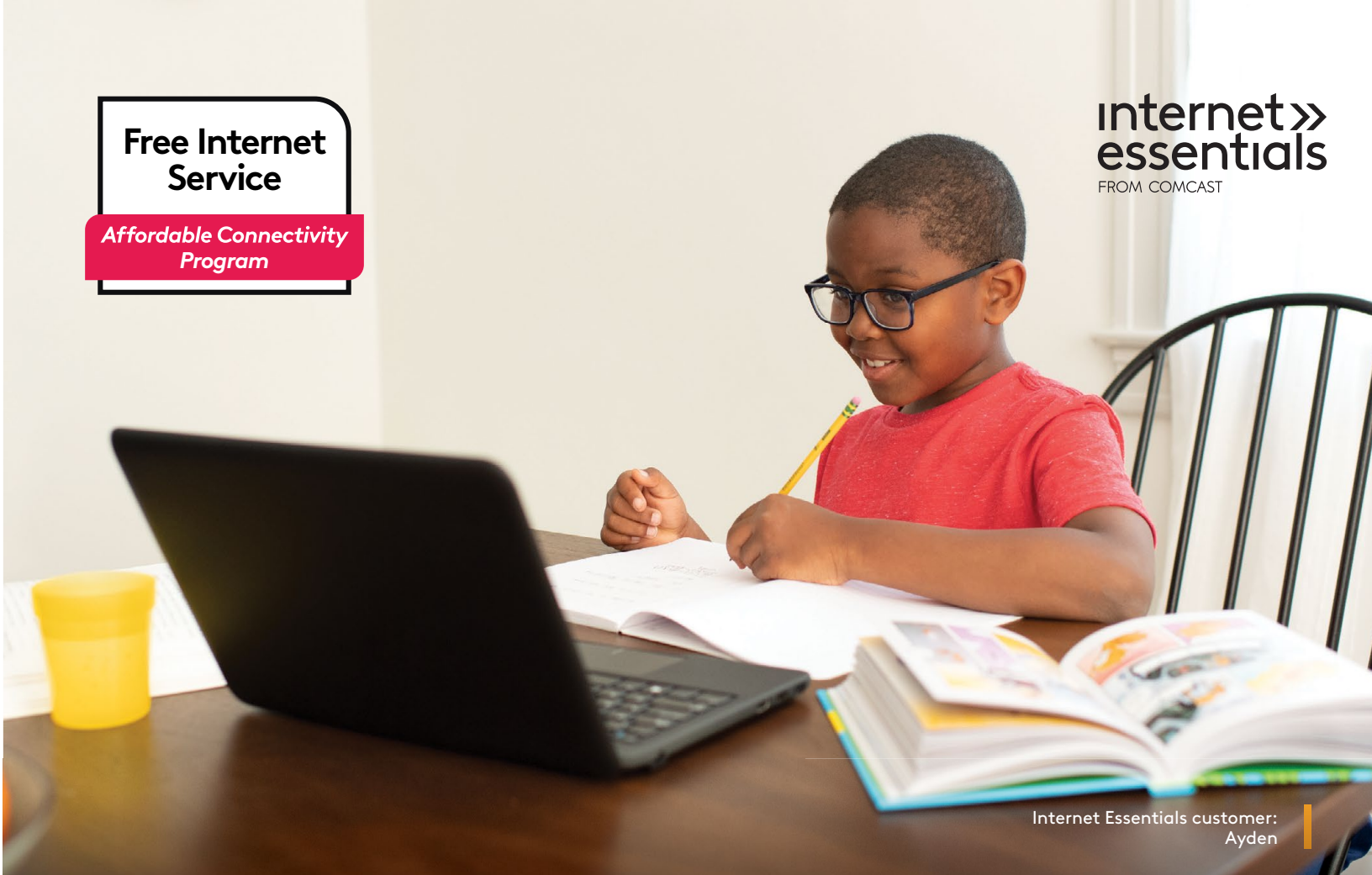
Contact: Jenna Jones, Lobbyist - jjones@orcities.org

A beach-themed advertisement for Prothman. At the top right, a yellow sun with a smiling face and black sunglasses is shining a beam of light down onto a colorful beach umbrella with segments of red, yellow, blue, and light blue. The umbrella is on a sandy beach with blue waves in the background. The text "Don't burn your HR team with too many job openings..." is written in bold black font. Below the umbrella, the Prothman logo is displayed in a stylized blue and black font, followed by the tagline "has you covered." in bold black. A list of three benefits is shown with checkmarks: "3 flexible recruitment options", "Any level of job position", and "Friendly, knowledgeable team". At the bottom, the website "www.prothman.com" is listed, and there are circular icons for LinkedIn and Facebook.

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City Deadline Calendar

Important statutory deadlines cities need to know

DECEMBER

December 31:

Audit: Annual Audit Review

City’s accountant must audit and review the city’s accounts and fiscal affairs at least once each calendar or fiscal year, with some exception for cities with less than \$500,000 in expenditures. The city must file a copy of its audit with the Oregon Secretary of State.

Note: The accountant must furnish the audit to the city within six months after the close of the calendar or fiscal year under audit. In this example, the fiscal year ended on June 30, 2023. Thus, the municipality should have the report no later than December 31, 2023.

December 31:

Water Rights: Cities Holding Rights Must File Water-Use Report

Cities with water rights must submit a report to the Water Resources Department by

December 31 each year detailing monthly water use under the rights for each point of diversion, specifically the amount of water used, the period of use, and the categories of beneficial use to which the water is applied. Reporting shall be for the previous water year (October 1 to September 30).

JANUARY

January 1:

System Development Charges (SDC): Provide Annual Accounting for SDCs

Cities must provide an annual accounting of SDCs, to be completed by January 1 of each year, showing the total amount of SDC revenue collected for each system and the projects that were funded in the previous fiscal year, including a list of the amount spent on each project funded, in whole or in part, with SDC revenues. State law, however, does not provide for a specific agency where cities may file such reports.

January 9:

March Election: File Notice of Measures and Statement of Candidates with County

City elections filing officer must file no later than the 61st day before the date of the election. This year, the deadline is Thursday, January 9, ahead of the Tuesday, March 11 election.

January 11:

Budget: Appoint Budget Officer

The city council must designate one person to serve as budget officer, unless otherwise provided by city charter.

Note: Depending upon a city’s size and total budget, the budget process may begin sooner or later than noted. This budget deadline is therefore suggested, not statutory.

January 26:

Budget: Appoint Budget Committee

The city council must establish a budget committee; exceptions outlined in ORS 294.423. This committee shall consist of all members of the council and an equal number of city electors. The city electors shall be appointed by the council.

Note: Depending upon a city’s size and total budget, the budget process may begin sooner or later than noted. This budget deadline is therefore suggested, not statutory.

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January 30:

2024 Audit: Adopt Plan to Correct any Deficiencies, and File Plan with the State

Upon filing its annual audit with the State, the city council must determine what measures are needed to correct deficiencies disclosed in the audit, if any. If corrective measures are needed, the council must adopt within 30 days a resolution setting forth these measures and the period of time estimated to complete them. The council must then file a copy of this resolution with the State.

Note: The accountant must furnish the audit to the city within six months after the close of the calendar or fiscal year under audit. For example, a fiscal year ending on June 30, 2024, would mean a municipality receives the audit report no later than December 31, 2024. Upon filing this report with the Secretary of State, a municipality would then have until Jan. 30, 2025, to both adopt any necessary corrective measures and file this plan with the Secretary.

January 31:

Urban Renewal Agency: Prepare Financial Statement for Filing with City Council and Distribute this Statement to Certain Taxing Districts

All urban renewal agencies must prepare a financial statement by Jan. 31, 2025. The statement must meet statutory requirements outlined in ORS 457.460(1). Notice that this statement has been prepared and filed with the council must be published once a week for not less than two successive weeks before March 1. All taxing districts affected by an agency's urban renewal plan must receive a copy of the statement, and consultation with the agency must be available.

