



**Promoting the
Great
Outdoors**

How Cities Encourage Recreation & Activities in Their Communities

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

2021 Spring Symposium

American Rescue Plan Update

Key Bills to Watch

**Salem's Minto-Brown Island Park
provides 29 miles of trails**

Photo by the City of Salem



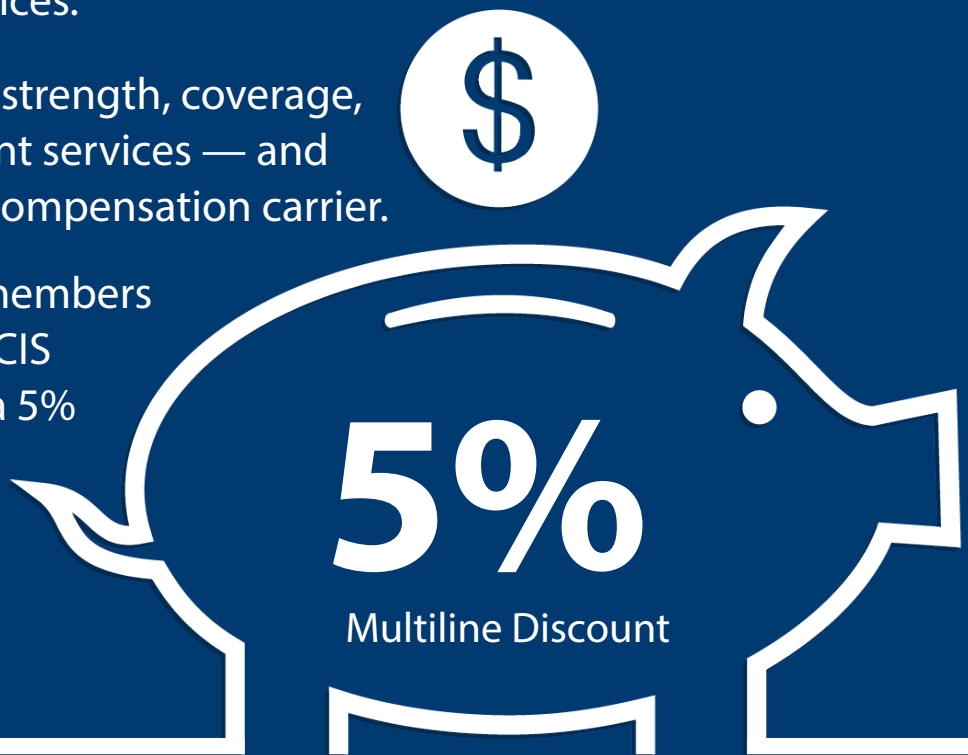
CIS and SAIF work together for first time!

CIS has partnered with SAIF to provide workers' compensation coverage to CIS members starting July 1, 2021.

By joining the CIS Servicing Group, members can get the best coverage and service at the best price.

Just the Facts!

- Any member of LOC or AOC — including those currently with SAIF or CIS — can participate.
- CIS provides risk management, loss control, return to work, and training services.
- SAIF provides financial strength, coverage, and claims management services — and serves as the workers' compensation carrier.
- CIS Property/Liability members who participate in the CIS Service Group receive a 5% multiline discount on their property/liability contribution.



For more information, visit cisoregon.org/ServicingGroup or contact Bill LaMarche, CIS member relations manager, at blamarche@cisoregon.org.



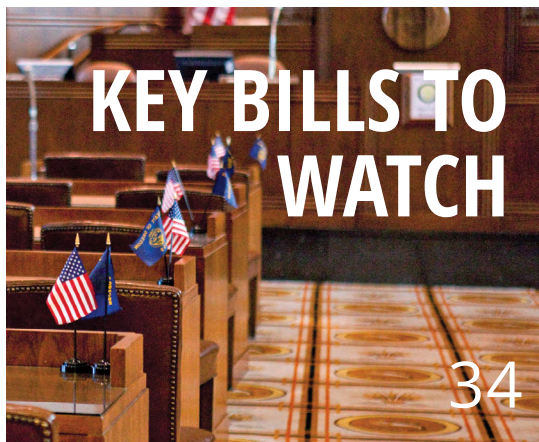
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Educating residents together.

Did you know?

- Over 240,000 water main breaks occur each year in the U.S.*
- 78% of homeowners surveyed believe their municipality should educate them on repairs and preventative measures**

NLC Service Line Warranty Program:

- Educates homeowners about their service line responsibilities
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412-266-9545 • www.servicelinepartner.com

* <https://www.infrastructurereportcard.org>

** 2017 IPSOS Survey of HomeServe policyholders and non-policyholders

Local Focus



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From the Executive Director

Direct Funding Coming to Oregon Cities

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) of 2021 – the latest COVID-19 stimulus package – is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill. Within the ARP, the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund provides \$350 billion for states, municipalities, counties, tribes, and territories, including \$130 billion for local governments split evenly between municipalities and counties.

With the stroke of a pen, President Biden and Congress delivered historic, unprecedented and meaningful aid to America's 19,000 cities, towns and villages. The National League of Cities' (NLC) year-long "Cities Are Essential" advocacy campaign resulted in \$65.1 billion in direct aid to every city, town or village across the country. There simply would not be direct funding allocated to all municipalities without the relentless effort of the NLC, state municipal leagues, and all of America's local and community leaders.

This funding will be released in two allotments: one half in the 60 days following enactment of the legislation, and the second

half 12 months after the first payment.

The \$65.1 billion allocated directly to cities, towns and villages is being distributed through a modified Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) formula. Under the bill, direct funding means:

1. The \$65.1 billion is 100% federal funding that all 19,000 municipalities are entitled to;
2. The \$65.1 billion is not co-mingled in any way with state or county funds; and



Mike Cully
LOC Executive Director

(continued on page 12)

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CIS Partners with SAIF to Create CIS Servicing Group

During CIS' Annual Conference CIS announced they are partnering with SAIF to provide more affordable workers' compensation coverage starting July 1, 2021. Cities and counties currently insured with SAIF or coming to SAIF from CIS can opt into the [CIS Servicing Group](#) by signing [this form](#). The benefits of signing the CIS Servicing Group form include:

- Supporting LOC (CIS provides over \$1 million in support of LOC's annual operating budget)
 - A 5% discount on your entity's CIS liability and property contributions. (3% if the entity has only one line with CIS.)
 - For those members who qualify, SAIF has applied for an OGSERP (Oregon Group Supplemental Experience Rating Program) discount through NCCI (National Council on Compensation Insurance). This program can provide an additional discount to eligible SAIF policyholders who are CIS members.
 - Access to CIS risk management consultants.
 - Access to CIS return-to-work consultants.
 - Public safety and health services for law enforcement and firefighters.
 - Trainings through the CIS Learning Center and SAIF's learning management system.
- The CIS Safety Manual specialized for public entities.
 - Additional Employers' Liability Coverage (sometimes called 'Coverage B') of \$2 million above a limit of \$3 million through CIS.
 - Access to our Rapid Care Hotline — a nurse triage hotline and intake service.
 - Automatic completion of OSHA reporting forms such as the OSHA 300 log.

The CIS safety and return-to-work team will have access to the tools and programs used by SAIF consultants.

Go to this link to sign up for the CIS Servicing Group: cisoregon.org/signup.

And for those interested in CIS' Rapid Care hotline, be sure to sign up for that program when visiting the CIS Servicing Group [signup page](#). For more information about the Rapid Care hotline, please watch this [1-minute video](#).

[This guide](#) from SAIF provides more information on the benefits of this program. If you have questions about the new agreement with SAIF, please email [Scott Moss](#) or [Patrick Priest](#).



During the time of uncertainty and continual adaptation, **Executech has been the one reliable constant.** They are quick to respond, confident in assessment, and big picture thinkers. Many thanks to the whole Executech team.

Nichole Rutherford
Finance Director
City of Coos Bay



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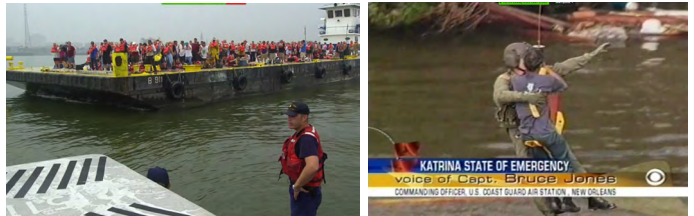
Emergency Preparedness Focus of 2021 Spring Symposium

On May 7, 240 city leaders representing 106 communities across the state came together virtually for the LOC's first Spring Symposium, which was co-hosted by the Oregon Mayors Association and was focused exclusively on emergency preparedness and response. The opening keynote address was presented by Astoria Mayor Bruce Jones, a retired U.S. Coast Guard captain who provided a powerful recounting of the Coast Guard's response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, when he served as the commanding officer of USCG Air Station New Orleans. Breakout sessions covered a broad range of topics, including: lessons learned from critical events; crisis communications; CERT Teams; roles and responsibilities of elected officials and staff; crisis management; and operations plans.

The event wrapped up with a closing keynote address from Andrew Phelps, director of the Oregon Office of Emergency Management, who focused on the need for state and local government to work together when responding to emergencies, and how this will be critical as we navigate future events, including the threat of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake.

The LOC would like to thank all of our member cities for their participation, along with our many speakers and panelists. We would also like to thank the following members of our Symposium Planning Committee for their efforts in putting together this important event: Dayton Mayor Beth Wytoski, Toledo Mayor Rod Cross, Cottage Grove Mayor Jeff Gowing, Monmouth Councilor Christopher Lopez and Dallas Mayor Brian Dalton.

And finally, a special thanks to the our presenting sponsor, PGE, along with the companies and organizations listed below which provided their generous support.



Opening Keynote Astoria Mayor Bruce Jones, a Coast Guard captain during Hurricane Katrina, shared powerful stories and lessons learned from the hurricane rescue missions.



Oregon Office of Emergency Management Director Andrew Phelps provided the closing keynote, an engaging and thought-provoking address to city leaders about their responsibility to their communities in planning for the next disaster.

Thank You Sponsors!



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NLC Service Line Warranty Program by HomeServe



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LOC Board Meets Virtually

The LOC Board of Directors met April 2 via Zoom and accomplished the following:

- Appointed General Counsel Patty Mulvihill as the parliamentarian for 2021;
- Appointed the following members of the People of Color Caucus to individual committees:
 - Happy Valley Councilor David Emami to the Bylaws Committee;
 - Newberg Councilor Jules Martinez Plancarte to the Equity and Inclusion Committee;
 - Albany Mayor Alex Johnson II to the Budget Committee;
 - Monmouth Councilor Christopher Lopez to the Conference Planning Committee; and
 - Woodburn Councilor Debbie Cabrales to the Nominating Committee;
- Reviewed the history of past amendments to the LOC Governing Documents;
- Supported the personnel update, which in turn supported the hiring of Accounting Specialist Elizabeth Ramirez and the creation of a full-time Project & Program Coordinator position;
- Appointed North Bend Councilor Timm Slater to fill the vacant position of Immediate Past President created by Jake Boone's resignation;
- Supported the process and steps taken regarding the FY 19-20 Audit;
- Were introduced to two new employees: Operations & Member Engagement Director Christy Wurster and Accounting Specialist Elizabeth Ramirez;
- Approved the 2021 Executive Director Performance Metrics, along with the evaluation process;
- Supported the collection of demographic information from board and committee members;
- Tabled a decision on the composition and structure of LOC committees to the June meeting following additional review by the Executive Committee;
- Appointed members to the DEI and Finance Committees for 2021;
- Referred the proposed Constitution and Bylaws Amendments of 2021 back to the Bylaws Committee. Revisions will be considered at the June 2021 meeting;
- Appointed Haines Councilor Peter Hall to the Finance Committee;
- Received the DEI Committee update on the formation of the Breaking Down Barriers Subcommittee to remove barriers to LOC participation, and the Grant Funding Subcommittee,

focused on fundraising and grants to support equity and inclusion;

- Supported the continuation of the LOC Pilot Legal Program;
- Approved the list of applicants for the 2021 External Conference Planning Committee; and
- Discussed the possibility of a hybrid, in-person/virtual 2021 LOC Annual Conference.

The next LOC Board meeting is scheduled for June 18 in Sherwood.

2021 LOC Board of Directors Meetings

- June 18 – 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sherwood
- October 20 – 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Riverhouse on the Deschutes, Bend
- December 10 – 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Local Government Center, Salem

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96TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 21-23 • RIVERHOUSE, BEND



Save the Date for the LOC 96th Annual Conference in Bend!

