

# REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

## Weekly Report

April 17, 2019

*Below are some highlights from the Governor's [Regional Solutions Coordinators](#), on behalf of the eleven interagency teams across Oregon.*

### **Regional Solutions Director – James LaBar**

- **Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF):** Regional Solutions' (RS) RIF was in front of Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to Association of Oregon Counties, League of Oregon Cities, and Marion County Commissioner Kevin Cameron for testifying in support of RIF. Additional letters of support for HB 5030, where RIF receives funding through lottery bonds, have been and will continue to be submitted to the Subcommittee. If interested in submitting a letter of support, please contact the Coordinator in your region.
- **South Valley/Mid Coast Regional Solutions Coordinator Position:** RS is pleased to announce that Sarah Means is the new South Valley/Mid-Coast RS Coordinator. Sarah has spent the past 10 years in the Community and Economic Development Division of Lane County, most recently as the Community and Economic Development Manager. Through her work with Lane County she is familiar with the RS program, South Valley/Mid-Coast region, state and local programs as well as the region's economic development strategic direction. I am confident that Sarah will provide strong leadership for the region and Governor's Office. Sarah's first day will be on May 6<sup>th</sup>. In the meantime, Patrick Wingard will continue to be the interim Coordinator. Thank you to all those who participated in the candidate process, especially Association of Oregon Counties and Business Oregon.

### **North Coast Region – Jennifer Purcell**

- **Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici hosts Housing Listening Session in Clatsop County:** Congresswoman Bonamici met with community leaders in Seaside on April 16 for the second of six listening sessions planned in the district. Representatives from Clatsop County, the Cities of Astoria, Cannon Beach, and Warrenton, along with economic development, education, mental and behavioral health, and housing and emergency shelter stakeholders discussed barriers and opportunities for development of affordable and workforce housing in Clatsop County. The discussion recognized a need for housing at all levels. Challenges range from a need for funding for projects that support those at 60-120% of median household income, to property constraints, such as wetland mitigation and access to utilities, to social impacts such as high school dropout rates. Recent successes include work conducted by Clatsop County's Housing Taskforce to better understand the region's housing needs, the recent LIFT award for a 40-unit housing project in Astoria, and the City of Astoria's approval of a low-interest loan to extend utilities to a new housing development east of town. Regional Solutions Team (RST) members continue to engage in issues relating to housing needs, supporting the advancement of important projects in the region.

### **South Valley/Mid Coast Region – INTERIM – Patrick Wingard**

- **City of Springfield Indoor Track Facility:** Springfield Mayor Christine Lundberg leads a team of local and regional economic and community development professionals focused on the development of an indoor running track facility in the Glenwood Riverfront Redevelopment District of Springfield. The RST provided to the Mayor's team an analysis on land use, environmental, and transportation systems pertinent to three potential sites for the prospective track facility. The Mayor's team has selected a site and is moving forward on property acquisition negotiations.
  - An indoor track facility in Springfield would generate year round sports tourism and honor the contributions of Springfield residents (notably, Steve Prefontaine) to track and field performance and innovation in the region. Time is of the essence for this project as the 2021 IAAF World Track & Field Championships are scheduled to occur in Eugene in August 2021. **The project team hopes to showcase its new facility in conjunction with the 2021 World Track Championships.**
  - The RST will continue to support this initiative as it moves from the property acquisition stage into site planning and development/building permits.

## Southern and South Coast Regions – Alex Campbell

- **Georgia Pacific (GP) Mill Closure, Coos Bay:** GP announced the closure of their Coos Bay plywood plant last week. Employment was about 110. RS assisting with communications, connecting GP HR to Oregon Employment Department (OED), and providing info to Business Oregon business recruitment group. The plant had struggled with profitability since 2006/7; the export terminal was a major factor, putting that operation at a real disadvantage in terms of log prices. The closure of the rail line also was an issue. (The Port of Coos Bay is still working on a repair to the swing bridge that went out almost a year ago. 70 percent of GP's finished product had previously been shipped by rail.)
- **Wildfire & Visitor Perception Study:** *Background:* Representatives of the City of Ashland, Travel Southern Oregon, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Neuman Hotel Group, and others have been collaborating on a State of Oregon-funded research project to get a better sense of how recent years of heavy smoke have impacted visitors' opinions of southern Oregon and future travel behavior. The project collected data to help businesses make decisions around investments, marketing strategies, scheduling, etc. RS staff helped develop the proposal and facilitated coordination with Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc. (SOREDI). Business Oregon staff, in particular Becky Baxter and Chris Cummings, expedited review of the grant and contracting to get results out prior to 2019 travel season.
  - *Update* – The report is now and can be found [here](#). While some previous visitors cited smoke and wildfire as a reason to not return to Southern Oregon (fewer than 1 in 10) and about 1 in 5 respondents plan to avoid visiting the area in August, many respondents were interested to learn more about opportunities to visit the region in spring and fall.

### Date of next Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

- Southern Oregon: June 14, 2019

## Mid-Valley Region – Jody Christensen

- **Workforce Housing Pilot Update: Background** – In Donald, the local agricultural equipment manufacturer GK Machine and the City of Donald have partnered to expand housing opportunities in the community. This project was one of five awarded for the Oregon Housing and Community Services/Regional Solutions Housing Pilot. The first phase of the project includes upgrading the City’s wastewater and water treatment plants to support 20-25 new homes, with an eventual planned total of 440+ new homes. This housing development is being designed as an agrihood featuring a range of housing options built around a farmscape that covers about 77 acres. The project partners include the GK Machines, City of Donald, Kim Travis with Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), Michelle Bilberry with Business Oregon, Mary Camarata, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and several potential businesses and service providers. And a special thank you to team member Angela Carnahan with the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) for with her previous work helping the City review its planning ordinances which helped to set the stage for this pilot.