Note: The financial statement must be prepared by January 31, but it is not required to be filed with the council then. The statement must be filed before publishing notice of the statement.

January 31:

Statewide Transit Tax: Returns and Payments Due

City employers are required to file a tax return, along with the payment of statewide transit tax withheld from employee wages, to the Oregon Department of Revenue for the fourth calendar quarter (October 1 to December 31) by January 31.

January 31:

Public Bodies with Unmanned Aircraft System Must Submit Annual Report to Oregon Department of Aviation

State law prohibits public bodies from operating an "unmanned aircraft system" without first registering the system with the Oregon Department of Aviation. If a public body registers one or more unmanned aircraft systems, the public body must submit an annual report for the preceding year to the Oregon Department of Aviation that summarizes the frequency of use of the unmanned aircraft, summarizes the purposes for which the unmanned aircraft were used, and indicates how the public can

access the public body's policies and procedures established pursuant to ORS 837.362.

Note: The law does not specify when the public body must submit the annual report to the Oregon Department of Aviation. Therefore, this deadline is suggested, not statutory

REMINDERS:

Deposit Construction Tax Revenues

As soon as practicable after the end of each calendar quarter, cities that impose a construction tax pursuant to ORS 320.192 shall deposit the construction tax revenues collected in the calendar quarter just ended in the general fund of the city.

Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) Reports

City must remit a regular report to PERS Board no later than three business days after the end of the city's pay cycle.

Download the full 2025 deadline calendar

The complete calendar is available on the [LOC website](#) under Resources, then Reference Materials.

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WATER CAUCUS

State Water Caucus Asking Cities to Complete its Water Investment Needs Survey

The Oregon Legislature’s Water Caucus is asking city leaders to share their water project needs by responding to a survey **by December 15**. The results of this survey will help state officials understand what improvements and investments are needed in areas such as water infrastructure.

Since 2012, Oregon has been working to address water needs, but the state still doesn’t have a full list of projects that need funding. By submitting your city’s water needs, you can help make sure your community is included in future planning.

An important step in shaping Oregon’s water future and addressing infrastructure needs, this survey is accessible here: bit.ly/2024waterinvestmentsurvey.

When all 241 cities in Oregon respond to this survey, it will clearly communicate water investment needs across the state.

Contact: Michael Martin, LOC Lobbyist - mmartin@orcities.org

Water Investment Needs Assessment Dashboard

The Water Caucus has created a dashboard with survey data submitted to date. This information is for informational and planning purposes only and does not guarantee funding.

Check it out: tinyurl.com/4up3t6us

≈ Oregon Legislative Water Caucus - Water Investment Needs Assessment ≈

This dashboard displays water investment needs across Oregon. Information submitted via a [survey](#) will help Oregon’s [Legislative Water Caucus](#) understand where additional water investments are needed. This information is for informational and planning purposes only and does not guarantee funding.

1 of 19

Funding Request Title

Water Investment Needs - Capital Planning / Funding

View Layer Legislative Water Caucus Statewide Survey of Water Projects: Water Investment Needs - Capital Planning / Funding

Funding Need Title	Water Investment Needs - Capital Planning / Funding
Organization Name	City of Oakridge
Type of Organization	City
Type of Organization - Other	
Investment Type (Primary)	Planning
Investment Type (Primary) - Other	
Investment Type (Secondary)	Planning, Coordination Capacity, Construction

Download with arrow below

Selected **19** Requests Received

Funding Request: **160M** Total Cost: 208.3M

Funding Requests by Project Category

Funding Request Category (Primary)	Funding Request Totals
Other	~\$5M
Drinking Water	~\$65M
Wastewater	~\$10M
Water Quality	~\$15M
Water Quantity/Supply	~\$65M
Water Storage	~\$5M

Funding Requests by Category | Request Count by Category



99TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 99th LOC Annual Conference welcomed more than 500 city representatives to The Riverhouse on the Deschutes in Bend, and League staff presented an informative, fun, and impactful experience for attendees from all corners of the state.

Living up to its billing, the conference was packed with great content. The sessions were well-attended, there was more dedicated time for networking, and the general sessions were unanimously appreciated. Highlights included: the Welcome & Keynote presentation by Dr. Abdul El-Sayed; the Friday evening Awards Dinner; Saturday's presentation from attorney Anit Jindal on the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Johnson v. Grant Pass*; and the Closing Keynote with Chris Estes, focusing on successful rural development. In addition, attendees participated in sessions on topics including infrastructure funding, artificial intelligence, wildfire response, water conservation, property tax reform, recruitment and retention, and DEIA.

Finally, the quality of this event, the largest annual gathering of city officials in Oregon each year, simply

wouldn't be possible without the support of our sponsors and participating vendors. 2024 was another record year for the level of financial support provided by these organizations (see page 28), and the LOC, its board of directors and member cities truly appreciate these partnerships!

The LOC Conference provides a one-of-a-kind experience for city officials from all corners of the state, so it's not too early to start thinking about the 100th LOC Conference, which is scheduled for **October 2-4, 2025** in Portland. Mark your calendars as we celebrate the LOC's Centennial Year!

Videos of the general sessions and award presentations are available online at www.orcities.org.

Sessions



Tours



Networking



Connecting with Vendors



MARK O. HATFIELD STATESMANSHIP AWARD

The Mark O. Hatfield Statesmanship Award is presented to a deserving “statesman” who has provided lasting benefits to the quality of life for Oregon citizens.

John McArdle Mayor, Independence

One of the longest-tenured mayors in Oregon, Mayor John McArdle is a selfless leader who convenes, leads challenging conversations, then generates momentum for achieving goals. Throughout his 26 years leading Independence, Mayor McArdle has advocated for community-led initiatives, which include broad vision plans and citizen guidance.

Mayor McArdle has also led the completion of numerous downtown enhancements, including construction of a new library, an amphitheater, an eight-screen cinema, and the redevelopment of the downtown streetscape. Twenty years ago, recognizing the importance of connectivity to his city’s future, Mayor McArdle guided a partnership with the neighboring city of Monmouth to create MINET, bringing high speed internet to every home and business in the two communities.

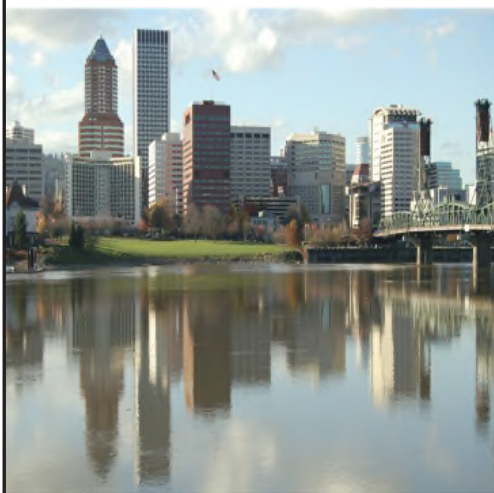
An enthusiastic ambassador for local government, Mayor McArdle has worked tirelessly to help educate, prepare and



connect elected officials throughout the state. He frequently hosts city officials to exchange ideas and travels across the state to help city councils overcome differences and work together.

Mayor McArdle has been an outstanding ambassador for the League of Oregon Cities and Oregon Mayors Association, serving each as a board member and president. His LOC service includes numerous policy committees, testifying at the Legislature, and overseeing the LOC Foundation.

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JAMES C. RICHARDS AWARD

The James C. Richards Award is given to elected city officials who serve the citizens of Oregon through an exceptional personal investment in intergovernmental affairs.

