



# LOCAL FOCUS

The Magazine of the League of Oregon Cities

September 2018



# LET CITIES WORK

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## 2019 Legislative Priorities

Photo by Jasperdo

Recycling Market Changes | Cybersecurity



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# Hackers Targeting Oregon's Cities

The best thing to do to defend your city against cyberattacks is to conduct regular staff trainings so your team recognizes these seven threats:

1. Impersonation Fraud
2. Ransomware
3. Cyber Theft
4. Open Data Hacks
5. Identity Theft
6. Viruses/Malware
7. Cyber Mischief

Not sure what those threats are?  
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For more information contact *Bill LaMarche*, CIS member relations manager, at [blamarche@cisoregon.org](mailto:blamarche@cisoregon.org).

The Magazine of the League of Oregon Cities



## On the Cover

### 17 Let Cities Work – 2019 Legislative Priorities

The LOC Board has adopted six legislative priorities for cities for the 2019 session.

This month we take an in-depth look at each issue—the background, the specific needs for cities and the potential impacts.



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How Cities are Adapting**



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# LOCAL FOCUS



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## “Let Cities Work”

It's much more than just a catchphrase for us at the League, it's our new advocacy mantra. The concept of home rule is easy to get behind but sometimes harder to explain. However, it's the reason this organization was founded back in 1925 and is the cornerstone of our mission today. The idea of local decision-making, self-government, and resident-centered solutions resonates with Oregonians, and with your League. “Let Cities Work” signifies the League's intent to seek investments to assist local governments find solutions for systemic problems, and in so doing, allow them to directly address the needs and goals of their communities. Implied in this objective is not only funding, but also the protection of authorities and the maintenance of tools currently possessed by cities to serve their citizens.

With this in mind, and following several months of in-depth data gathering, including meetings, polling and voting, the LOC is pleased to roll out its legislative priorities for the 2019 session in this issue. On the following pages you will read about the issues we will put front-and-center as priorities during the upcoming session.

You'll note that I specifically did not say these were “our” priorities. They are actually YOUR priorities—what you, collectively as cities, told us were important. We did not unilaterally decide the issues that would be paramount to our advocacy efforts. To get there, we employed an inclusive committee structure grounded in collaboration to achieve member-driven outcomes. It was not an easy process, and we thank all the representatives from our 241 cities who participated, whether through electronic polling or in person, at one of our many policy committee meetings.

Thousands of pieces of legislation will be introduced over the course of six months next year, and we will monitor the great majority of those, always weighing their impact on cities. We may pivot to address pressing legislation being introduced throughout the year, but we will be highly visible and impactful in the areas in which you have requested priority attention:

- Mental Health Investment;
- Revenue Reform and Cost Containment to include:
  - Property Tax Reform
  - PERS;
- Housing and Homelessness Improvement;
- Infrastructure and Resiliency Investment;
- Broadband Investment and Protection of Right-of-Way Authority; and
- Preservation of Third-Party Building Inspections.

Some of these we have been dogging for years, while others have risen through the ranks based on emerging societal trends. No matter the ranking, we will persevere and push on them all. This time, however, we will not be standing alone on many of these issues.

The phrase, “there is strength in numbers,” is true on several levels with the League. This organization is credible and influential because every city in our great state is represented. With 70 percent of all residents in Oregon residing in a city, that's significant political swagger.

Taking that one step further, LOC actively partners with like-minded entities to add even more clout to our advocacy on common issues. This new spirit of collaboration has already borne fruit in



Mike Cully  
Executive Director

the 2018 session, as evidenced with the League's alignment with the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association (ORLA) as we came together on the issue of transient lodging taxes and short-term rentals. There is power in numbers, and we are growing our network daily and working closely with organizations such as the Association of Counties (AOC) and the Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO). We are finding common ground more often than many imagined, and this brings a whole new dimension to our legislative efforts going forward.

While these sorts of partnerships haven't been exactly commonplace for the League through the years, we can already feel the effectiveness of these efforts. Another non-traditional move from the League is our increased willingness to include the private sector in our efforts, with the caveat that our collaboration keeps the concept of home rule at the forefront of how we operate.

2019 promises to be an exciting and challenging year politically, and there is a lot at stake for Oregon's cities. For that reason, we are charting a bold new course for the organization, led by the League's advocacy team, that will further cement the LOC's position as a respected and influential player in the Capitol.

*(continued on page 11)*



## Legislative Director Craig Honeyman to Retire

In June, LOC Legislative Director Craig Honeyman announced his retirement from the League after 10 years of service, effective on December 31.

“Craig’s leadership and expertise have been instrumental for

the League’s effectiveness in its legislative and policy efforts at the Capitol,” said LOC Executive Director Mike Cully.

“He’s doing this for no other reason than he feels it’s time. These are big shoes to fill, and it will be imperative that we hire the very best available to fill this role. It’s one of the most important positions at the League.”

In making his announcement Honeyman said, “It has been a pleasure over the past decade to work with the high-performing staff at the League in service to Oregon’s 241 cities and their elected and professional staffs. Local government is the closest to the people and polls show is the most highly regarded. To have been a part of and contributed to arguably the most effective form of governance in the country has been very satisfying.”