- **Update** – OHSC is working with GK Machine on the housing portion of the project. As a pilot, OHSC is developing new capacity for its agency by laying the groundwork for the next similar project. Business Oregon and DEQ are engaged on the infrastructure portion. Business Oregon provided a \$20,000 grant to prepare a Wastewater Facilities Plan, as well as \$20,000 for a Water Master Plan, and both have been completed. Currently, the DEQ senior wastewater engineer is working with the City of Donald’s public works department on the facility plan. Business Oregon has committed Special Public Works Funds of \$330,000 for sewer improvements necessary for pilot project. In the future, DEQ may be providing a state revolving loan for the upgrades.

- **Detroit Dam Update:** This week, RS attended the Federal Lakes Recreation Committee for Detroit where the US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) gave a current state of Detroit Dam and water conditions as a result of the recent April Flood Event. The report indicated the water was above Peak Reservoir Storage by 3.5 feet. The event was managed with minimal impact. The next step will be to address the lake sweeping (logs/water along the shoreline). The USACE representative also discussed their upcoming draft Environment Impact Study comment period for the fish passage installation on the Detroit Dam which is expected to be opened in late May for 60 days. The draft will identify the preferred option as *build in the wet* with no draw down.

## **Metro Region – Raihana Ansary**

- **Metro Employment Land Site Readiness Toolkit:** The entire Metro RST met with Lise Glancy from the Port of Portland about the Metro Employment Lands Site Readiness Toolkit that she is working on with Greater Portland, Inc. (GPI) and Metro Regional Government. The project is intended to help find tools to move challenged employment sites (i.e. industrial and commercial) within the Metro Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) to market-readiness to accommodate projected population growth. The project is a follow-up from the Regional Industrial Site Readiness Lands Inventories completed in 2011, 2014 and 2017. Clackamas and Washington Counties are participating on the Project Advisory Team with 13 cities in the region. The final report will include best practices for addressing site readiness challenges such as infrastructure, natural resource mitigation, brownfield remediation, entitlements, assembly/aggregation, gravel pit

reclamation and redevelopment. It will also include customized site readiness roadmaps for three challenged sites in the region. Metro RS will track the project and looks forward to the final report and presentations in spring/fall 2020. Metro RS may help to implement the customized site readiness roadmaps for the challenged sites that are highlighted in the final report.

## North Central Region – Nate Stice

- **Mitchell Outreach Meeting:** Members of the RST attended a meeting organized by Mitchell Mayor Patrick Farrell to discuss a list of projects the City is working on. The meeting focused on:
  - 1) Enhancing recreation assets to capture more revenue from visitors. Representative from Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) discussed state and federal grant opportunities.
  - 2) Stabilizing critical infrastructure and in particular addressing an unstable water system. The water system presents a particular point of concern given the threat wildfire poses to the community.
  - 3) Natural hazard mitigation inside the UGB.
  - 4) City planning and beautification.
    - The RST is very excited to work with the Mayor and community to move forward these and other project. Our hats are off to Mayor Patrick Farrell for the impressive group of stakeholders he pulled together, and the impressive, yet attainable vision he presented for his community.

## Greater Eastern and Northeast Regions – Courtney Warner Crowell

- **Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Outreach (CTUIR):** Our RST had an outreach meeting with the economic and community development department of the CTUIR and had a great discussion about projects where the state might be able to help and regional projects that might interest them. They are working on a three phased broadband project to provide service to the reservation and business park. We also discussed their need for more electrical power with the expansion of the casino (which we've also heard numerous times from Umatilla County and City of Pendleton), yet the struggles with Pacific Power and BPA around the cost and length of a study on power needs. Our team will be digging into this issue to see if there is something that the state can do to help. They mentioned that Washington State is having similar issues and there might be a collaboration possibility.
- **League of Oregon Small Cities Presentation:** Our RST gave a presentation in Athena to the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) Small Cities meeting and explained the program, and how our team can help communities like theirs. Had some great feedback, received good questions from new councilors, and made good connections.
- **Umatilla Infrastructure Projects:** Melisa Drugge (Business Oregon), Nancy Bruener (DEQ), Ken Patterson (Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)) and myself had a meeting with the City of Umatilla to talk about some key challenges they are having adding industrial wastewater capacity for key business expansion locating in their community. We talked through some of the regulatory challenges they are facing with DEQ, and we set a plan in motion for our team to engage with DEQ and see if we can find a path forward. We also talked about the possibility of an Immediate Opportunity Fund project through ODOT and Business Oregon.
- **Eastern Oregon Flooding:** Spring rain storms and lots of snow melt has created bad flooding condition in Eastern Oregon, particularly in Umatilla, Grant, Wallowa and Union counties. Wallowa, Grant, Umatilla and CTUIR have all issued emergency declarations; and while the water is still high, things have calmed down for the moment. Umatilla County lost at least two

bridges, and most of the bridges in Canyon City and John Day have serious erosion concern. RS will continue to monitor and work with the counties and cities as they begin to assess the damage and rebuild.