Steve Callaway Mayor, Hillsboro



Before joining the city council in 2011 then becoming mayor in 2016, Mayor Callaway served on the Hillsboro Budget Committee, 2020 Vision Committee, Planning Commission, Library Foundation, the Oregon International Air Show, and the Hillsboro Schools Foundation. In leading a community where people of color represent more than 40% of the population, Mayor Callaway has been a strong advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). His efforts have been recognized by The League of Minority Voters and Centro Cultural. Under his leadership, Hillsboro has earned consistent national recognition as a “best place” to live and work. In 2022, the city was named Public Employer of the Year by the Oregon Resource Association for creating an inviting and equitable work environment for employees with disabilities. Mayor Callaway’s positive impact has reached communities throughout Oregon, where he’s helped countless elected leaders while serving on the board of directors and as president of both the Oregon Mayors Association and the League of Oregon Cities.



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HERMAN KEHRLI AWARD

The Herman Kehrlı award is given to a city employee who has made exceptional contributions to city government in Oregon, producing lasting benefits for their community.

Kathryn Greiner City Administrator, Condon

A dedicated, proactive public servant who goes well beyond her job description, Kathryn Greiner has an uncanny ability to seamlessly utilize available resources for the greater good of her community and region. Throughout 20 years of managing this city of 726 residents, Greiner’s impressive accomplishments include:

- Overseeing the growth of Condon’s budget from \$2.8 million to \$10.1 million;
- Initiating and managing upgrades and infrastructure projects;
- Working to increase employee compensation to livable wage levels;
- Leading the effort to develop affordable housing for local employees; and
- Helping to bring high speed internet to Condon, earning the prestigious Oregon Connections Telecommunications Award in 2023.



Throughout her tenure, Greiner has envisioned the needs of her growing community and forged valuable connections with county and regional organizations, helping Condon gain access to essential resources. With an unmatched commitment to top-quality public service, Kathryn is a genuine community builder.

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VP of Community Engagement
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CITY AWARD WINNERS

Award for Excellence

The Award for Excellence recognizes progressive and innovative city operations and services. This year, the LOC presented the award to three recipients: Turner, Hermiston and Gresham.

City of Turner

David Sawyer Park Playground Replacement Project

David Sawyer Park is one of the most popular in the city, and when the playground equipment was recently removed, the city partnered with Turner Elementary School to create a learning experience for students, and get new, fresh ideas on playground design. The city's goal was to give the customers what they wanted, and so a focus group of students met with playground designers to discuss equipment design, variety and overall look. They picked three final design options, and voting by students and parents took place at the school during the lunch hour and at a community event. Funded with a combination of park SDCs and ARPA funds, the project exceeded its goals by creating a new, expanded community asset, and providing a great learning experience for local students.



City of Hermiston

Regional IT Department Integration Program

Facing a substantial cost increase by a local service provider, the city of Hermiston created its own Information Technology department in 2022—with capacity to provide services to other local governments and nonprofits. This cost-effective solution allowed the city to: maintain high security levels against malicious threats; conduct important maintenance and training for staff; and provide reliable IT service to partner organizations. Hermiston's new department started with four full-time employees to meet the needs of the city, then scaled up as additional cities, special districts, and others sought services. Individual contracts meet the specific needs of each partner, and range from a few hours a month, to 40 hours a week. In rural Oregon, a city creating an IT department offering contracted services isn't a common practice. To date, Hermiston has service agreements in place with eight cities, three special districts, one county, and one non-profit.



CITY AWARD WINNERS

Award for Excellence continued

City of Gresham Rental Housing Inspection Program

The program provides mandatory and complaint-based inspections of rental units and properties. It focuses on code violations that can pose a fire, life, or safety risk to tenants and properties, ensuring all Gresham community members have a safe place to call home. Forty-five percent of the city's residents are renters, and Gresham has a large number of rental properties. Prior to 2007, the city received frequent complaints from tenants about poor living conditions; and while code compliance could address exterior issues, the city lacked a means to address interior issues on private properties. Gresham's proactive, mandatory inspection model has helped tenants who might be intimidated by their landlord, or unaware that the conditions they're living in violate established property maintenance standards. Additionally, the mandatory inspection process decreases potential conflicts, or retaliation by landlords on tenants who report concerns to the city. Recently, the city added a Housing Resources Coordinator to address tenant needs that fall outside of the inspection program. The coordinator provides a deeper level of service for tenants, including direct referral relationships for rent assistance and eviction prevention, as well as energy assistance.



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CITY AWARD WINNERS

Helen & Alan Berg Good Governance Award

The Helen & Alan Berg Good Governance Award recognizes progressive and innovative city operations and services.

City of Aumsville Wastewater Facility and Community Outreach Program



Like most small cities, Aumsville has faced consistent challenges over the years. After a recent enforcement action by a state agency, the city was required to finance a new, \$28-million wastewater facility. Looking to reduce the cost share passed to residents in their utility bills, city staff and the city council partnered with local legislators, Business Oregon, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to submit funding applications.

Direct outreach efforts had two goals: prepare citizens for a possible utility bill increase, but also gain support for alternative funding sources. Thanks in large part to a letter of support signed by nearly 1,000 community members, the city secured more than \$20 million in grants and forgivable loans, including \$9 million from the state budget and \$6 million through the USDA.

In addition to reducing the cost share for Aumsville residents, the outreach conducted by staff and council achieved community buy-in and prepared them for what is now a much more manageable cost share.

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2025-26 Legislative Priorities



During its October meeting in Bend, the LOC Board of Directors approved a set of nine legislative priorities for cities for 2025 and 2026. These priorities were selected based on LOC member cities ranking their top five choices using a ballot that included 23 legislative recommendations developed by seven of the LOC's policy committees.

As part of the legislative priorities, the board added one additional priority in response to the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Johnson v. Grants Pass*. This issue was not part of the original ballot because there was no decision from the court at the time ballots were created. The LOC Board of Directors reviewed options to address this issue during its October 16 meeting, and passed a resolution represented in Legislative Priority #9.

The following represent the top priorities the LOC will advance over the next two years. It's important to understand that in addition to the top nine issues below, the remaining legislative recommendations brought forward by the seven policy committees remain part of the overall focused advocacy effort from the LOC's lobby team. We also use the LOC's [Municipal Policy](#) and [Organizational priorities](#) to evaluate all legislation.

1 Community Infrastructure and Housing Development Funding

LOC Lobbyists: Michael Martin, mmartin@orcities.org; Alexandra Ring, aring@orcities.org; Jim McCauley, jmccauley@orcities.org

Recommendation: The LOC will advocate for a comprehensive infrastructure package to support increased investments in water, sewer, stormwater, and roads. This includes funding for system upgrades to meet increasingly complex regulatory compliance requirements, capacity to serve needed housing and economic development, deferred maintenance costs, seismic and wildfire resiliency improvements, and clarity and funding to address moratoriums. The LOC will also champion direct and programmatic infrastructure investments to support a range of needed housing development types and affordability.

Without needed infrastructure investments, communities cannot build needed housing. To support this, the LOC will advocate to maintain and increase state investments to support the development and preservation of a range of needed housing types and affordability, including: publicly supported affordable housing and related services; affordable homeownership; permanent supportive housing; affordable modular and manufactured housing; middle housing types; and moderate-income workforce housing development. In addition, the LOC will seek opportunities to address structural barriers to production of different housing options at the regional and state level.

Background: Cities continue to face the challenge of how to fund infrastructure improvements—to maintain current, build new, and improve resiliency. Increasing state resources in programs that provide access to lower rate loans and grants will assist cities in investing in vital infrastructure. Infrastructure development impacts economic development, livability, and importantly how much housing we as a state can develop. The level of funding for these programs has been inadequate compared to the needs over the last few biennia, and the funds are depleting and unsustainable without significant program modifications and reinvestments.