The LOC Executive Committee met on May 5 and decided to proceed with an in-person conference this fall. The LOC's 96th Annual Conference is scheduled for October 21-23 at the Riverhouse in Bend. The in-person format for this year's event is subject to change depending on county risk levels due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic.

Registration for the 2021 LOC Conference will open on **August 2**. Further details on registration will be provided in the Friday [LOC Bulletin](#) and on the [LOC website](#).

Contact: Lisa Trevino, Program Manager - ltrevino@orcities.org.

Budget Now to Attend the Annual Conference

Don't miss out on LOC's premier training and networking event for city officials. The 96th Annual Conference will be held October 21-23 at the Riverhouse on the Deschutes in Bend.

For Your City's Budget

Here are estimates cities can use in their FY 2021-22 budget process to plan for registration and event costs.

| Costs per attendee | If registered August 2 - September 17 | If registered after September 17 |
|---|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| LOC Member full registration | \$375 | \$425 |
| LOC Business Partners/Associates | \$375 | \$425 |
| Non-Member Government | \$475 | \$525 |
| Non-Member Corporate | \$1,000 | \$1,050 |
| Guest | \$150 | \$150 |
| Awards Dinner | \$50 | \$50 |
| Special Tours/Workshops/Seminars (includes OMA, OCCMA, Councilors Workshop and Tours) | \$50-150 | \$50-150 |

Note: Conference registration closes on October 8. After October 8 registration must be done on-site and will cost an additional \$50.

LOC Welcomes Elizabeth Ramirez as Accounting Specialist



The LOC is pleased to welcome Elizabeth Ramirez to our Finance Department as an Accounting Specialist. Ramirez attended Western Oregon University, majoring in Business, and brings over five years of accounting experience to the LOC's team. Duties include review and entry of deposits, collections, and expenses.

LOC Weekly Conference Calls for City Leaders



Join us every Friday at 10:05 a.m. as Executive Director Mike Cully hosts a statewide conference call for city leaders. Among the weekly presenters are staff from the governor's office, the Oregon Health Authority, the Oregon Office of Emergency Management and the National League of Cities. Each call also allows time for Q&A with LOC members.

The call-in information is posted on the [LOC website](#) and the audio of each call is posted Friday afternoons.

Topics A-Z



Municipal Information at Your Fingertips

Easy to navigate and searchable, **Topics A-Z** is an online collection of information categorized into fundamental city governance topics. Find resources, publications, samples and links to information on a range of topics from animal regulations to youth engagement. Check it out: www.orcities.org/resources/reference/topics-z.

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Upcoming Small Cities Meetings

LOC Operations & Member Engagement Director Christy Wurster is inviting elected and appointed city officials to join her for the League's upcoming second quarter Small Cities program meetings.

Each meeting will include a presentation with topics selected by the participants in each region, as well as a roundtable discussion. While the meetings are intended for cities with a population of 7,500 or less, all city officials in each region are welcome to attend. In addition, guests from state agencies, regional and county governments, non-profits, and consultancy firms are also welcome.

[View a map of Small Cities regions](#)

Upcoming Meetings

Central Coast (Region 5)

May 19 at 11 a.m., via Zoom

[RSVP](#)

Metro (Region 2)

June 16 at 11 a.m., via Zoom

[RSVP](#)

Gorge (Region 8)

June 17 at 11 a.m., via Zoom

[RSVP](#)

Central (Region 9)

June 18 at 11 a.m., via Zoom

[RSVP](#)

Contact: Christy Wurster, Operations & Member Engagement Director – cwurster@orcities.org

2021 Legislative Posters Arriving in Cities Soon



The popular reference poster, created in partnership with the Association of Oregon Counties, Oregon School Boards Association, and Special Districts Association of Oregon, will be mailed to cities the week of May 17. Cities can request additional copies by emailing Kevin Toon, LOC Communications Director, at ktoon@orcities.org.

Prepare for an on-time arrival.

Are you tired of your city's financial reports landing on your desk at the last minute? At TKW we know you have plenty to do without worrying about missing a filing deadline. We've been going above and beyond to provide our clients with on-time delivery of audits, reviews and compilations since 1987. We won't risk your reputation, or ours, for anything less than the highest level of service.

Imagine what more you could do by using TKW audit services.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (continued from page 5)

3. There are safeguards and penalties in place to discourage state interference or additional state mandates on the use of these funds.

For all municipalities with less than 50,000 residents, states are required to suballocate funding according to a simple per-capita formula. States that fail to suballocate funds that small cities are entitled to under the American Rescue Plan Act will be penalized by the U.S. Treasury Department, which is authorized to claw back state funds by an amount equal to the funding not allocated to municipalities as required by the law.

Now that I have unpacked the bones of the plan and how funds will be rolled out to cities, it is prudent that I highlight the importance of exercising patience and situational awareness of how to make the most of these funds. I am underscoring this point because while many cities have priority project lists already and things in the pipeline, there is also a slew of proposals forming now that could very well supplement or even replace your need to bear the entire financial cost of whatever your city may be planning.

President Biden has outlined an economic recovery package focused on infrastructure and jobs, and it is important to remember the connection that environmental protection has to infrastructure and economic growth. This includes investing in our nation's water infrastructure, acting on climate change to build community resilience, and enhancing local parks and green/natural infrastructure. This means financial investment, and some of these plans may overlap with what your city may be planning as well.

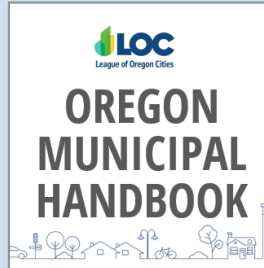
The League of Oregon Cities is continually monitoring this evolving situation, and it is our core mission to ensure that our members are aware of available opportunities. We also strongly encourage transparency by cities when utilizing their CARES and ARP funds, to encourage interaction and trust with your constituents. Many cities have chosen to build a webpage highlighting investments made with these dollars, which appears to be well received.

In the end though, we encourage our member cities to use the LOC as your resource. If you have questions, thoughts or ideas, we stand ready to help evaluate, advise and even investigate the possibility of additional or matching funds for your projects. ■

Are You Signed Up for the *LOC Bulletin*?

Each and every week, the *LOC Bulletin* brings the latest news of interest to Oregon's cities directly to your email inbox. To be added to the list, send a request to loc@orcities.org.

Chapters Added to the Oregon Municipal Handbook



The LOC's [Oregon Municipal Handbook](#) is a comprehensive resource providing city officials, from elected leaders to essential employees, an understanding of the purpose, structure, authority and nuances of municipal governance in Oregon.

Chapters added this quarter include:

- [Public Records](#)
- [Abuse Reporting](#)
- [Working with the Public](#)
- [Marijuana Law](#)
- [Local Government Associations](#)
- [League of Oregon Cities](#)

[See all Handbook chapters](#)



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Second Quarter 2021 | LOCAL FOCUS 13



Q: Are You Familiar with Everything the LOC can do for You and Your City?

A: While most of Oregon's 241 cities are familiar with the LOC, and some members even regularly interact with the LOC, most probably do not realize how encompassing the LOC is in terms of its staff and resources. Ask yourself this question: Are you familiar with everything the LOC can do for you and your city?

How Many People Does the LOC Employ?

The LOC has 20 employees spread across five departments. Those five departments include: Communications; Finance; Intergovernmental Relations (a.k.a. lobbying); Legal Research; and Member & Administrative Services. The LOC's employees are led by Executive Director Mike Cully.

What Services Does the Communications Department Provide to Members?

The Communications Department informs and helps educate LOC members through the development and publication of electronic communications, publications, and social media platforms. For example:

- Each week the department produces the *LOC Bulletin*, an e-newsletter that provides members with updates about bills that may impact cities, training opportunities city officials may want to attend, and generally keeps cities apprised of municipal happenings.
- Every quarter, the department produces the *Local Focus*, a magazine which zeros in on topics relevant to city leaders, ranging from housing, disaster resilience, council-staff relations, and law enforcement issues to funding and innovative ways to obtain needed resources.
- The department ensures the LOC is active on social media platforms like [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
- On a bi-weekly basis, the department produces a podcast called *City Focus* that provides cities with timely and relevant information in 20 to 30-minute segments.

If you are not presently receiving the LOC Bulletin, Local Focus, or haven't subscribed to the City Focus podcast, please email loc@orcities.org to get added to LOC's distribution list.

What Services Does the Finance Department Provide to Members?

The LOC's Finance Department, in addition to managing the LOC's funds, also leads the organization's partnership with

NPPGov, a cooperative procurement service that provides LOC members the opportunity to receive significant cost savings on products and items they need to operate effectively. For more information on NPPGov, and how it can save your city money, please visit the [procurement webpage](#).

The department also provides financial services for the LOC Foundation, the Oregon City Attorneys Association, Oregon City Planning Development Association, the Oregon City/County Management Association, and the Oregon Mayors Association.

What Services Does the Intergovernmental Relations (Lobbying) Department Provide to Members?

At its core, the role of the Intergovernmental Relations Department is to advocate for Oregon's 241 cities in the state legislature, before state administrative bodies during rulemaking processes, and Oregon's federal delegation.

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The department is effectively the LOC’s front line in passing legislation that makes sense and is helpful to communities across Oregon. It also spends considerable energy working to stop legislation that presents cumbersome oversight or limits or preempts local decision-making. The department’s staff covers the full range of legislative issues, from land use and taxation to water quality and ethics and everything in between. During a typical long session (occurring in odd-numbered years) the department tracks more than 1,000 bills.

What Does the Legal Research Department Provide to Members?

The core mission of LOC’s Legal Research Department (LRD) is to provide information and technical assistance to elected and appointed city officials who have questions about their duties, city operations, city governance, and various state and federal statutes. There are two key service areas the Department provides:

1. The department manages the LOC’s [member inquiry line](#). The member inquiry line provides access to LOC attorneys, who answer questions about best and common municipal practices, provide direction on statutory requirements (such as public meetings law, local government budget law, election law, etc.), and point members in the direction of other resources to assist them in overcoming challenges and meeting their city’s goals.
2. Departmental staff create [educational resources](#) that members can use as starting points in understanding complicated legal issues and as reference tools when trying to resolve local community concerns. Resources produced include: FAQs; guides; models; and white papers. Guides provide a comprehensive explanation and a how-to manual on one particular area of municipal law – for example, the LRD has produced a guide on local transient lodging taxes. Models are sample ordinances or policies covering a broad range of issues facing cities. FAQs are short, easy-to-read resources that answer questions regularly posed to LOC by its members. White papers are essentially a legal memorandum wherein complicated legal issues are dissected and explained.

What Does the Member & Administrative Services Department Provide to Members?

The Member & Administrative Services Department is the go-to resource for membership needs, connecting cities to resources to assist in solving whatever challenge the city is facing. The department coordinates job ads, the uniform traffic citation bulk purchases program, and supports the LOC Board of Directors, the LOC Foundation, the Oregon City/County Management Association, and the Oregon Mayors Association. It also provides educational resources and other services for members. There are three key service areas the department provides:

1. The department is responsible for planning and hosting both the [LOC Annual Conference](#) and its regional [spring conference](#).
2. Departmental staff manage the LOC’s [training program](#). From November through January, following local elections

every two years, the department leads “[Elected Essentials](#),” a training program for city leaders who have recently been elected. These workshops are offered in 12 regions around the state. In the year between elections, the LOC offers its “Local Government Fundamentals” training program that touches on similar information as “Elected Essentials,” but in a shorter format. The Fundamentals training is offered for members who missed the “Elected Essentials” training or would like a refresher course. The LOC is also providing more on-demand training and fields member requests for specific training topics. In addition, the Member and Administrative Services Department oversees the [Local Government Management Certificate](#) for a host of pre-determined training areas that are listed on the League’s website.

3. The department is responsible for the LOC’s [Small Cities Program](#), which includes quarterly meetings in 12 regions around the state. The program allows local officials and others to gather, network, and share information and solutions on issues within their communities. These meetings also include a scheduled presentation with topics that are relevant to the region.

The League of Oregon Cities, its board of directors, and staff, take pride in the assistance and support provided to Oregon’s 241 home rule cities. For more information on specific departments and resources, please visit the LOC website at www.orcities.org. ■



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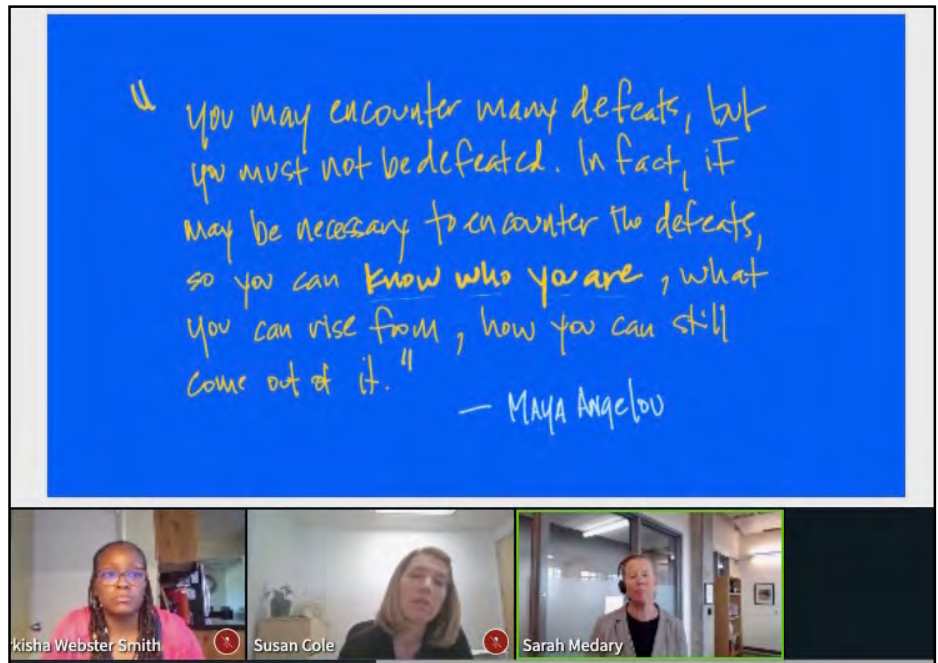
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Students From Across Oregon Participate in Networking Event About Local Government Careers

On April 15, the Engaging Local Government Leaders (ELGL) network, the League of Oregon Cities, the Special Districts Association of Oregon, the Government Finance Officers Association of Oregon, and the IPMA-HR Oregon Chapter partnered on a two-hour event about local government careers for students from Clackamas Community College, Mt. Hood Community College, Willamette University, University of Oregon, and Portland State University.

The event started with short presentations about the wide variety of jobs available with local governments, ranging from city management, to public safety, to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Presenters shared what a “typical day” looks like in their roles, and also reflected on the undergraduate coursework that has been most useful in their careers.





Chinook Program 2021 – October 3-8
Watch for Information Soon

Current Training and Consulting Opportunities:

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- Decision Making in the Public Realm
- Planning in Oregon
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- Organizational Assessments and Development

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Students then had a chance to visit in small virtual groups with the speakers, to ask questions and learn more about career paths.

Stefan Myers from Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue shared after the event: “The best moment was meeting a student who was in community college and serves as the student body president. I then got the pleasure of sharing that I actually am a community college graduate and was student body president. We bonded and had a great discussion on what it was like to work in local government versus non-profit.”

The event concluded with a panel discussion with Tigard Human Resources Manager Brandi Leos; Klamath Falls Assistant to the City Manager Eric Osterberg; and Springfield Management Analyst Sam Kelly-Quattrocchi. They shared their experiences and stories about finding a local government job or internship.

Special thanks to all of the speakers at the event for volunteering their time to inspire the next generation of local government leaders to public service careers:

MaryKay Dahlgreen, Lincoln County Library District
 Sarah Medary, Eugene City Manager
 Susan Cole, Beaverton Assistant Finance Director
 Felicita Monteblando, Tualatin Hills Parks & Recreation District Director
 Kent Wyatt, Tigard Communications Director
 Stefan Myers, Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue Public Information Officer
 Ronda Groshong, Beaverton Chief of Police
 Markisha Smith, Portland Office of Equity & Human Rights Director
 Mike Cully, League of Oregon Cities
 Christy Wurster, League of Oregon Cities
 Jennifer Quisenberry, Special District Association of Oregon
 Matt Zook, Oregon City Finance Director
 Brandi Leos, Tigard HR Manager
 Eric Osterberg, Klamath Falls Assistant to the City

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CONSERVATION CORNER



Conserving Water in Your Garden and Landscaping

Over the last year, thanks to a combination of lockdown due to COVID-19, teleworking and the arrival of nicer weather, there has been a large uptick in home gardening. Since spring is officially here and Oregon is finally starting to see nicer weather, the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) wanted to remind everyone of some tips to conserve water in your garden, lawn and landscaping.

- Plant native plants that are perennials and drought tolerant and consider xeriscaping to help reduce fire risk to your home.
- Install drip irrigation instead of watering with a garden hose or a sprinkler system. Not only does it prevent disease in your plants by minimizing water contact with leaves and stems, but it saves water because there is less evaporation as the water is distributed.
- Harvest rainwater by collecting it off an impervious surface like your roof into rain barrels for watering your garden and landscaping.
- Add mulch to landscaping to prevent moisture from evaporating especially during dry spells.
- Water your garden and lawn early in the morning or late at night to reduce evaporation.
- Recycle household water. For example, that cold water that runs out when waiting for the water to heat up can be captured and used to water container plants.
- Move your mower blade up one notch and allow your grass to grow a little higher than you normally would. Longer blades of grass lead to less water wasted through evaporation.



Replace grass around trees with mulch, wood chips or gravel.

- Plant your garden in small blocks instead of long rows for easier watering and greater efficiency.
- If you're resurfacing your patio or driveway, consider using permeable building materials such as paver blocks, and pervious concrete. This allows infiltration of stormwater runoff and can filter out pollutants that contribute to water pollution.
- Add compost to your garden soil to help retain water (thereby reducing watering needs) and bonus—it helps improve drainage in clay soils.
- Be sure to check your garden hose for leaks and replace washers on a regular basis to prevent leaks before they can happen.



Install drip irrigation to save water and prevent disease in your plants.

This is of particular importance if you store your garden hose outside during the winter.

- When planting your garden, be sure to group plants by water needs. This will make watering far more efficient.
- Install a water timer—look for one with a soil moisture sensor that detects how wet the soil is and prevents overwatering.
- Reuse greywater (water from showers, washing machines, etc.) for watering landscape plants. Household soaps and detergents are harmless to plants (be sure NOT to use water containing bleach or disinfectants).
- Reuse your cooking water—if you steam or boil vegetables, pasta, etc. save the water! It is full of nutrients and makes for great fertilizer for your plants (be sure to let it cool overnight first).
- If you have a fish tank, don't throw that water out when you clean the tank and change out the water. It's full of "old" nitrogen and phosphorous which are great for plants.
- Resist the urge to wash down driveways, walkways and patios. Instead get some exercise by sweeping them off.
- Replace grass around tree trunks. The grass growing under a tree is competing with the tree for nutrients and water. Instead, replace the grass around trees with mulch, wood chips, or gravel.
- Trim your trees on a regular basis, especially the unnecessary lower branches—not only does this create a more structurally appealing tree by lifting the eye up to the canopy but with fewer branches and leaves there is less moisture loss (this is also great for fruit trees as it makes for a better harvest).

For other questions related to OWRD's water-conservation programs, please contact Kerri Cope at Kerri.H.Cope@oregon.gov or 503-979-9544. ■

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Photo courtesy of City of Bend website



Bend's Juniper Swim and Fitness Center offers many recreation programs, including outdoor fitness classes.

Promoting the Great Outdoors

How Cities Encourage Recreation & Activities in Their Communities

By Melody Finnemore



Photo courtesy of City of Salem

After more than a year of living with restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most Oregonians are more than ready for some fun and plenty of opportunities are available outside. City leaders already are promoting outdoor annual events and other activities in anticipation of a summer that promises to be more celebratory than the last one.

Making Connections in Salem & Prineville

This summer will mark the opening of the Gerry Frank|Rotary Amphitheater at Salem's Riverfront Park. It is part of the first phase of improvements outlined in the Salem Riverfront Park Master Plan, which includes several new features for the 26-acre downtown park described by residents as "Salem's Living Room."

Salem's cost for the improvements is \$2.6 million, paid for through Park System Development Charges. Soft cost added about another \$1 million to project costs. Construction of the new amphitheater was funded with the help of community contributions and fundraising for the project is ongoing.

The Peter Courtney Minto Island Bridge and Trail connects 1,200 acres of parks and more than 20 miles of off-street trails between south Salem, downtown and west Salem. When combined, this acreage is larger than New York City's Central Park.

"It creates a beautiful connection and you can walk or ride your bike to all of the trails in Minto-Brown Island Park," said Salem City Council President Chris Hoy.

The \$10 million project funding came from federal, state and local resources as well as the Riverfront Downtown and South Waterfront Urban Renewal Areas, Salem Keizer Area Transportation Study, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Business Oregon and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). The project also complements the Historic Union Street Railroad Bridge renovation.

Minto-Brown Island Park is 900 acres, Riverfront Park is 23 acres and Wallace Marine Park is 114 acres. More than 20 miles of trails for walking, running and biking allow residents and tourists to explore Salem's riverfront and downtown.



Photo courtesy of City of Prineville

Above: Salem's Peter Courtney Minto Island Bridge and Trail connects 1,200 acres of parks and more than 20 miles of off-street trails.

Left: Prineville turned an old railroad track into a half-mile walking and biking path.

Salem's Winter-Maple Neighborhood Greenway project is creating a safe and convenient route for biking and walking between the Oregon State Capitol and Salem Parkway. In addition to improving safety, the project encourages a healthy lifestyle and prioritizes bicycle and pedestrian travel. The cost was about \$4,500 and is being paid for from the city's general transportation maintenance budget as funded by the state gas tax.

"You can enjoy so many great opportunities for recreation without having to leave the city or even getting in your car," Hoy said. "It's really remarkable how far we've come in the last two or three years."

Meanwhile, a stretch of long-idle railroad track in Prineville is now being turned into about a half-mile walking and biking path, from Northeast Juniper Street to Combs Flat Road. The 10-foot-wide paved trail is made possible with a grant the city secured through ODOT's Rails to Trails program, which paid for 90% of the \$400,000 project.

"Right where we're at, we're pretty close to a creek and some amenities and a park, so it's just another opportunity to get people out walking around," Prineville Mayor Jason Beebe told News Channel KTVZ.

The trail was to be completed in the late spring and the city hopes to add to it this summer.

(continued on page 22)



Photo courtesy City of Sisters



Photo courtesy Boatnik Facebook page

Left: The Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show attracts thousands of visitors from around the world every July. Right: The annual Boatnik Festival in Grants Pass will return this year, complete with a parade, carnival, concert and fireworks.

Summer Brings Community Events

Sisters residents and city leaders are looking forward to this year’s Outdoor Quilt Show, Sisters Rodeo Parade, Sisters Folk Festival and Sisters Harvest Faire, annual citywide events that draw at least 2,000 attendees and typically several thousands of visitors. The community also hosts dozens of other public events throughout the year.

“Our citywide events, in particular, have a long history of being cultural staples and economic drivers. Many other public events also support our community and tourism economy,” City Manager Cory Misley said. “The Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show has especially put Sisters on the global stage as travelers from around the world have attended for decades.”

The city, with transient lodging tax through the chamber of commerce, supports tourism promotion including the city-wide events. The city has also supported nonprofit events with community grants. “The city is always working in the spirit of partnership on policies, administration and being a vibrant visitor destination with overall livability,” Misley said.

Grants Pass will host its 62nd annual Boatnik Festival Memorial Day weekend, with this year’s theme as “Small or tall, we stand for them all.” Organized by the Grants Pass Active Club, the activities start Thursday evening with the Davis Shows Carnival featuring food, rides, games and other family fun. The excitement continues Friday with a concert and fireworks display on the Rogue River. Saturday morning features the Boatnik parade that travels through downtown Grants Pass and ends at Riverside Park.

Throughout the weekend the festivities continue in the park and include sprint and drag boat racing; arts and crafts; a pizza eating contest; children’s activities; bingo; food vendors; the Boatnik Brewfest; Chevy Drive It Home Golf Shoot Out and more fireworks. Monday is the highlight and features the World

Famous Tom Rice Memorial White Water Hydroplane Race and Memorial Day Service, including a jet flyover.

There is no admission to attend many Boatnik events, and all funds raised by the all-volunteer Grants Pass Active Club are returned to the community by supporting local children and youth programs. The club also provides scholarships to area high school seniors.