This priority will focus on maximizing both the amount of funding and the flexibility of the funds to meet the needs of more cities across the state to ensure long-term infrastructure investment. The 2024 LOC Infrastructure Survey revealed the increasing need for water and road infrastructure funding. The results show \$11.9 billion of infrastructure funds needed (\$6.4 billion for water and \$5.5 billion for roads).

Combined with the federal-cost share decline on water infrastructure projects—despite the recent bipartisan infrastructure law investment—cities face enormous pressure to maintain and upgrade water infrastructure. At the same time, cities across the state are working urgently to address Oregon's housing

crisis. To unlock needed housing development and increase affordability, the most powerful tool the Legislature can deploy is targeted investments in infrastructure to support needed housing development.

Recent legislation and executive orders have made significant changes to the state's land use planning process, including new housing production directives for cities and counties. These updates have resulted in extensive, continuous, and sometimes conflicting efforts that are not supported by adequate state funding. Cities do not have the staff capacity or resources needed to implement existing requirements. Additional state support is needed to assist local implementation, including technical assistance and education for local staff and decision makers, and workforce development. The state should prioritize implementation and coordination of existing programs in the 2025-2026 legislative sessions before considering any new policies.

2 2025 Transportation Package

LOC Lobbyist: Jim McCauley, jmccauley@orcities.org

Recommendation: The LOC supports a robust, long-term, multimodal transportation package focused on: stabilizing funding for operations and maintenance for local governments and ODOT; continued investment in transit and bike/ped programs, safety, congestion management, and completion of projects from HB 2017. As part of a 2025 package, the funding level must maintain the current State Highway Fund (SHF) distribution formula and increase investments in local programs such as Great Streets, Safe Routes to Schools, and the Small City Allotment Program.

In addition, the package should find a long-term solution for the weight-mile tax that stabilizes the program with fees that match heavier vehicles' impact on the transportation system. The funding sources for this package should be diverse and innovative. Additionally, the package should maintain existing choices and reduce barriers for local governments to use available funding tools for transportation investments.

Background: Oregon has one of the country's most transportation-dependent economies, with 400,000 jobs (1 in 5) related directly to transportation via rail, road, and ports. The State Highway Fund (SHF) is the primary revenue source for the state's transportation infrastructure and comes from various sources, including gas and diesel tax, weight mile tax, vehicle registration fees, vehicle title fees, and driver's license fees. These funds are distributed using a 50-30-20 formula, with 50% to the state, 30% to counties, and 20% to cities. Continued investment in transportation infrastructure is critical for public safety objectives such as "[Safe Routes to Schools](#)" and the "[Great Streets](#)" program. The Legislature must develop a plan to match inflationary costs and a plan to transition from a gas tax to an impact fee based on miles traveled to stabilize transportation investment.

3 Restoration of Recreational Immunity

LOC Lobbyist: Scott Winkels, swinkels@orcities.org

Recommendation: The LOC will introduce legislation to protect cities and other landowners who open their property for recreational purposes from tort liability claims.

Background: An adverse court ruling stemming from a recreational injury sustained on a city owned trail opened cities and other public and private landowners to tort claims for injuries sustained by people who are recreating. The Legislature enacted a temporary restoration of the immunity in 2024 that will expire on July 1, 2025. Legislation to make the immunity permanent will be needed for cities to offer recreational amenities without fear of tort liability lawsuits or excessive risk premiums.

4 Behavioral Health Enhancements

LOC Lobbyist: Scott Winkels, swinkels@orcities.org

Recommendation: The LOC will introduce and support legislation to expand access to behavioral health treatment beds and allow courts greater ability to direct persons unable to care for themselves into treatment through the civil commitment process.

Background: While Oregon has historically ranked at or near the bottom nationally for access to behavioral healthcare, the state has made significant investments over the past four years. It will take time for investments in workforce development and substance abuse treatment to be realized, and areas for improvement remain. The standard for civilly committing a person into treatment remains very high in Oregon, and as a result, individuals who present a danger to themselves or others remain untreated, often producing tragic results. Additionally, the number of treatment beds for residential care does not meet demand, with services unavailable in multiple areas of the state.

(continued on page 32)

5 Lodging Tax Flexibility

LOC Lobbyist: Jenna Jones, jjones@orcities.org

Recommendation: The LOC will advocate for legislation that increases the flexibility to use locally administered and collected lodging tax revenue to support tourism-impacted services. These services include public safety, community infrastructure, and housing-related investment.

Background: In 2003, the Legislature passed the state lodging tax and restricted local transient lodging tax (TLT) by requiring that revenue from any new or increased local lodging tax be spent according to a 70/30 split: 70% of local TLT must be spent on “tourism promotion” or “tourism related facilities” and up to 30% is discretionary funds. Tourism has created an increased demand on municipal service provision. Some of the clearest impacts are on roads, infrastructure, public safety, parks, and public restrooms. Short term rentals and vacation homes also reduce the housing supply and exacerbate housing affordability issues. Cities often play an active role in tourism promotion and economic development efforts, but requiring that 70% of lodging tax revenue be used to further promote tourism is a one-size fits all approach that does not meet the needs of every tourism community. Cities must be allowed to strike the balance between tourism promotion and meeting the needs for increased service delivery for tourists and residents.

6 Shelter and Homeless Response

LOC Lobbyist: Alexandra Ring, aring@orcities.org

Recommendation: The LOC will support a comprehensive homeless response package to fund the needs of homeless shelter and homeless response efforts statewide. Funding should include baseline operational support to continue and strengthen coordinated regional homeless response and include a range of shelter types and services, including alternative shelter models, safe parking programs, rapid rehousing, outreach, case management, staffing and administrative support, and other related services. The LOC will also support capital funding for additional shelter infrastructure and site preparation.

Oregon’s homeless response system must recognize the critical role of cities in homeless response and meaningfully include cities in regional funding and decision-making, in partnership with counties, community action agencies, continuums of care, housing authorities, and other service provider partners.

Background: The LOC recognizes that to end homelessness, a cross-sector coordinated approach to delivering services, housing, and programs is needed. Despite historic legislative investments in recent years, Oregon still lacks a coordinated, statewide shelter and homeless response system with stable funding. Communities across the state have developed regional homeless response collaboratives, beginning with the HB 4123 pilot communities funded by the legislature in 2022 and the more recently established Multi-Agency Collaboratives and Local Planning Groups created by Governor Kotek’s Executive Order on Affordable Housing and Homelessness. As Oregon continues to face increasing rates of unsheltered homelessness, the LOC is committed to strengthening a regionally based, intersectional state homeless response system to ensure all Oregonians can equitably access stable housing and maintain secure, thriving communities.

7 Address Energy Affordability Challenges from Rising Utility Costs

LOC Lobbyist: Nolan Pleše, nplese@orcities.org

Recommendation: The LOC will: support actions to maintain affordable and reliable energy resources; invest in programs and new technology that support energy efficiency, renewable energy, and battery storage to help reduce overall energy costs and demands; and address grid challenges during peak energy demand and the associated rising costs, while balancing the pace of energy production and power supply that impact rates.

Background: In recent years, rising utility costs have increased the energy burden on Oregonians, particularly low-income Oregonians, those with fixed incomes, and those who are unable to work. Costs contributing to these increases include: infrastructure upgrades, maintenance, and modernization; climate impacts from increased extreme weather events (wildfires, ice storms, snowstorms, flooding,

etc.) and mitigation costs associated with them; fuel costs; inflation; legislative and gubernatorial actions; and investments in new energy-producing technology; and battery storage. While many investment opportunities exist, more cooperation and collaboration is needed to find a path forward that reduces the need for large rate increases that impact Oregonians. Rate increases should balance and prioritize vital labor, infrastructure, and mitigations necessary to sustain present and future energy demands with compensation.