Encouraging Inclusion

A growing number of cities across the state are adding inclusive playgrounds to their outdoor amenities. As an example, Hillsboro is developing a new, 11-acre park just south of the Hidden Creek Community Center that will feature its first inclusive playground.

“This is a huge step forward for the people of Hillsboro,” said Parks & Recreation Commission Chair Gwynne Pitts. “This is the park and playground that our community needs. We have an opportunity to come together to remove barriers and make



Photo courtesy City of Hillsboro website

Hillsboro’s 11-acre park is set to open in 2023 and will feature an inclusive playground.

life a little more fun for every child and adult in Hillsboro.”

Construction on the park and playground is expected to begin in 2022, with an anticipated opening in 2023. Other park amenities will include picnic shelters, restrooms, pathways, a parking lot, an open lawn and landscaping.

The city of Sutherlin also is constructing an inclusive playground, transforming deserted property around a forgotten log pond into Ford's Pond Park. In addition to the inclusive playground, the park will feature nature trails winding through restored oak habitat and a 10-foot-wide path circling the pond, according to *The News-Review*. Hillsboro and Sutherlin join Portland and Baker City as Oregon cities featuring inclusive playgrounds.

Activities for All Seasons

Other family friendly, outdoor amenities include swimming pools and aquatic parks, and Central Oregon boasts some of the state's best. Juniper Swim & Fitness, operated by Bend Parks & Rec, has an Olympic, 50-meter pool that is outdoors in the summer and indoors in the winter as well as a seasonal outdoor activity pool with a waterslide and aquatic playground.

The Sunriver Homeowners Aquatic & Recreation Center (SHARC) near Bend is open to the general public and features more than 2.5 acres of outdoor and indoor pools, a hot tub, two water slides, a lazy river and a tubing hill.

The southern Oregon town of Malin recently renovated its public pool, splitting the once 35-yard pool into a 25-yard main/competition pool with new starting blocks and a diving board and a separate, sloped-entry wading pool. The gutter, filtration and heating systems have been upgraded as well and the pool, built in 1948, is now fully ADA accessible.

The city notes that the project was made a reality thanks to a grant from the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department. Its grant award was \$352,000 and its final project cost was about \$750,000. The city also points out that the pool is conveniently located within Malin Park, which includes horseshoe pits, a playground, walking trails, grated barbecues, picnic space and baseball fields.

Golf courses, disk golf facilities, and bike trails and parks abound throughout the state and attract families during the warmer



Sutherlin's Ford's Pond Park will feature an inclusive playground and nature trails winding through restored oak habitat and a 10-foot-wide path circling the pond.



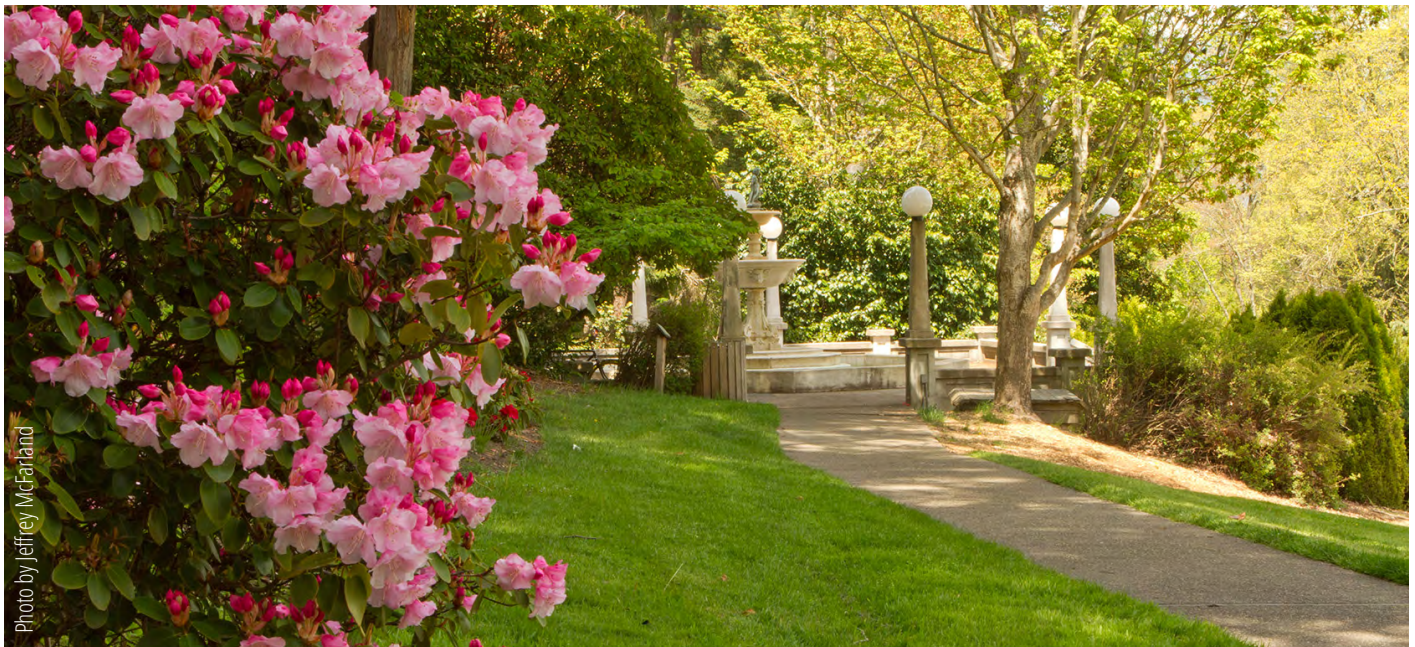
Left: Malin's public pool was recently renovated into a 25-yard main/competition pool with new starting blocks and a diving board and a separate, sloped-entry wading pool. Right: The Sunriver Homeowners Aquatic & Recreation Center is open to the public and features more than 2.5 acres of outdoor and indoor pools, a hot tub, two water slides, a lazy river and a tubing hill.

months. In the winter, ice skating rinks are a draw in cities such as Ashland, Klamath Falls, Bend, Sunriver and Hillsboro.

Outdoor dining has grown in popularity as several cities closed parts of sidewalks and roads to create more space for restaurants to serve customers outside due to COVID restrictions. Several guidebooks and websites dedicated to outdoor and patio dining in the Portland metro area already existed before the pandemic, and seating restrictions led to a host of new ones such as “15 Restaurants Offering Winter-Friendly Outdoor Seating,” released in February by pdx.eater.com.

The increase in outdoor dining is expected to continue to buoy restaurants through the spring, summer and fall. By mid-April, customers already were flocking to them to enjoy the sunshine, spirits and delicious cuisine. ■

Ms. Finnemore is a Portland-area freelance writer. Contact her at precisionpdx@comcast.net.



City Walking Trails and Pathways

An Often Overlooked Treasure

By Patty Mulvihill, LOC General Counsel

In non-pandemic times, I travel fairly extensively in my work for the LOC. A lot of my travel involves me spending the night in hotel rooms across this great state. But, with COVID-19, I have greatly reduced my traveling; I went from being on the road 4-6 times per month to maybe only a dozen times in the last year. And while my travel schedule has changed, so too has my routine while I'm on the road.

Most hotels I've stayed in this last year have closed their swimming pools and exercise rooms—requiring me to find other ways to get in my daily workout. Luckily for me, Oregon cities, both large and small, have invested heavily in creating and maintaining walking trails and pathways. These miles of walking trails and pathways have not only been a blessing in terms of providing an avenue for physical exertion during this pandemic, they've also provided, well at least for me, an opportunity to breathe fresh air and find some peace and serenity in nature. I can't possibly describe, or even begin to list, the numerous walking trails and pathways that exist in our Oregon communities, but I can at least point out and give kudos to those trails and pathways that have given me respite during my travels over the last several months.



Butte Park, Hermiston

Butte Park covers 40 acres and features soccer fields, a dog park, a spray park, an outdoor swimming pool, and most importantly (at least to me) a hiking trail that leads you up to the top of Hermiston Butte. When you're standing on top of Hermiston Butte you have a panoramic view of the entire city, and if you are willing to make the short climb around sunrise, it's a pretty spectacular place to start the day. The trail itself isn't long, the city's website indicates the trail is a little less than a mile. While the distance may be short, the elevation gain is pretty solid. I did three trips up and down the Butte and if my pedometer is to be believed, I managed to climb the equivalent of about 70 flights of stairs.



Depoe Bay Scenic Trail Lookout

This trail is short, and unlike Butte Park in Hermiston, there is really no elevation to speak of. But, what the trail lacks in distance and elevation, it more than makes up for in awe-inspiring beauty. The trail itself leads you right to the edge of a cliff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. At times, especially if you experience the trail during high tide, mist from the crashing waves will blanket your face. The roar of those same waves is often so strong that you can feel the sound in your heart. And if you like whales, grab a cup of coffee or tea, because there are benches along the trail where you can sit and watch the whales swim by all day long.



Lithia Park, Ashland

The city of Ashland describes Lithia Park as its crown jewel. Its 100 acres are comprised of open lawn space, gardens, tennis courts, pickleball courts, volleyball courts, playground equipment and space for outdoor concerns. And while the park is full of activities, my favorite feature is the miles of hiking trails that wind their way through the park. When you walk through Lithia park you have the privilege of walking through the woods, a Japanese garden, a rose garden, and stumbling upon a few duck ponds. To me, the most fascinating part of Lithia Park is the fact that it lies in the heart of a bustling city—it's literally steps from Ashland's main shopping and entertainment district.

Whenever I'm in Ashland I know that if I need to reset and recharge I have only to take a few steps outside of its city hall to find myself immersed in nature.



Deschutes River Trail, Bend

This is probably one of the most well-known trails in Oregon. It's easy to find in travel brochures and on hiking apps. But I think what is often overlooked about this trail, is that for all its notoriety, I often wonder if most people realize it's a city facility. A local government created this path—and oh what a path. The sound and sight of natural water is one that I find particularly soothing. And while I love traveling to see our members, providing all-day trainings, or attending non-stop meetings can be somewhat taxing. Walking along the Deschutes River Trail has a calming effect on me. It provides one with the rare opportunity to engage with nature in the middle of what some would call a major metropolitan area.



Leo Alder Memorial Parkway, Baker City

Through a four-phase development project, Baker City has created a 2.3-mile asphalt pathway that takes pedestrians through natural landscapes and provides them with views of the Powder River. I stumbled upon this trail quite by accident. In most of

(continued on page 26)



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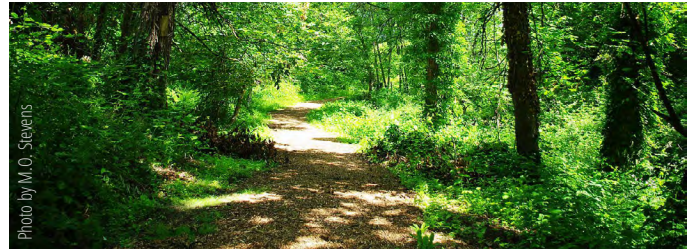
my visits to Baker City, what I have always enjoyed is looking at the historic buildings and facades that have been saved. It was on one of these random walking excursions that I stumbled upon the Leo Alder Memorial Parkway trail. The trail is beautiful, it provided me with an opportunity to see the historic buildings I love and also get a dose of some much needed Mother Nature. If you're staying in the heart of downtown, the trail is readily accessible to you.



Waterfront Park, Hood River

Waterfront Park in Hood River is a great way to get up close and personal with the Columbia River, without having to try your hand at windsurfing. During one of my trips I was staying at one of the hotels along the Columbia. With no gym to utilize, the hotel receptionist told me to head out back and step right onto the Waterfront Park trail. Her recommendation did not disappoint. The slightly less than three-mile trail provides countless sights for the eyes to enjoy. You walk under the bridge

connecting Oregon to Washington, through a marina, over to the entry point the kayakers and windsurfers use, and into the heart of some of Hood River's delicious restaurant venues. If you're not brave enough to try windsurfing like me, walking this trail is a great way to get the feel of the Columbia, without the danger of actually stepping into it.



Memorial Park, Wilsonville

Memorial Park is Wilsonville's largest (126 acres) and oldest park. The park has basketball courts, tennis courts, a skate park, a community garden, and lots of open space. But for me, what I love about Memorial Park is the trails that meander through it. While I don't live too far from Wilsonville, meaning any work-related travel I do there doesn't require a hotel stay, the city's Memorial Park has saved my sanity on more than one occasion. For those of you that have the pleasure of traveling I-5 between Portland and Salem, you're probably familiar with the traffic. Sometimes, after a long drive from eastern Oregon or the north coast, stopping in Wilsonville and visiting Memorial



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The next time you travel to an Oregon city you don't call home, I encourage you to check out the city's park system.

Park is exactly what I need to clear my head and find some patience. The trail system in the park takes you through open green spaces, mature trees and at times you even have a nice view of the Willamette River.



Minto Brown Island Park, Salem

Minto Brown Island Park encompasses 1,200 acres of space in the heart of downtown Salem. Now, I will admit, I live in Salem. So it's not fair to say this park has provided me a respite during my work travels. But given that I, like most people, have spent the last year in some type of lockdown and Minto Brown Island Park has been a constant source of peace in my life. The park has 29 miles of trail, nine of which can be done in a loop. My favorite part about this trail system is the numerous opportunities it provides for finding and watching the bald eagles and ospreys. When you're in the middle of Minto Brown, you feel like you're in the middle of nowhere—traffic sounds fade away, several trails see hardly any hikers so you're all alone with your thoughts, and you feel like you have completely gone off the grid. But, when you need a beverage or bathroom, city life is only a short walk away.

Oregon parks and trails get a lot of attention nationally, and well they should. But for the most part, the parks and trails earning all the accolades are those owned and managed by the state or federal government. The pandemic, and its impact on my travel routines, has shown me what I should have already known—Oregon cities make some pretty fantastic parks themselves. The next time you travel to an Oregon city you don't call home, I encourage you to check out the city's park system. I have a sense you'll stumble upon some hidden treasure that will give you a heady dose of nature and a chance to stretch your legs. ■



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“Forest Bathing” Can Improve Health

By Bill LaMarche, CIS Member Relations Manager

In Japan, researchers have discovered that when people spend time in the forest, they can receive several health benefits. It’s known as “forest bathing.” But it’s not bathing in a literal sense, it’s more about getting outdoors and into the natural world.

Over the past year, pandemic-living has led many to feel much more stressed and anxious. The isolation of social distancing has had an impact on people’s psyche. Because of this, it’s more important than ever to spend time outdoors. Whether it’s a walk during the lunch hour or going to a nature park after work, taking the time to get outside should be a priority.

A pre-pandemic story on NPR highlighted some of the health benefits of taking a walk on a forest trail or sitting by a river. The story highlighted that being outdoors can lower a person’s

heart rate, blood pressure and anxiety levels. In one Japanese study, the health benefits of taking a walk in nature was compared to a city walk. While both activities were good for overall health, researchers discovered that being in a more natural place had additional health benefits. Besides lower blood pressure and a reduction in stress hormones, the study participants described themselves as feeling less tired and less anxious. There was even an increase in cancer-fighting cells in their bodies.

So, whether you enjoy a walk along the ocean or a forest trail, try to get out to experience the sights, sounds and smells of nature. The Japanese have it right, forest bathing is a great prescription to help alleviate some of the stress and anxiety caused by this terrible pandemic. ■

CIS Benefits BeyondWell Program Offers \$150 Rewards

Many cities in Oregon get their employee health benefits through CIS Benefits. In 2021, employees and their spouses who have a CIS Benefits health plan (Regence or Kaiser) can earn up to \$150 in Amazon.com rewards for participating in CIS’ BeyondWell wellness program. BeyondWell combines wellness activities, goal setting, rewards and more into one place. The result is a personalized well-being experience, tailored to each person’s unique needs. Now’s the time to get started by following these three easy steps:

1. Go to cisbenefits.org
2. Scroll down to the programs listed and select BeyondWell for either Regence or Kaiser

3. For new user, accept the Terms of Use and create a username and password. This allows participants to take advantage of the BeyondWell mobile app!

The best way to get started with BeyondWell is to complete the Health Assessment. The Health Assessment takes 15 minutes to complete and personalizes a well-being plan in the Journey section. Once completed, participants will earn \$25!

Now’s the time to get outdoors and start earning rewards for good health!

The Heart of an Oregon Town is Outside:

How Safe Routes to School makes safe places for families and communities

By LeeAnne Ferguson and Heidi Manlove

Kimber learned to ride a bike during the pandemic lockdown. Routinely, Kimber's mom walks with her and her little brother to "school"—which is the school bus parked on the street several blocks away. Kimber packs her backpack with a notebook and a pencil and does her "school work" on the sidewalk near the bus on sunny mornings. At age three (going on 13, according to her mom), Kimber is like children all over Oregon, learning to walk and ride on city streets during this prolonged time at home. Perhaps most importantly, she is building safe habits now that will help her when she starts kindergarten in a year or two.

Cities across Oregon are creating spaces where families like Kimber's can safely explore their neighborhoods, the outdoors and the heart of their towns. Engaging in Safe Routes to School programs and projects is one big way communities can create safe access to whatever destinations lie ahead, and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is a proud partner in this endeavor.

ODOT's Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS) envisions a future where all Oregon students and families can choose and access safe, active, or shared transportation options for the school commute. To make this vision into a reality, the ODOT Safe Routes to School Program:

- Invests in and evaluates safe construction, education, and encouragement programs. In 2022, ODOT will solicit applications for construction grants, education grants, and planning assistance. [More information](#) about past solicitations is available now and the upcoming solicitation will be available in late 2021.
- Prioritizes underserved communities for program resources, support, and opportunities.
- Builds and leverages partnerships with agencies, schools, and community organizations.
- Commits to evolving transparent communication and evaluation that engage and support communities. [Sign up](#) to receive email updates for more information about upcoming grants and assistance.

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Because of the determination of the community to secure a Safe Routes to School grant, a stretch of four-lane Highway 101 where the elementary, middle and high schools are located, now has a new enhanced crossing.

Safe Routes to School Program Overview

Safe Routes to School is a national movement dedicated to improving quality of life for children and communities by supporting students' ability to walk and roll safely to school. Safe Routes to School has existed as a movement since the 1990s, and federal and Oregon state legislation codified its goals in the mid-2000s. Oregon's 2017 transportation package, Keep Oregon Moving, reinforced the state's commitment to Safe Routes to School efforts. The ODOT Safe Routes to School Program relies on partnerships between public, private, and non-profit organizations at the local, regional, and state levels. These partnerships deliver a program with four main areas of focus: education, construction, planning, and equity.

Since 2017, ODOT has funded 70 SRTS construction projects totaling \$44 million. From the 2005 inception of investing in education and encouragement activities around the state, ODOT has funded 100 education projects and encouragement activities, totaling approximately \$10.6 million.

Demand for SRTS funding continues to grow each year, with more communities seeing the benefits that Safe Routes to School education and construction grants bring to their schools, families, and communities as a whole.

Project Highlight: Florence

One community that completed a Safe Routes to School construction project with grant funds is beautiful Florence, on the central Oregon coast. It all began when parents from Florence expressed their support of a SRTS project that has now installed a crosswalk and sidewalks along the busy Oregon Coast Highway, U.S. 101. The elementary, middle, and high schools within Florence are all in a row along a single side of the highway. Many students have independence yet don't have the ability to drive. This, coupled with the absence of a safe crossing, produced a dangerous situation of kids running across the highway.

The installation of the crosswalk benefits the community of Florence by enhancing the safety of kids and students, their families, and drivers. Because of the determination of the community to secure a Safe Routes to School grant, that stretch of four-lane highway now has a new enhanced crossing.

The city of Florence also completed a pedestrian walkway a block away from the highway and a few blocks away from the middle school to provide more safe options to access the schools.

Spring Time is for Walking and Rolling

It's spring! Have fun walking and rolling whether your family is going to school in person or not! ODOT Safe Routes to School has several opportunities and fun events coming up:

- Learn more about bike rodeos and school carpooling tools in [upcoming webinars](#).
- Get creative with our [Art Contest](#): Students draw what they see when they walk or roll. Win digital backgrounds and get your art celebrated in advertisements. Wackiness encouraged!

Additional resources: Yard signs, social media posts, posters, and banners are great ways of reminding everyone to be cautious traveling around kids. Watch ODOT's [webinar](#) for an overview of

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free resources you can use to increase awareness of youth walking and biking like:

- Building a Safe Routes to School project? Consider engaging your community to encourage walking and rolling! Check out ODOT's new [Construction Grantee Toolkit](#) for resources and ideas.
- Host your own event – check out our [Physical Distancing Walk and Roll E-Toolkit](#) in English and Spanish for safe and fun ideas.
- ODOT's [Bike/Ped Digital Toolkit](#) has many downloadable materials with different safety messages. Use [this form](#) to order printed safety materials.
- ODOT created a [Back to School Safety](#) video, which reminds everyone to do our part to make sure we all go back to school safely.

Spring is a time to reintroduce communities to the outdoors and to each other. Time to refresh the garden beds, start mowing the lawn (again), wave to neighbors, and explore the community by walking and rolling! Kimber learned to ride a bike this spring (with no training wheels, she would proudly tell you). What outdoor activity will inspire you? ■

Ms. Ferguson is the Safe Routes to School Program Manager, and can be reached at: LeeAnne.FERGASON@odot.state.or.us

Ms. Manlove is the School/Bicyclist/Pedestrian Program Manager, and can be reached at: Heidi.Manlove@odot.state.or.us

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AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

ARP Funds: Going Forward

Passed by Congress in March, the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan (ARP) established a massive federal re-investment in communities across the country as they climb out of the economic and health related impacts from the worldwide Coronavirus pandemic. The funding allocated to states, cities and counties marks the first time that cities and counties will be receiving funds directly from the federal government to use in their communities.

Much of what has been written by the LOC and others has been focused on the role-out of the funding, as well as the type of local investments cities should focus on. Although there is probably no perfect template the LOC can pass along, it is important for cities to understand how the ARP funds can fit into their local decision making and what other funding streams are available. Cities should evaluate their respective options and fund projects or programs that truly reflect their local priorities or are perhaps shared with other cities or county partners.

Some counties and cities have already started conversations with the intent of advancing conversations to identify possible joint investments or partnerships for projects of significant value to all communities in their region. The LOC encourages this local government dialogue going forward, because the expanded conversation could create important local partnerships for generational projects.

Treasury Spending Guidance Released

The plain language in the state and local government distribution of ARP speaks to the core uses in the areas of public health, economic support for individuals and businesses, backfill for lost local revenue, and infrastructure related to water, sewer, and broadband. What's still to come is further guidance from the U.S Treasury for spending, and more detail on where other federal funds are being deployed at the state level.

On May 10, Treasury released [guidance](#) for states, cities and counties. This guidance provides cities with a population greater than 50,000 (entitlement cities) a portal for registration to ensure their direct funding from the federal government is smooth. Meanwhile, cities with a population less than 50,000 simply need to make sure their DUNS number is current. More details will emerge as LOC staff and NLC have a chance to review the document, which at first glance is extensive with 150 pages of guidance. The LOC will be sharing details with cities and likely schedule webinars for additional assistance.

Details Associated with Additional Revenue Streams are Needed

In addition to the direct funding to states and local governments over the next two years, the ARP provides funding streams to states for a variety of purposes. These include education relief funding, emergency rental assistance, child care and CDBG, Head Start, urban transit relief, rural transit support, and expanded coverage for the Medicaid population.

These additional funding streams are identified to provide cities with more details about the funds Oregon will receive. The state's plan for distribution of these funds is not yet available, so this will be a further area of focus for the LOC to uncover answers. Additional help is coming to Oregon that is separate from the state's direct \$2.6 billion payment. Some of this funding detail will be known once the 2021 legislative session is complete. When determining where to invest their direct share of ARP funds, it's important for cities to understand these additional funding sources, primarily to avoid duplicate funding if state resources will also be available through the ARP.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

LOC Creates American Rescue Plan Resource Hub

The LOC website now features a [resource hub](#) dedicated to the ongoing implementation of the American Rescue Plan. The webpage contains information on funding, spending guidance, latest news, links to the U.S. Treasury and NLC, and more.

American Rescue Plan Resource Hub

Significant law by President Biden on March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan (ARP) allocates \$1.9 trillion to COVID-19 relief and economic recovery. Cities in Oregon will directly receive more than \$687 million through the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.

These funds will be provided over two distributions: the first half is available now for metropolitan cities and in mid-June for smaller cities; the second half will be available one year later. Funds will be available for use through Dec. 31, 2024.