In addition, the LOC would advocate for new tools and utilizing existing tools to modernize rate structures to provide flexibility and account for the time of year of rate increases (phasing in of rate increases) and recognize the higher burden for low- and moderate-income and fixed-income Oregonians.

8 Operator-in-Training Apprenticeships

LOC Lobbyist: Michael Martin, mmartin@orcities.org

Recommendation: The LOC will advocate for funding for apprenticeship training programs and the expansion of bilingual training opportunities to promote workforce development of qualified wastewater and drinking water operators due to the significant lack of qualified operators.

Background: Water utilities must resolve a human infrastructure issue in order to keep our water and wastewater systems running. Currently, water utilities face challenges in recruiting, training, and retaining certified operations employees. In addition, retirements of qualified staff over the next decade will exacerbate the problem.

In 2023, the Legislature approved one-time funding for the development of a training facility for certified operators and technical assistance staff in partnership with the Oregon Association of Water Utilities. Sustained funding for regional training facilities and direct funding for utilities hosting training programs is needed to train the next generation of water and wastewater operators.

9 ORS 195.530 *Johnson v. Grants Pass*

LOC Lobbyist: Alexandra Ring, aring@orcities.org; Jim McCauley, jmccauley@orcities.org; Scott Winkels, swinkels@orcities.org

Recommendation: The LOC will advocate public policy that allows cities to respond to the unique needs of their community's housed and unhoused members. This advocacy will include adjustments to ORS 195.530 to provide cities with the necessary tools to address unsafe camping conditions, safeguard public spaces, and protect the health, safety, and wellness of all community members.

Background: To understand ORS 195.530, one must first understand a series of federal court decisions, and the Oregon Legislature's concern that the United States Supreme Court may one day reverse those court decisions, with the court decisions being released in 2018, 2022, and 2023.

In 2018, the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, in *Martin v. Boise* opinion specifically states that local units of government could impose reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions on where people may sit, sleep, or lay on public property, but the court failed to provide any specific guidance on what would constitute a reasonable regulation.

In 2022 (and with a subsequent decision in 2023), the Ninth Circuit released its opinion in *Johnson v. Grants Pass*, expanding its decision in *Martin v. Boise*, in several ways.

Grants Pass appealed the *Johnson* case to the United States Supreme Court, which issued a ruling this summer, finding that the 8th Amendment does not prohibit cities from enacting and enforcing generally applicable camping ordinances to regulate public spaces, even if the regulations and enforcement thereof impact people experiencing homelessness. ■

How You Can Get Involved and Advocate for Your City

As we enter the 2025 session, **member grassroots advocacy** will remain a key factor in the LOC's ability to achieve our top legislative priorities and protect our members from continued efforts to reduce "home rule" authority. The LOC lobby team will reach out throughout the session and in the interim to ensure we can expand our reach with every state elected official. Those local-state relationships in your communities are critical to the overall outcome of the legislative process.

Stay Engaged

Stay tuned during the session for weekly legislative reports and calls to action. We'll schedule Friday Zoom meetings beginning the second week of January and as needed throughout the session. Be sure to read the

weekly *LOC Bulletin* email each Friday for the most up-to-date coverage of the status and policy developments relating to bills being tracked by the LOC.

Attend City Day at the Capitol

Plan now to attend City Day at the Capitol on January 28 in Salem. We'll have a full slate of activities for members, including an opportunity to hear from Governor Kotek, legislative leadership, and the LOC's lobby team. There will also be sessions to learn more about lobbying, how to secure funding for your communities and opportunities to meet directly with your state legislators. In addition, Irma Esparza Diggs, Senior Executive and Director of Federal Advocacy from the National League of Cities (NLC) will be sharing the latest on federal advocacy. See page 35 for more information.



Contact the LOC Advocacy Team

Reach out to the LOC Intergovernmental Relations team if you have questions or need more information on legislative bills and priorities:

Jim McCauley, Legislative Director – Oversight of League's legislative program; transportation
(971) 428-7274 | jmccauley@orcities.org

Alexandra Ring – Land use, housing, eminent domain
(541) 646-4180 | aring@orcities.org

Jenna Jones – Tax and finance, economic development
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Meghyn Fahndrich – Legislative research, reports, fiscal impact statements & bill tracking
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Michael Martin – Water, wastewater, environment, natural resources
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Nolan Pleše – Telecommunications, broadband and cable, energy, environment, solid waste
(971) 428-7278 | nplese@orcities.org

Scott Winkels – PERS, ethics, human resources, collective bargaining, public safety, mental health & general government
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REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

CITY DAY AT THE CAPITOL

JANUARY 28, 2025

The LOC invites elected and appointed city officials to join mayors, city councilors, and city staff members for our City Day at the Capitol on **January 28, 2025** in Salem. This event is your chance to stand with other city officials from around Oregon in support of legislative actions that will return greater local authority over local decisions. It is also the time to let legislators know how actions they take could impact our communities and the difficult decisions we make. By coming together, our collective voices will make a difference to advance our legislative agenda.

Highlights of City Day at the Capitol will include presentations from the LOC's government relations team on legislative priorities, and briefings from state elected leaders about their priorities for the 2025 session. You will also have time for individual visits with your legislators, afternoon seminars and a special reception with legislators and staff that will officially kick off the LOC's Centennial Year. We expect nearly 200 people to attend.

The most important part of the day will be your individual visits with legislators. The LOC will provide transportation to the Capitol. You are encouraged to schedule your visits with your state Senators and Representatives during the afternoon (1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.). More information on scheduling visits will be provided with your registration confirmation.

The Legislative Reception will be held that evening from 5-9 p.m. at the Salem Convention Center.

Register online at www.orcities.org by 5 p.m. on January 22.

Preliminary Agenda

7:30 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast Begins

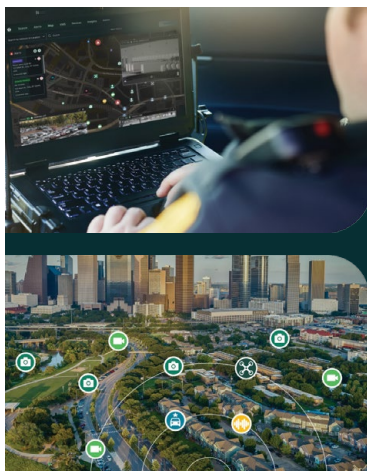
9 a.m. - 12 p.m. General Session

1. Welcome from Salem Mayor Julie Hoy and LOC Board President Jessica Engelke
2. Invited State Elected Leaders
3. Legislative Landscape & Lobbying
4. LOC Legislative Priorities

12 p.m. - 4:45 p.m. Afternoon Activities

- Boxed lunches available at Salem Convention Center
- Shuttle bus to Capitol for scheduled legislative visits leaves every 15 minutes.
- Workshops at Salem Convention Center
 - Public Meetings Law
 - Lobbying at the Federal Level
 - Revenue Reform Tools
- State agency tables at Salem Convention Center

5 p.m. - 9 p.m. Networking Reception & Centennial Kick-Off



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Unconscious Bias

Growing Number of Cities Exploring Ways to Increase Awareness, Build Allyships

In her work as senior human resources consultant for CIS, Sharon Harris provides trainings for government leaders and staff across the state. CIS has long offered training on harassment, discrimination and retaliation called “Red Light, Yellow Light, Green Light,” with the Yellow Light portion touching on topics such as unconscious, or implicit, bias.

In 2020, when the pandemic forced the trainings to be held virtually, Harris started receiving more requests for training and resources around diversity, equity and inclusion. She created a course called, “Your Role in Creating a Culture of Civility and Respect.” The challenge, however, was that she didn’t know if she was truly reaching people because there were no face-to-face interactions, she said.