By the Numbers:

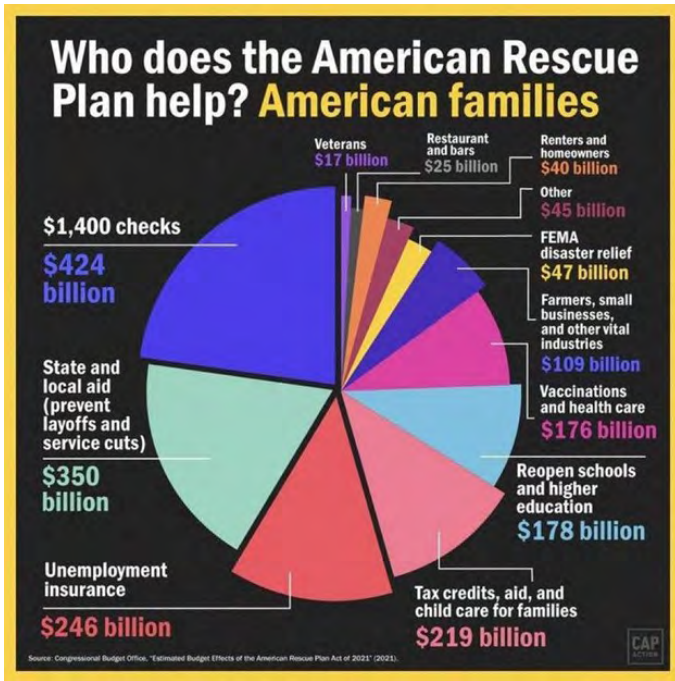
- State of Oregon total = \$4.2 billion
- State of Oregon = \$2.6 billion
- Metro cities (CDBG entitlement cities) = \$497.7 million
- Other cities = \$242.9 million
- Counties = \$818 million
- Capital Projects (State) = \$155 million

Latest News

[Legislators Need to Hear from Cities on \\$268M in Spending Authority](#)

[Registration Required to Receive American Rescue Plan Funds](#)

[Webinar: Coordinating Federal Relief](#)



Source: Center for American Progress

Governor Brown's 10-Point Plan – Post Session

On March 23, Governor Kate Brown released her 10-point economic plan, which is intended to provide recovery investment to help pull Oregon out of the economic catastrophe facing many communities and businesses. The 10-point plan provides investments in the following areas:

1. Investing in Oregon's hardest hit workers (those currently unemployed or underemployed).
2. Reinvesting in innovative housing.
3. Supporting resilient rural communities.
4. Supporting Oregon's workforce (those currently employed but struggling).
5. Creating opportunities for Oregonians (workforce development).
6. Getting small business back on its feet.
7. Investing in Oregon's infrastructure.
8. Oregonians investing in Oregon.
9. Safely reopening Oregon's economy.
10. Innovation in manufacturing.

Details on funding in the 10 focus areas of the governor's plan are not available at this time. It should be noted – this plan depends on three different sources: funds from the ARP distribution; funds in the Governor's Recommended Budget; and legislative actions yet to be taken by the Legislature. A full understanding of the details or the extent of funding won't be possible until the 2021 session has been completed. LOC staff will be taking this "deeper dive" once session is over.

Senate District Allocation

The LOC has recently learned of the Oregon Legislature's intent to provide each state Senate district with an allocation of \$8 million to be divided with the two state representatives in each of the Senate districts. The allocation will work as follows: \$4 million/Senator, \$2 million/Representative. The concept was created so that state elected officials can have a conversation with cities and counties in their respective districts and identify projects of importance and whether there is interest in combining funds from the local governments. The list of projects would be identified by June 1. The state's Legislative Fiscal Office would review projects, and then Governor Brown's office would provide a review as well. Once approved, the funds would be transferred to support the projects and programs.

The Take-Home Message for Cities

The elements of this article are intended to provide cities with resources for evaluating investment options over the next few years. The generational support provided with the direct ARP funds will benefit cities across Oregon. Again, when deciding how to invest funds, cities should evaluate the full range of funding streams discussed previously. Cities are urged to expand their investment considerations through discussions with other local government partners. These conversations could generate opportunities to leverage investments on projects and programs that could have dramatic value for all communities. ■



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LOC Identifies Key Bills for Remainder of Legislative Session

On April 13, the first critical deadline passed for the Legislature. If any legislation had not moved out of committee by April 13, it was effectively dead. The only exceptions are bills in the Rules, Revenue, or Joint committees, along with those in the Ways and Means Committee. The April 13 deadline helps narrow the LOC government relations (IGR) team’s focus for the remainder of the session.

Listed below are the top priority bills the LOC team has identified for the remainder of the session. These bills represent budget and policy priorities identified by the LOC and its many partners in the city lobby. The list also includes bills that the LOC and its many local government partners oppose. There are, of course, hundreds of other bills the LOC will continue to actively track as the session moves towards its scheduled June 27 closing date.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INVESTMENT

SUPPORT

HB 2086: Funding for Crisis Intervention and Behavioral Health

Creates policy objectives and allocates funds for crisis intervention, behavioral health (BH) and access to care. This legislation addresses the main deficiencies in our behavioral health and addiction treatment services.

HB 2980: Respite Centers

Allocates funds for peer run respite centers in geographic regions of the state to provide care for people experiencing distress from anxiety, depression, or other behavioral health issues. A lack of beds for people experiencing a crisis is a critical gap in Oregon’s BH system.

COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY

SUPPORT

SB 282A: Tenant COVID Recovery

SB 282A extends the grace period for all tenants for repayment of back-rent to provide tenants sufficient time to repay debt accumulated during the pandemic and time to deploy state and federal resources for tenant and landlord rent assistance. The bill also continues the temporary 10-day non-payment termination notice to give tenants the possibility of finding rent assistance to avoid eviction and continues the prohibition on credit reports for rent debt protected by the moratorium or grace period.

SB 330: Landlord Tax Credit

Establishes an income tax credit for landlords equal to the amount of unpaid rent forgiven as a condition of accessing the Landlord Compensation Fund. It ensures property owners are treated with the fairness they deserve, while simultaneously providing certainty to tenants who carry significant debt with no obvious path towards repayment.

HB 2966 A: Commercial Rent Grace Period

As amended, extends rent repayment grace period to September 30, 2021 to give commercial tenants with rent arrearages time to access funding from Business Oregon’s Commercial Rent Relief Program and the resources from the American Rescue Plan.

HB 2343 A: Enterprise Zone Employment Flexibility

Creates a path for zone sponsors to temporarily waive enterprise zone employment requirements for businesses that

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have suffered COVID-19 related employment losses. Some traded sector businesses have had to reduce employment due to decreased demand, supply chain issues, or restrictions necessary for the public health. Without relief, these businesses could be subject to disqualification from the program and a claw-back of any tax savings from prior years.

COMPREHENSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

SUPPORT

HB 2344: Labeling of Wipes Products

This bill would require manufacturers of baby wipes, make-up wipes, cleaning wipes and other personal care wipes to adhere to a statewide labeling standard that would require product packaging to clearly indicate that such products should not be flushed down toilets. The legislation reflects an LOC policy committee recommendation, and aims to help alleviate some of the ongoing challenges associated with wipes and related products that are frequently flushed down toilets, resulting in costly impacts for wastewater infrastructure and staff.

In a 2020 report, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies has estimated that wipes result in an estimated \$440 million per year in additional operational costs for wastewater utilities. And despite local investments in public education and outreach, numerous Oregon cities have continued to reach out to the LOC to express frustration over clogs in wastewater infrastructure that result from improper disposal of these products.

HB 5023: Business Oregon Budget

This bill is important for infrastructure dollars going through Business Oregon, which will oversee broadband project grants for infrastructure and planning. The LOC is hoping that the broadband office will become fully staffed and help with technical assistance and planning for smaller communities. Business Oregon's budget also contains funds for water/wastewater projects, and the LOC supports the continued capitalization of the Special Public Works Fund to support key infrastructure projects. Other notable infrastructure investments in the Business Oregon budget include money for the Brownfield Redevelopment Fund and the Strategic Reserve Fund.

SB 5505: Bond Bill

The Governor's Recommended Budget provides money for broadband (approx. \$100 million) and other critical infrastructure through bonds and COPs. However, state statute must be amended to allow bonding of this nature. This funding is a high priority for the LOC.

PROPERTY TAX REFORM

SUPPORT

HB 2634: Senior Deferral

The proposed -2 amendment would extend the sunset for the senior deferral program, create an option for late application, increase access to the program in rural parts of the

(continued on page 36)

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KEY BILLS TO WATCH

state, and ease application for surviving spouses and disabled heirs. Cities recognize the need for property tax assistance for our most vulnerable residents, and this bill will help keep Oregonians in their homes.

OPPOSE

SB 299: Children's Service Districts

The bill would create a new taxing district that would compete with cities for funding due to compression under Oregon's Measure 5 property tax limitations. Cities lost 2.2% of tax revenues to compression in 2019-20, and this bill would only exacerbate those losses by allowing a new type of district with a new permanent tax rate.

HOUSING AND SERVICE INVESTMENT

SUPPORT

HB 5011: Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) Budget

In its 2021 legislative priorities, the LOC supports the OHCS budget bill, which will fund programs across the housing spectrum, from preventing and ending homelessness, to developing and maintaining affordable rental homes, to increasing access to and maintenance of affordable homeownership. Cities are committed to improving the housing opportunities and quality of life for the people they serve.

SB 5505: Affordable Housing Bonds

Among other important investments in SB 5505, the LOC supports inclusion of \$250 million for LIFT affordable housing development, including 20% to build affordable homes for purchase, and \$50 million for permanent supportive housing in Article XI-Q General Obligation bonds.

SB 5534: Affordable Housing Preservation Lottery Bonds

Among other important investments in this lottery bond bill, the LOC supports the inclusion of \$100 million in lottery backed bonds to preserve and maintain affordable housing across Oregon. As Oregon continues to invest in and build new, affordable housing it is critically important that we also maintain our state's existing affordable housing infrastructure.

WATER UTILITY AND RATE ASSISTANCE

SUPPORT

HB 3089 A: Drinking Water & Sewer Rate Assistance

HB 3089 was introduced at the request of the LOC and would establish a new state Public Drinking Water and Sewer Rate Assistance Fund. While there appears to be legislative support for HB 3089, it was sent to the Ways and Means Committee without recommendation. This is due to federal legislation

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that was recently approved and included federal funds for water utility assistance. The state is still waiting for federal guidance as to how those dollars will be distributed and prioritized, including how much Oregon will receive. If federal funds coming to Oregon are less than anticipated, HB 3089-A may become a vehicle to appropriate additional state dollars.

DISASTER RELIEF AND RECOVERY

SUPPORT

Wildland Fire Policy – The two remaining priority wildfire bills for the LOC are SB 762 and HB 2722. The LOC will narrow its focus to improve legislative commitments from state agencies for a local process, identifying funding sources for local government costs that include likely changes to zoning and comprehensive plans. The LOC has been supportive of all primary policy bills moving forward into the Ways & Means process, where funding will be allocated and additional detail in policy guidance will be discussed.

HB 2247 A: Property Tax Delinquent Interest

Authorizes a county to waive delinquent interest on property taxes for the 2020-21 tax year for wildfire victims or businesses which demonstrate COVID-19 related losses. Cities count on timely receipt of property tax revenues but also recognize these are extenuating circumstances.

HB 2341: Wildfire Property Tax Proration

This bipartisan bill is the product of a workgroup, including the LOC, which began when the wildfires were still burning. HB 2341 changes the calculation of property tax proration so that owners see a tax benefit commensurate with their lost value due to damage or destruction from the fires. It also creates an authority for assessors to proactively prorate taxes when they are aware that a property has been destroyed.


HB 3127: Wildfire Recovery Resources

The LOC supports the broad funding package the Legislature is considering to support continued recovery in wildfire impacted communities, including infrastructure needs and approximately \$27.5 million in financial assistance to expand capacity for local building and planning departments and cover fee waiver revenue losses.

HB 5042: Budget Reconciliation

The budget reconciliation bill includes numerous items of importance to cities, including: revenue backfill for cities affected by the 2020 wildfires; local technical assistance funding at the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development for wildfire rebuilding; funds for navigation centers to assist individuals and families access support services and permanent housing; funds to assist wildfire rebuilding efforts; funds for staffing and equipment for testing related to harmful algal blooms; and funding for Business Oregon to

(continued on page 38)



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provide technical assistance to businesses and stand up a commercial rent relief program. The bill has passed both chambers and is awaiting the governor’s signature.

SB 405A/HB 2289-1: Nonconforming Use and Rebuilding Policies

SB 405A would allow for a nonconforming use to not be considered interrupted or abandoned by a city or county during the COVID-19 pandemic and other state of emergency declarations, enabling special community events to keep their permit status through the COVID-19 emergency. The measure would also, until September 30, 2025, allow commencement of restoration or replacement of nonconforming uses that were damaged or destroyed by the September 2020 wildfires. HB 2289-1 would similarly allow replacement of nonconforming uses for property owners to rebuild after the September 2020 wildfires and streamline some approval processes.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

Police Reform

Please note that these bills should be viewed as a package of police reform bills. While there may be one part of the legislation that will place a financial obligation on a city, other aspects provide cities long-term management tools that the LOC has been advocating for years.

SUPPORT

HB 2162: Police Training Study

Directs the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training to study changes to police officer training and to provide results of the study to the Legislature no later than December 31, 2021.

HB 2513: Police Training – Airway Management

Requires police officers to be trained in airway and circulatory anatomy and physiology and certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

HB 2928: Use of Chemicals by Law Enforcement

Regulates use of chemical incapacitants, kinetic impact projectiles and sound devices by law enforcement agencies.

HB 2929: Duty to Report

Modifies a police officer’s duty to report misconduct.

HB 2930: Limitation on Arbitrators Decision Making

Imposes limitations on arbitrators’ decisions concerning alleged misconduct by law enforcement officers. This legislation includes LOC supported arbitration reform.

HB 2932: Database of Physical Force

Directs the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission to establish statewide database of reports of use of physical force by peace officers and corrections officers.

HB 2936: Pre-Certification Prior to Training

Requires the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training to investigate person’s character before accepting

person for training and certification as police officer or reserve officer.

HB 3059: Repeal of State Statute

Repeals state statute, authorizing law enforcement officers to command dispersal of unlawful assemblies and arrest participants who do not disperse.

HB 3355: Law Enforcement Identification

Specifies identification required on uniforms of law enforcement officers working in crowd management.

SUPPORT

HB 2015: Local Marijuana Tax Authority

Allows local governments to levy 10% local marijuana retail sales taxes, up from the current limit of 3%. Measure 110, which decriminalized small amounts of street drugs, will reallocate the state marijuana taxes to drug recovery programs. Cities are expected to lose 72% of their share of state marijuana taxes as a result. City revenues are already struggling due to the pandemic, and Measure 110 will make these problems worse. Cities need HB 2015.

HB 2478: Indefinite Attorney Client Privilege

Maintains attorney client privilege indefinitely, giving Oregon’s public agencies the same privilege as private sector legal counsel. Currently, public records exemptions expire after 25 years and courts are reviewing if this expiration applies to the attorney client privilege. Cities and public officials need the same frank and candid advice from their legal counsel as


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all other clients, and HB 2478 clarifies the statute and will keep genuine legal advice inviolate.

Funding for 211info

The LOC supports a \$3.85 million investment to maintain 211info's current expanded service level across the state. Through contracts with the Oregon Department of Human Services, the Oregon Health Authority and an allocation of \$1M in CARES funding in 2020, 211info has increased service levels to address the need for service information and referral due to the pandemic and wildfires. In the 2021-23 biennium, \$3.85M will support expanded service hours (7 a.m.-11 p.m. M-F, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Sa-Su), eight community engagement coordinators and a statewide emergency manager.

HB 2758: Public Health Positions at OLCC

The Oregon Liquor Control Commission needs additional resources to respond to the impacts of beer, wine and liquor on society.

SB 5530: Local Implementation Funding for Housing Legislation and Climate Mitigation Rulemaking

The Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) budget bill includes funding requests that are critical to avoiding unfunded mandates for cities in the 2021-23 biennium. DLCD Program Option Package (POP) 110 includes \$3.9 million for staff and local technical assistance funding to implement HB 2001 and HB 2003 (2019).

The 2019 Legislature enacted HB 2001 and HB 2003, which made landmark advancements in how local communities plan for and encourage needed housing and have the potential to

overcome decades of exclusionary planning and development policies. However, this work cannot continue without funding to retain DLCD housing staff and provide critical local technical assistance grants in POP 110. Similarly, POP 112 includes \$1 million to support cities and counties within the state's metropolitan areas that will be directed to implement new Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities administrative rules in 2021, which aim to reduce climate pollution in the transportation sector and promote more affordable, equitable development. The Legislature must fund POPs 110 and 112 to prevent unfunded mandates on cities in the 2021-23 biennium.

OPPOSE

HB 2740: Liquor Agent Compensation

An OLCC concept to increase agent compensation at liquor stores, thereby reducing revenues that would otherwise be distributed to the general fund and local governments. Liquor agent compensation is already up due to the Coronavirus pandemic, and the LOC is not aware of any stores closing due to profitability concerns. The OLCC came up with this revised formula in closed meetings, with only liquor store owners at the table. Asking cities to pay for this overly generous formula with no input is unfair.

HB 2204: Expanded Tort Liability

This legislation will significantly expand the number of police tort claims and require the payment of attorney fees. HB 2204 treats claims against police differently than claims against other city services, and would cost members of the CIS pool approximately \$18 million per year. ■

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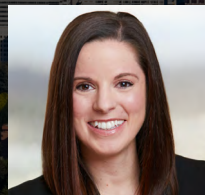
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Building a Lower-Carbon Future

By Jennifer Kenny, Oregon DEQ

What do the Colosseum in Rome, Portland's reservoirs and the sidewalks in your city have in common?

High carbon emissions.

While concrete is a useful building material, producing it generates significant greenhouse gases. How significant? Approximately 887,000 million metric tons globally in 2015—the equivalent emissions from 190,000 cars on the road for a year, according to [Oregon's Consumption Based Emissions Inventory](#), making the cement sector the world's third largest industrial source of pollution.

Concrete has four components: sand, aggregate, water and cement, which is made by heating up crushed limestone to very high temperatures in a kiln. During cement production, large amounts of carbon dioxide, a major greenhouse gas, are released as the limestone is heated. More emissions also come from the fossil fuels burned to generate heat. The Zero Energy Project says that 79% of concrete's CO² emissions come from the cement, even though it is only 13% of the material weight.



Workers at one of the Portland test sites moving wet concrete.

Oregon is a Leader in Low Carbon Concrete

Despite a pandemic and global economic downturn, new construction continues apace in Oregon, *and concrete is here to stay*. With that in mind, the Oregon Department of Environmental

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“Low carbon concrete is important for Oregon cities because concrete and other construction materials often comprise significant portions of the carbon emissions from public spending.”

DEQ Senior Policy Analyst Jordan Palmeri

Quality is working with cities and industry leaders to cut greenhouse gas emissions by using low carbon concrete. A recent [pilot project](#) in Portland showed that by using alternatives to cement, the carbon footprint of an average sidewalk ramp was reduced by 23-34% without increased cost or loss of structural integrity.

For the past four years, the [DEQ's Materials Management](#) program has voluntarily worked with concrete producers to help them develop an environmental product declaration (EPD) for each of their concrete mixes. EPDs are third-party verified reports used to identify the carbon footprint of products, which is disclosed as the Global Warming Potential (GWP). These declarations are akin to nutritional labels on food packages. Low carbon concrete uses less cement, which would be reflected as a lower GWP value in the product declaration. By selecting the lowest cement mix that still meets the structural and finishing requirements of the concrete, an engineer can significantly lower the embodied carbon in a project. It is important to plan ahead if a project will use low carbon concrete since the materials take a little longer to cure and may affect project schedules that need “high early strength.”

Online sources of EPDs for structural materials include the [Embodied Carbon in Construction Calculator](#), the [Transparency](#) catalogue and on [Oregon Concrete and Aggregate's Producer's Association](#) website. In the Portland area, EPDs are available from Cal Portland, Knife River, Cadman and Wilsonville Concrete. In addition, Riverbend Materials offers EPDs in Salem, Eugene and Corvallis, and Hooker Creek Concrete has EPDs in Bend.

Oregon Cities Can Reduce Carbon in Concrete

The city of Portland's [2016 Sustainable Supply Chain Analysis](#) identified construction services as a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, and use of concrete as one of the primary reasons. In response, the city now requires concrete EPDs as part of a larger effort to lower emissions. DEQ Senior Policy Analyst Jordan Palmeri says cities have a critical role in lowering overall carbon emissions in the state. “Low carbon concrete is important for Oregon cities because concrete and other construction materials often comprise significant portions of the carbon emissions from public spending,” says Palmeri. “Fortunately, we

have the materials and knowledge to use lower carbon mixes across the state.”

So What's in it For Your City?

For cities that have a climate change or sustainability plan, using low carbon concrete helps to meet plan goals. Another motivating factor is financial savings. The Portland pilot project showed that low carbon concrete was cost neutral or less expensive than traditional mixes.

But a city doesn't need a plan or an EPD requirement to take advantage of these innovative products. Cities can start by simply asking if lower carbon mixes are available that meet the project's specifications. Since there are many parties involved in public infrastructure projects, starting the conversation early about low carbon concrete can lead to very good outcomes.

The DEQ's Clean Water State Revolving Fund can offer principal forgiveness on loans of up to 50 percent, but not exceeding \$500,000, of the project costs associated with using low carbon concrete or other “green” materials in wastewater and stormwater projects. With current interest rates dipping below 1% on some loans, cities can invest in their infrastructure, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save tax payers a lot of money. With the purchasing power of cities, Oregon can build a better future.

To learn more about concrete EPDs, contact Jordan.Palmeri@deq.state.or.us; to find out about the Clean Water State Revolving Fund call 503-229-LOAN or CWSRFinfo@deq.state.or.us. ■



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Aging Infrastructure Causes Water Loss, Further Financial Woes

By Dennis Lyon, Regional Director, NLC Service Line Warranty Program by HomeServe

Given the age of our country’s infrastructure and the billions of gallons of water that are lost beneath our streets each year, utilities are looking to manage water loss in more efficient ways, especially considering many utilities don’t have deep pockets.

Many water utility managers are familiar with winter water line breaks, when the cold makes pipes brittle and the soil around them contracts, but there are more and more breaks during warmer weather—and many of those breaks occur because pipes are long past their usable lifespan.

Water managers are aware of the age of their water infrastructure and the need for repair or replacement, but the money to repair these critical infrastructure systems is hard to come by.

The American Society of Civil Engineers recently estimated it will cost \$1 trillion to maintain current infrastructure and expand to meet anticipated demand. The group gave the country’s water infrastructure a “D” grade, citing aging infrastructure and underinvestment.

An Expensive Problem

Utilities cannot recoup the costs of treating water that never makes it to the meter, let alone beyond. Many utilities haven’t undergone an audit to determine just how much water they are losing, but it could be as high as [50% of all water treated](#).

American water utilities lose seven billion gallons of treated potable water daily, which adds up to [1.7 trillion a year](#). Part of the problem is the unprecedented number of water main breaks each year—an estimated [240,000 water mains](#) across the country break annually.

Seeking Answers

There are three questions to ask about water loss: How much is being lost? Where is it occurring? Why is it being lost? Once you have the answers to these questions, you can formulate a strategy to address water loss.



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Apparent losses through unmeasured usage, such as the use of hydrants to fight fires or flush lines, is an unavoidable and accepted part of the business of water utilities. Then there are apparent losses through data handling errors and metering inaccuracies. A data audit can look to compare authorized and unbilled consumption, billed consumption and unauthorized and unbilled consumption.

Then there is unauthorized usage, or theft. When a utility doesn't recoup the costs for stolen water, that cost must be spread out across those customers who are paying, [increasing their bills](#). Frequently, when businesses or contractors access water without authorization, they open a fire hydrant or tap into a sprinkler system—something that could [damage those life-saving systems](#). Residential theft can be prevented by locking meter housing or varying the meter reading schedule. Additionally, a usage audit can show if a home or business has an unexplained drop in water usage.

An [American Water Works Association](#) assessment found a collective apparent loss of more than 29 billion gallons at a cost of \$151 million. At the same time, real losses because of leaks was more than 130 billion gallons. A utility's [average real loss is 16%](#), but most utilities can reduce that by two-thirds with the proper measures. Water loss can negatively impact customer satisfaction because it only takes a loss of 20% to impact water pressure throughout your system.