When trainings could be held in person again, Harris received a positive response to the course and increased demand because, as employees started returning to work, managers found workplace conflict increasing amid issues such as opposing opinions about vaccines and heightened sensitivity about gender identity, sexual orientation and the use of pronouns. These conflicts emerged against the backdrop of Oregon’s Workplace Fairness Act, enacted on Oct. 1, 2020.

“This class started to get some traction about who we are as people and what our role is in our company’s culture,” said Harris, SHRM-SCP, IPMA-SCP. “It takes people through who they are as a unique individual, our unique perspectives and experiences, how that impacts who we are and who we are at work.”

Harris noted that while some co-workers share experiences and perspectives, others have had very different ones depending on their generation, where they grew up, gender, culture, and a host of other factors. It’s important to be aware of affirmative and negative biases and stereotypes, microaggressions and how body language conveys micro-messaging.



CIS Senior Human Resources Consultant Sharon Harris offers training on unconscious bias.

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During the two-hour training, which is free to all CIS members with general liability coverage, the discussion also centers on how to make work practices and places more inclusive, and how managers can avoid unknowingly creating barriers for employees.

“I really just try and take them through paying attention to who they are, how they act and interact at work, and who is in their ‘in group’ and their ‘out group,’” Harris said. “We have to understand that we are in charge of ourselves, and we do make the decisions about who we talk to and how we talk to them.”

While most city and county offices are stocked with employee handbooks and workplace policies, in-person trainings and the conversations they initiate are a way of not only using those tools but enhancing them to be more effective.

“I think there are certain managers today who want to know how to get in front of this and my advice is not to be afraid of conflict,” Harris said. “It’s one of my favorite classes to teach and it’s also the class where I get the most people sitting with their arms crossed glaring at me, and that’s ok.”

Corvallis Takes Team Approach to Improving Awareness

While the city of Corvallis has long fostered an organizational and community ethic of inclusion and honoring diversity, city leaders consistently seek ways to strengthen those values. This ranges from proactively updating language in the city’s charter as it relates to pronouns to participating in DEI trainings, said City Manager Mark Shepard.

Annual mandatory DEI training is required for all city employees and that has broadened to include inclusion and bias. Following George Floyd’s death in 2020, the Corvallis City Council heightened its awareness work through a partnership with Soul Force Education, a Corvallis-based diversity and equity development company, to provide training on implicit bias. The sessions took place virtually in 2020 and 2021 and included the mayor, city council, city manager and individual department directors.

“The city council is engaged in the foundational issue of bias,” Shepard said. “Representation really matters and it’s important for community members to be able to see themselves in these positions, whether they are an employee at the city, a city councilor or are involved in community engagement. In general, it brought a conversation forward and council is looking at how we can get broader representation on the council.”

The experience motivated the city council to create a stipend to encourage people to participate because it recognized that many people are limited by child care needs or other economic reasons.

The city also set aside \$150,000 to fund a feasibility study to establish a regional bias response system for Linn, Benton and Lincoln counties. Conducted by the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, the 2023 study researched and catalogued existing state and local anti-bias resources and identified resource gaps.

The study team convened focus groups with service organizations, community advocates, residents, committee members and other stakeholders to learn about potential gaps in current resources as well as ideas about how a bias response system could best serve them. The feedback from those sessions was aggregated and shared during a bias response summit.

“I think it elevated the conversation in the community and provided an opportunity for people to engage, to feel heard about bias and the impacts it has,” Shepard said.

About 18 months ago, the city of Corvallis became a member of Oregon Latinos in Local Government and encourages its staff to participate in the organization, he added.

Trainings Continue to Evolve for Eugene City Leaders, Staff, Police

The city of Eugene’s Office of Equity & Community Engagement provides trainings alongside staff from the Employee Resource Center’s Training and Development team. The series of training modules, called the Belonging Training Series, is the city’s baseline diversity, equity and inclusion training. It is aimed at supporting staff to promote a sense of belonging in the organization and in the community, according to Julien Arias, program coordinator for the Office of Equity & Community Engagement.

Module 1, taken by all city staff, is called Inclusive Public Service and helps participants understand how historical facts and policies shaped Eugene and be informed about opportunities and challenges to providing inclusive public services today. It helps participants understand how changes in community and workforce demographics impact their work as public servants. It also introduces concepts that help participants become more self-aware, competent and responsive in their interactions with the public.

Module 2, also taken by all city staff, is Respectful and Inclusive Workplace and focuses on increasing participants’ understanding

(continued on page 38)

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of the influence of cultural diversity on human dynamics, including verbal and non-verbal communication. It helps staff understand how their thought processes can lead them to interactions that make people feel or not feel welcome in the organization. This module develops conflict resolution skills and development of self-awareness, emotional intelligence and trust building.

Module 3, required for supervisors and lead workers, is the Design for Equity workshop. Workshop facilitators use a process called Liberatory Design Thinking, which was born out of an urgent need to explore and design process steps to integrate the practice of “design thinking” with a mission toward integrating equity into the city’s daily work.

Module 4, also required for supervisors and lead workers, is scenario-based training called Leading for Equity and is intended to help supervisors understand how to lead across differences. Each scenario covers one aspect of the employee experience from onboarding to performance evaluation. Each scenario is discussed in small groups and then the best approaches are shared in a larger group. Facilitators indicate policies and tools that apply to each scenario.

Arias said later modules expand the content covered in the basic modules 1 and 2 and are made available to all employees as part of Eugene’s ongoing career development program.

The Eugene Police Department also has taken proactive steps to combat unconscious bias. In 2006, it became the first police agency in Oregon to train its entire police force on the topic of biased-based policing using the nationally recognized curriculum known as Perspectives in Profiling. The Oregon Criminal Justice Commission reviewed the police department’s data in 2019 and found it was equitable during traffic and pedestrian stops.

In 2015, the police department partnered with the University of Oregon to further ensure professional contact with the public. Professor Erik Grivan from UO’s School of Law provided implicit bias training to all sworn officers and several support staff, including community service officers, crime prevention specialists and volunteers.

Hillsboro Building a Culture of Allyship

When asked to explain allyship to people who may be unfamiliar with the term, Eunice Makinde, the city of Hillsboro’s DEI manager, said the main ingredient is empathy.

“It’s an openness to hearing the thoughts, feelings and experiences of someone else. It’s how you show up effectively for other people so it feels meaningful and impactful to them,” she said. “People might think it means just checking in on someone, but it’s more than just sympathy. It’s how to support and advocate for people in marginalized groups, especially if you are not part of that group, and it’s an opportunity for personal development.”

Makinde added that successful allyship is also about growth, trust and honesty about what is feasible and what is not. As an example, traditional government hierarchical structure is often not trusted by people, and it is important for municipal leaders to realize that titles of power can create barriers.

“Leaders have to put egos aside and realize they are not the experts. They need to step out of their environment and talk to people who are boots on the ground doing the work, and allow that to inform

decisions they are making so relationships can be fostered on all levels,” she said.

Makinde said that one of the most important lessons she has learned about allyship is that it is hard work. Many people want to be considered as allies, but don’t realize that there may be a personal cost for them to show up and go the extra mile. As an example, she explained, people may have yard signs saying that everyone is welcome, but the community as a whole does not feel welcoming.

“The voice of the community is important. We can assume we know what people need, but that is often through the lens of our own perspective. We really need to do the due diligence to find out what are the needs of people within our community,” she said. “We have to be malleable and realize that the experiences of one person in a group may not be like others. Adaptability and humility are also required. We need to be humble and ask what they need, then be receptive to what we hear.”

Makinde said the city of Hillsboro’s affinity groups foster allyship, as seen in its BIPOC affinity group, which provides a safe space for employees to discuss issues impacting marginalized communities, grow knowledge, and enhance support personally and professionally. Culturally specific affinity groups also offer spaces for connection, support and shared workplace experiences, she said.

“We are still learning what true allyship looks like and how it can help create a sense of belonging. We just finalized and put out to the community our new mission, vision and values, and it’s been a while since we had done that,” Makinde said, adding the word “belonging” has been added to Hillsboro’s DEI language.

“I think our new mission, vision and values is a stepping stone to ask ourselves how do we show up for each other, our community, and how do we make everyone feel valued not just as individuals, but as a city as a whole,” she said.

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CONSERVATION CORNER

2024 Updates to Oregon Groundwater Allocation Rules

by Tamera Smith and Kerri H. Cope, Oregon Water Resources Department

In some parts of Oregon, water pumped and used from underground aquifers is outpacing what nature replaces through precipitation. Scientific data shows that groundwater depletion is occurring at rapid and unsustainable rates in many parts of the state, resulting in many dry wells and water scarcity that impacts families, farmers, industry and recreation. Additionally, groundwater depletion is expected to increase due to a warming and drying climate. Much of the water in streams during summer months comes from groundwater sources. With groundwater sources declining, reduced surface water flows in streams, rivers, and lakes impact existing water rights holders and inhibit healthy fish, aquatic habitat, and recreation.

After decades of groundwater declines, Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) is responding to the modern realities experienced by Oregonians and confirmed by science. To limit the further depletion of groundwater resources, OWRD has developed science-based rules for issuing new water rights.

On September 12, the Oregon Water Resources Commission voted unanimously to adopt updates to Oregon's groundwater allocation rules, marking an historic step in how the state manages and allocates groundwater. The adopted rule updates will go into effect upon filing with the Oregon Secretary of State.

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Scientific data shows that groundwater depletion is occurring at rapid and unsustainable rates in many parts of the state, resulting in many dry wells and water scarcity that impacts families, farmers, industry and recreation.

The adopted rules detail how OWRD grants new groundwater rights. The new rules are designed to promote sustainable groundwater use. This means that when evaluating a new use application, the OWRD is looking to determine whether water is available for further appropriation, including:

- Determining if groundwater levels are reasonably stable;
- Prioritizing existing water rights over new groundwater rights that will interfere with surface water rights; and
- Confirming the target aquifer is physically capable of producing the requested new rate of use.

The rule updates are not intended to impact groundwater applications in the agency queue at the time the new rules become effective. The changes do not affect exempt groundwater uses, existing water rights, or water rights transfers.

Alternatives to securing new water rights for health and safety, population growth, economic development, and housing include:

- Efficiency and conservation measures to offset water needs
- Transfer of water rights

- Water sharing agreements
- Market-based solutions
- Designing for water reuse and reclamation
- Aquifer storage and recovery
- Watershed management
- Public education

On a larger scale, planning initiatives can help communities explore multifaceted solutions to their long-term water resource management, sustainability, and resilience challenges.

Cities in Oregon might heed examples set by the cities of Las Vegas and San Diego, which have significantly reduced water usage in response to diminished flows caused by climate change.

For more on Groundwater Allocation including FAQs: www.oregon.gov/owrd/programs/GWWL/GW/Pages/Groundwater-Rulemaking.aspx

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New Tool For Cities: UO's Wildfire Camera Network Continues to Grow

The frequency and severity of wildfires are rising, driven by climate change, decades of fire suppression, and growth in the wildland-urban interface. But a lab at the University of Oregon has deployed a wildfire intelligence platform that gives cities new tools to spot and track wildfires.

The [Oregon Hazards Lab](#) at the University of Oregon (OHAZ) is now part of the world's largest network of public wildfire cameras. OHAZ has installed dozens of cameras on telecommunications and lookout towers with long-range, 360-degree views of the surrounding landscape. Together, they enable firefighters to discover new ignitions, receive visual information to inform suppression efforts, and monitor fire behavior through containment while keeping people out of harm's way.

OHAZ has been able to rapidly grow its wildfire camera network thanks to funding by the Oregon Legislature, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, public utilities, and local partners. There are currently 57 cameras in Oregon, with plans to deploy 75 cameras by the end of 2025 and hundreds more in future years.

In addition, U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley directed funds this year to OHAZ to implement recommendations

of the Oregon Wildfire Detection Camera Interoperability Committee. The committee is co-chaired by OHAZ and the Oregon Department of Forestry and aims to increase cooperation between agencies in detection camera efforts.

View Wildfire Cameras on the ALERTWest Platform

Any member of the public can view live and timelapse camera footage by visiting [ALERTWest.live](#). This platform displays more than 1,200 cameras operated by OHAZ and universities in other western states. In August 2024 alone, more than 12,000 unique users watched Oregon's wildfire cameras, showing the impact that these tools can have on public safety and situational awareness during fire season.

Emergency managers, firefighters, and other stakeholders with public safety needs can receive login credentials to ALERTWest that allow them to rotate, tilt, and zoom the cameras to monitor specific wildfires. Credentialed users can also receive automated alerts when a new ignition is detected in their region. Over 200 officials from more than 50 different agencies in Oregon currently have camera credentials, including city governments; local utilities, police departments, and fire departments; and land management agencies.



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Oregon Hazards Lab employee Silas Thoms installs the Crestview camera just south of Eugene. Each camera can rotate 360 degrees, tilt 220 degrees, and zoom up to 40 times. With near-infrared capabilities, they have a range of up to 30 miles in the day and 40 miles at night.

City Partnerships Bolster Community Resilience

As wildfires increasingly threaten urban and suburban areas, cities are on the front lines of community protection. OHAZ's partnerships with local governments enhance the ability of fire departments, emergency management teams, and other stakeholders to detect and manage fires near residential areas before they grow out of control. In 2023, the Crestview camera in the South Hills of Eugene enabled firefighters to monitor the Moon Mountain Fire, which consumed 37 acres near the Laurel Hill residential area. OHAZ has now partnered with the Rogue

Valley Council of Governments to install 12 cameras across the Rogue Valley region by 2027, which will provide a comprehensive viewshed of this high-risk area. From dense urban cores to the sprawling wildland-urban interface, cities can use this cutting-edge technology to bolster their resilience and protect their residents from disasters like the 2020 Almeda Fire in Phoenix and Talent.

OHAZ collaborates with cities across Oregon to enhance community-level resilience to natural hazards. More than simply

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The Buck Mountain camera detected a brush fire near the Eugene airport in July 2024. Every two minutes, ALERTWest software takes a panoramic image from each camera and scans the images for new ignitions using wildfire detection algorithms. ALERTWest employees confirm detection validity and then deliver alerts to credentialed users.

using login credentials to watch for fires, local governments are crucial partners in hosting camera sites and providing access to the power and telemetry needed to keep cameras operating 24/7.

In addition to wildfire detection, OHAZ leads efforts to strengthen seismic resilience throughout the region. The lab continues to expand the Pacific Northwest Seismic Network (PNSN) and strengthen the ShakeAlert Earthquake Early Warning System, which provides people with precious seconds of warning before dangerous seismic shaking reaches them. These technologies help cities save lives and mitigate catastrophic damage to infrastructure and emergency response systems.

OHAZ is working to secure additional funding to continue and expand its critical work. Cities interested in supporting OHAZ's efforts at the state and federal level are encouraged to reach out to Joe Erickson at jerickson@uoregon.edu for more information on how they can help advocate for this critical resource.

OHAZ Wants to Work with Your Community

Emergency managers, firefighters, and other individuals with a public safety mission can email wildfirehelp@uoregon.edu to receive control and alerting credentials for Oregon cameras. Local governments can also email the lab to learn more about hosting camera sites near their city and to receive outreach materials for their residents. Together, we will be ready for next fire season, with an eye in the sky from the High Desert to the Cascade Range, from the forests to your town.