A Potential Solution

A water audit, including physical inspections, flow analysis and leak detection tools, can determine where these real losses are originating from and which ones are in greatest need of repair. Utilities also can cross reference billing and usage data with information on historical breaks and leaks, line age and composition and areas of heavy usage.



The great majority of hidden leaks are found in customer service lines—and they are often not repaired in a timely or efficient manner. Even when a leak is caught, it can take a long time to fix—an average of four to five weeks, while the system continues to lose potable water.

The National League of Cities (NLC) Service Line Warranty Program by HomeServe offers an optional service line repair plan that allows your customers to quickly repair any damaged water service lines that can be draining water from your system while protecting them from the financial shock of the repair. With the program, customers won't shy away from repairs because they don't have the funding to undertake them, meaning less water loss for your utility.

HomeServe also offers the [ServLine Leak Protection Program](#) that can protect the utility and all customers from an unexpected high water bill.

To find out more about how we can help you eliminate service line leaks, [contact us](#). ■

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Around the State

Stories from across Oregon

As COVID-19 restrictions begin to relax and we begin to return to “normal,” here’s a look some of the good things our cities have been doing all across this great state.

DETROIT

Volunteers Build Community Center

During last year's devastating wildfires, the Beachie Creek and Lion's Head fires merged in the center of Detroit, decimating homes, businesses and city hall as well as much of the landscape.

Soon after, generous members of the building community pledged to help. The Santiam Rebuild Coalition is a group of licensed and insured construction industry members who have committed materials and labor to fast-track a community building for Detroit.

On March 20, the group broke ground on the new Detroit Community Building at 345 Santiam Street. The property was formerly the site of Detroit High School. The school building was demolished a few years ago, but the gymnasium is still standing and rebuild plans include using the existing structure.

Presenters during the groundbreaking included: Detroit Mayor Jim Trett; Nick Harville of SEDCOR; Marion County Commissioner Kevin Cameron; Detroit Lake Foundation President Chris Tardiff; Santiam Rebuild Coalition Coordinator Rich Duncan; and John Gooley of Withers Lumber, who made a \$10,000 check presentation to the foundation.

Marion County Commissioners Danielle Bethell and Colm Willis also attended the groundbreaking, and Detroit City Councilor Tim Luke presented the mayor with a flag for the building.

Harville and Duncan, owner of Rich Duncan Construction, created the coalition to construct the community building and jump-start the region's redevelopment. Duncan noted that there is much work to be done to restore life to the canyon.

"If Detroit doesn't come back, the canyon cannot come back," he said, adding that although more people live in surrounding communities such as Gates and Mill City, Detroit has been the economic driver for all residents in those areas.

Along with the community building, rebuilding plans include a thriving downtown with new businesses, a historical monument and a visitor's center.

The project brings together many of the partners involved in the Extreme Makeover: Home Edition build, led by Duncan in 2010.



Photos courtesy of Santiam Rebuild Coalition

Thousands of citizens gathered to revitalize the Oregon School for the Deaf's Nightmare Factory and boys' dormitory.

At an organization meeting in mid-October 2020, more than 90 contractors pledged to provide labor and materials for the rebuilding effort.

GRESHAM

Refunds for Struggling Restaurants

As restaurants increasingly relied upon delivery services to stay in business during the pandemic, many saw their costs rise because of fees charged by DoorDash, Grubhub and similar third-party, app-based delivery platforms.

“They were just barely covering the cost of the food itself and some companies took advantage of the pandemic to charge fees that were a little exploitative,” said Allison Don, senior manager in Gresham’s Office of Governance and Management.

After conferring with Portland about its policy addressing similar fees, the city of Gresham in July 2020 implemented a temporary 15% cap on the delivery charges. Under the cap, the total fees charged, including credit card processing fees, cannot exceed 15 percent of an order’s purchase price.

Last fall, the city learned that one of the platforms continued to charge restaurants credit card processing fees in excess of the cap. The city issued civil penalty warnings in November and, when the issue was not resolved, took a stand through legal action.

Through a settlement, Gresham restaurants that were overcharged credit card processing fees between Nov. 25, 2020, and Jan. 29, 2021, will be refunded the entirety of the money they were overcharged. That amounts to an average of more than 4% of their revenue.

“Gresham’s restaurants have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic,” Mayor Travis Stovall said in a statement after the settlement. “While we’re thankful for the platforms that allow our residents to continue to support our local businesses through delivery service, it’s important to ensure that the fees aren’t so onerous that they hurt our restaurants. The city is committed to continuing to advocate for our businesses that are struggling.”

A business that sells an average of \$250 per day using a third-party app will see a return of about \$650 from the nine-week period when the fee cap violations occurred. One business owner said, “This is a significant relief because \$650 is almost 43 hours that I could have had an employee employed.”

Don said several Gresham restaurant owners conveyed their gratitude to the city for its actions. “We were proud to be able to defend the restaurants in our community from the exploitative actions of that company,” she said.



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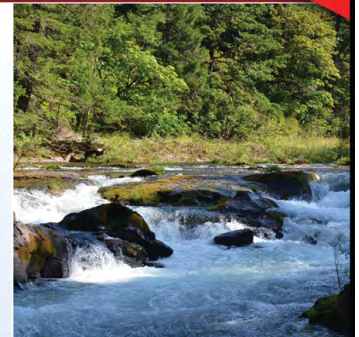
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PHOENIX

City Cancels Court Debts



Several Oregonians received welcome news earlier this year when the city of Phoenix decided to cancel court debts that were 10 years old or older.

The decision resulted from a settlement the city reached with the Oregon Law Center (OLC) regarding a backlog of traffic tickets and other fines that had not been paid. The OLC informed city leaders about a woman who had lost her ability to drive because she had court fees from a decade ago.

“I think the council overall felt that it is fundamental to living in society to be able to drive to work. The overriding principle in this issue was to allow individuals to be able to drive legally,” said Phoenix City Manager Eric Swanson.

Swanson added that when city leaders asked Police Chief Derek Bowker to weigh in on the matter, he said that while police support public safety enforcement there are other considerations as well.

“He also acknowledged that people tend to drive without licenses and if they get pulled over they may try to escape and allude and

they may end up getting hurt or hurting someone else,” Swanson said. “I think that hit it right on the head.”

Tracy Chavez of Bend had her license suspended for more than 26 years because of a traffic citation issue in Phoenix.

“That made it hard to find a job, to get her kids to where they needed to go, to go to the grocery store to buy food,” her attorney, Emily Teplin Fox of the Oregon Law Center, told Jefferson Public Radio. “And like a lot of people, she accumulated additional fees and fines and saw the amounts she owed balloon.”

City leaders began negotiating with the OLC in late 2019 and Doug McGeary, the city’s attorney, told the *Mail Tribune* that fines outstanding for a decade or longer are effectively a forfeit and called them “a nuisance for the city,” which has closed its municipal court.

Phoenix’s decision to clear all court debts follows the 2020 enactment of a state law that halted the practice of automatically suspending driver’s licenses for people who failed to pay traffic fines on time, according to *Oregon Public Broadcasting*.

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PRINEVILLE

Expansions Strengthen Regional Economy

Prineville and its regional neighbors received an economic boost with recent announcements that Facebook is expanding its data center and a Baker City-based technical college is offering regular classes there to train highly skilled workers for Central Oregon businesses that desperately need them.

Baker Technical Institute (BTI) began offering truck-driving courses on April 19, and college President Doug Dalton said Crook County's blue-collar culture is a perfect fit for the school. "The culture of the city of Prineville really fit well with the BTI culture. It's really rooted in the tradition of work, a job well done, the old-school work ethic," he told *The Bend Bulletin*.

The school's specialty is training students for careers such as trucking, construction equipment operation and welding. "The skilled workforce is at an all-time low, as far as inventory goes," Dalton said. "There's been a lack of training for so many decades."

BTI's Prineville branch will mostly teach in portable classrooms on land donated by local businesses or the city. Dalton said the purpose of the nontraditional setup is to easily bring students to sites such as construction zones for training.

Kelsey Lucas, Prineville Area Director for Economic Development for Central Oregon, called the partnership "an incredible opportunity for Prineville and the region to train local talent, attracting new talent for these nationally recognized courses, and tailor specialized training for our existing industries and companies."

City Manager Steve Forrester said the partnership gives people opportunities they've never had before. "Being able to build a workforce and support the companies that have been operating not only in Prineville but the entire region is critical to having a thriving economy."

Facebook's expansion will add another 900,000 square feet with two new buildings that are 450,000 square feet each. Servers will be on two separate floors and development is due for completion in 2023.

The latest expansion takes the total to 11 buildings and 4.6 million square feet. In development for more than 10 years, it is Facebook's largest data center campus in the U.S. and Facebook has invested more than \$2 billion into the site.

"Facebook has been an important part of our community now for over 10 years, and their continued growth here in Prineville is just a testament to the excellent relationship that we have together," Mayor Jason Beebe said in an interview with *datacenterdynamics.com*. "I'm excited for this new growth and their commitment to



Facebook Data Center in Prineville

Prineville and Crook County and the support they have provided for our community, especially the schools."

Facebook also announced a new \$60,000 grant for Crook County School District's K-12 robotics program.



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MILWAUKIE

Oregon's Top "Tree City"

Oregon Community Trees (OCT) has recognized Milwaukie for its efforts to ensure its urban forest provides a wide range of benefits by awarding the city with its top "Tree City" designation.

OCT President Samantha Wolf said the award is intended to highlight a city for delivering the best urban forestry practices to its residents, and each year OCT partners with the Oregon Department of Forestry to select one of Oregon's nationally recognized Tree City USA cities for special accolades, according to the Portland Tribune.

"Residents of Milwaukie have an improved quality of life because they live in a healthy urban forest," Wolf said. "The award recognizes the efforts the city of Milwaukie makes to ensure its urban forest continues providing a wide range of social, health and ecological benefits far into the future."

ODF Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program Manager Kristin Ramstad described Milwaukie as a "fine example" of a Tree City USA.

"They have only been a Tree City USA for five years and already they've earned two Tree City USA Growth Awards for building their community forestry program," she said.

Ramstad said Milwaukie's newly created urban forest team has worked nonstop in recent years to reach the city's canopy goal. Milwaukie city staff closely collaborate with its tree board and assist the city council on tree-related actions. The Milwaukie Public Works Department's natural resources team includes an International Society of Arboriculture-certified arborist to provide technical expertise and guidance.

"It's deeply gratifying that all of the hard work that Peter Passarelli, our public works director, Julian Lawrence, our urban forester, and our tree board have done to preserve our existing trees and meet our goal of nearly doubling our tree canopy, has been recognized with this important award," said Milwaukie Mayor Mark Gamba.

He noted that the city has prioritized trees in its city vision as well as its climate action plan and comprehensive plan.

"We recognize that trees increase property values, reduce heat island effect, absorb storm water, store carbon and improve human health and well-being," Gamba said. "We are investing, at unprecedented levels, in our tree canopy for future generations of the residents of Milwaukie."



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EUGENE

Riverfront Park Set to Open

Development of Eugene's Downtown Riverfront Park hit significant milestones this spring with the opening of overlooks and the addition of public art. Designed to reconnect Eugene with the Willamette River, the three-acre park is expected to open in July.

The river overlook at 5th Avenue will be the most notable and visible from the corner of 5th and High Street near the 5th Street Market. The overlook is marked by a striking pavilion made from 56 highly polished steel ribbons hung from a 20-foot-high steel structure, according to Emily Proudfoot, principal landscape architect and park planner for the city.

The shape of the ribbons reflects the riverbed topography immediately below the overlook and will reflect people, activities, the river and anything else happening below them. The piece is intended to be an iconic marker and will create space for additional art performance, displays and even movie showings, Proudfoot wrote in a publication for the American Institute of Architects Oregon chapter.

Looking upriver, a boardwalk and deck shape the second river overlook at the base of an existing electrical tower. The park, located on a former industrial site, features a third overlook just north of the Steam Plant that provides additional views up and down the river.

Proudfoot said integrated art pieces throughout the site are based on three themes of river stories: industry, ecology and culture. A multilevel drinking fountain interprets the story of the Across-the-Bridge Community, home to many Black families in Eugene because they were not allowed to live within the city limits. All of the art pieces will be made of cast bronze and crafted in Eugene at Reinmuth Bronze Foundry.

An adjacent, one-acre Park Plaza to the west of Riverfront Park is scheduled for additional design work and construction under a second phase. Construction of the urban plaza is anticipated for 2023 along with additional outdoor venues to the south, adjacent to the Steam Plant. ■

DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT PARK



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