The Oregon Hazards Lab is a hazard monitoring group within the University of Oregon's Department of Earth Sciences. OHAZ is developing a regional sensor network for understanding, detecting, and mitigating multi-hazards in the Pacific Northwest.

The data collected by its instruments advance knowledge of natural disasters and the environment, protect the public through real-time alerting, and contribute to community-level resilience.

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Around the State

Stories from across Oregon

Good things our cities have been doing all across the state.

MONMOUTH

Podcast Wins Gold Award

Monmouth Monthly, one of just a few municipal podcasts in Oregon, recently won a Gold Award in the 2024 MarCom Awards. From people to events, Monmouth Monthly showcases what makes the city special and has hosted state representatives, published authors, a mayor, city councilors, musicians and national representatives for the arts.

With listeners in five continents, 125 cities and 10 countries as well as the local KMUZ listening audience, Monmouth Monthly is produced, hosted and edited by Communications Director Sabra Jewell. She manages everything from arranging guests to creating interview questions and ensuring each episode is pleasing to the ear.

The city's rebranding campaign also received an Honorable Mention from the MarCom Awards, which honor creativity from marketing and communication professionals in categories such as graphic design, photography, websites, social media and more. Each year, about 6,500 print and digital entries are submitted from dozens of countries.



Fred Evander, city planner for Independence, and Marty Wine, former Monmouth city manager, share their thoughts during the Monmouth Monthly podcast. *Photo credit: Emmanuel Goicochea, communications director for Independence*

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CAVE JUNCTION

Splash Pad Opens at Jubilee Park

Community members in Cave Junction celebrated the grand opening of a new splash pad at Jubilee Park over the summer. The addition to the park was made possible through a collaboration of city officials, local businesses and community members.

City Council Liaison Tina Casey Jones said, “this splash pad has been in the works for years and its completion represents our commitment to enhancing the quality of life for our residents and creating inclusive spaces where families can come together and enjoy the outdoors. We are excited to see the joy and laughter this new feature will bring to our community,” KOBI-TV NBC5 reported.

The 1,600-square-foot splash pad is one portion of the recent renovations underway at Jubilee Park and features several colorful water fixtures shaped like flowers, frogs and a small butterfly. It runs from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. during warm weather and can be turned off for 15 minutes at a time with a control panel in one of the flowers, according to the *Illinois Valley News*.

John Miles, Parks & Recreation chairman, said that as commission members brainstormed ideas for the splash pad, he visited other parks in the area to see how they benefited community members. The commission’s goal has been to create a more welcoming environment for families at Jubilee Park.



In addition to the splash pad, improvements include a new ADA-compliant section of the playground. It features a merry-go-round, teeter-totter and two-person swing, all of which are designed to be accessible to people with physical disabilities. It also has rubber bond flooring to prevent injuries, and playaway fiber wood chips that are designed to absorb impact and allow wheelchairs and walkers to move easily over them.

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DALLAS

Historic Downtown Added to National Register

Dallas received a pretty momentous gift for its 150th birthday this year. On May 24, the Dallas Downtown Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places because, in part, of its significance in commerce and representation of economic development.

The Oregon State Historic Preservation office has given hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants to Dallas over the last few years. Dallas has also participated in Oregon Main Street, a program that helps cities throughout the state with revitalization efforts.

Former Mayor Brian Dalton said the historic designation could help draw attention to the town. “Having a national historic district really elevates our presence and, I think, our visibility,” he said.

Near the center of the historic district is the Polk County Courthouse, which was completed in 1900 and exemplifies an era when agriculture and timber led to Dallas’ unprecedented economic vitality, according to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

The district also is listed in the register because of its local significance in architecture and reflection of commercial building design, technology, style and form over a nearly century-long period of development. As a collection, the buildings in the district reflect the evolution of commerce in Dallas’ downtown core from some of the earliest permanent construction in the 19th century through the arrival of modernism in the mid-20th century.

The Dallas Downtown Historic District is one of four individually National Register listed properties in the city. The National Register of Historic Places was established as part of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.



The city hosted a Historic Downtown ribbon cutting ceremony on August 6. Pictured left to right: Brian Latta, City Manager; Anna Scharf, State Representative; Kenneth L. Woods, Jr., Mayor; Gustavo Guerrero, Senator Merkley's Office; and Michael Shilling, Council President.



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HOOD RIVER

Residents Graduate from Civics Academy

A graduation night, complete with ceremony and presentation, was held Oct. 28 for a group of Hood River residents who completed the city’s Civics Academy: Hood River 101. Mayor Paul Blackburn and Community Engagement Coordinator Jackie Vanderpuye led the ceremony during the city council meeting.

Vanderpuye, the program lead for the course, said the city’s goals for the program are to inform the public and engage them with local government, build relationships and conversations within the community, and foster future leaders or committee members, according to the *Columbia Gorge News*.

The first Hood River 101 was held in 2023, and this year the city wanted to make it more accessible by offering it in Spanish and providing dinner and child-care. Classes were held once a week for six weeks. Each week they spent two hours learning about a different city department, including fire and emergency medical services, wastewater treatment, planning and building.

Vanderpuye said that last winter, Hood River partnered with The Next Door on a grant application to the Oregon Immigrant and Refugee Funder Collaborative in order to offer the course in Spanish. That grant resulted in nine graduates from the Spanish course this fall.

At the program graduation, a few graduates spoke about their positive experiences taking the course and explained the empowerment they gained from learning why the city makes certain decisions and what each department does, the *Columbia Gorge News* reported.



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MEDFORD

Police Livability Team Recognized

Medford Police Department's Livability Team recently received the Community Service Group award from the city's Parks and Recreation department. The Livability Team was recognized for its success in improving community livability by reducing crime along the greenway and downtown area.

The Livability Team officially became operational in September 2019 after the Medford City Council and Budget Committee approved funding. Since its inception, the city has approved additional funding to add more officers and community service officers to the team.

The team is now comprised of eight sworn police officers, two full-time community service officers, two part-time community service officers and one records specialist. They perform weekly outreach and cleanup efforts to reduce criminal behavior along the greenway and downtown corridor. They are accomplishing this through enforcement, linking resources to people experiencing homelessness, partnerships and a collaborative approach to identifying long-term solutions.

The Livability Team formed the Chronically Homeless Outreach Partnership (CHOP) in 2019 to bring together community



stakeholders. This partnership includes social service agencies, the courts and non-profit organizations, and the group meets monthly to discuss and create pathways for personalized solutions.

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WILSONVILLE

Grant Covers Playground Replacement

The city of Wilsonville's Parks and Recreation Department has secured two new grants, totaling \$1.1 million, that entirely fund the cost of an upcoming project to replace playground equipment at lower Memorial Park.

Both grants, \$550,000 each from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Local Government Grant Program (LGGP), are programs administered by Oregon State Parks.

"Successfully procuring these grants allow us to deliver fresh, new amenities at Wilsonville's signature park to increase its value to the estimated 600,000-plus residents and guests who visit each year," said Parks and Recreation Director Kris Ammerman.

The primary playground near the tennis courts and the swing bay near the volleyball court are both being replaced with new, upgraded equipment. Construction is expected to take place next summer.

Prior to construction, the city will seek public input on a park design from park users and residents. After the city selects a contractor, three preliminary park designs will be presented for review. Community members will be able to share their preferences on structure design, play components, themes and colors.

"As with all of our new park assets, we'll seek fun, safe components, and a universal design that provides opportunities for children



diverse abilities," said Parks Supervisor Dustin Schull. "We can't wait to get started on the project."

With grant funding secured, the Memorial Park play equipment project is to become the latest in a series of significant recent investments by the city to provide the community with new and diverse park amenities.



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