The League has retained the Prothman Company to lead a national search for its next legislative director. This is a great opportunity to lead LOC’s Intergovernmental Relations Department and direct the development and representation of the League’s legislative policies. More information is available at [www.prothman.com](http://www.prothman.com).



### Small Cities Meetings

## Upcoming Small Cities Meetings

The Small Cities Network is a League program for cities with a population of 7,500 or less, with quarterly meetings to network and discuss common issues and solutions. All meetings start at 11:00 a.m. RSVP to [loc@orcities.org](mailto:loc@orcities.org).

**On the Web:** [www.orcities.org/smallcities](http://www.orcities.org/smallcities)

**Northern Coast (Region 1)**  
Seaside – November 2

**Portland Metro (Region 2)**  
Estacada – September 20

**Northern Willamette Valley (Region 3)**  
Willamina – November 8

**Southern Willamette Valley (Region 4)**  
Creswell – November 9

**Central Coast (Region 5)**  
Newport – November 14

**Southern Coast (Region 6)**  
Gold Beach – November 15

**Southern Valley (Region 7)**  
Glendale – September 13

**Columbia Gorge (Region 8)**  
Condon – September 20

**Central Oregon (Region 9)**  
La Pine – September 21

**South Central Oregon (Region 10)**  
TBD – September 14

**Northeastern Oregon (Region 11)**  
Joseph – October 17

**Eastern Oregon (Region 12)**  
Vale – October 18

# SAVE THE DATE

**Let  
Cities  
Work!**



# **CITY DAY AT THE CAPITOL**

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**JANUARY 24, 2019**

**Salem Convention Center**

**Co-hosted by the Oregon Mayors Association**

Make our Collective Voices Heard.

Learn about 2019 priorities · Meet with legislators · Network



# 93<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE

September 27-29, 2018

# EUGENE

## Register Today for the 93rd LOC Conference

Cities—we have heard your feedback, and the League is pleased to announce that we are keeping registration for the LOC Conference open until **September 20**. In years past, registration has closed as many as three weeks before the event. This year, we are starting a new tradition, allowing cities more time to register online and avoid late fees. The 93rd LOC Conference is scheduled for September 27-29 at the Hilton Eugene.

### Plan Your Trip to Eugene

The city of Eugene and the surrounding areas have much to offer, including recreational opportunities, shopping, wineries, breweries, art and more! Travel Lane County has created a webpage for LOC Conference attendees, with suggestions of places to explore while attending the event. The webpage also includes a link to their “Show Your Badge” program, where local businesses have created special offerings for conference attendees. Visit the webpage at: [www.eugenecascadescoast.org/league-of-oregon-cities](http://www.eugenecascadescoast.org/league-of-oregon-cities).

### Tours! Tours! Tours! – Have You Signed Up?

It's not too late to sign up for a city tour during the LOC Annual Conference. Tours will take place on both Thursday and Friday, September 27-28, from 1-4 p.m. From economic development to public arts programs, these tours are designed for members to learn, ask questions and see best practices. The cities of Eugene and Springfield are excited to share their resources and expertise with attendees. Cost is \$50 and space

is limited. To add a tour to your existing conference registration, send your request by email to [loc@orcities.org](mailto:loc@orcities.org). For those not yet registered for the conference, you can add a tour when you register online.

### Thursday Welcome Reception

The LOC Conference is the largest annual gathering of city officials in Oregon, where LOC members enjoy face-to-face interaction with their peers in government, as well as with event sponsors, League Business Partners and participating vendors. The conference provides a great informal opportunity for city officials to hang out and share stories, hear from others and meet product and service providers who can help their city. Join us Thursday evening for our annual Welcome Reception, the official conference kick-off event, with hors d'oeuvres and beverages.

### Roundtable Meetings – Bring Your Questions

New this year at the LOC Conference—roundtable meetings for small, medium and large cities. Meetings will be facilitated by League staff and will provide the opportunity for attendees to discuss the issues affecting their communities. These roundtable meetings are designed to be interactive, so bring your ideas and concerns and be prepared to ask questions and join the discussion. The meetings are scheduled for Friday, September 28, from 8-8:45 a.m.



## Urban Renewal & Housing All-Day Seminars

Two special day-long seminars will be presented on Thursday – one on urban renewal and one on housing. Each seminar will include 4-5 sessions. During a lunch session, the two seminars will join together to network and discuss how urban renewal can be used to finance housing projects and further leverage development. Seminar session descriptions and speakers are being added to the conference webpage ([www.orcities.org/conference](http://www.orcities.org/conference)) as they are confirmed.

City staff are particularly encouraged to register and attend one of these day-long seminars that are geared at bringing policy leaders, elected officials, city staff and industry together to address hot issues.

The cost of each seminar is \$150 for Thursday only, or \$75 if attending the rest of the conference.



### Conference Mobile App

This year, all conference program information will be available on a new enhanced mobile app that will include all session and speaker information, sponsors, exhibitors, interactive maps, links to handouts, and more. Attendees will be able to save their own schedule, connect with other attendees, and post to social media all through the app.

Keep an eye on your email inbox and [www.orcities.org/conference](http://www.orcities.org/conference) for download instructions in the weeks leading up to the conference.

## New This Year: Technology Room

Back by popular demand are opportunities to learn more about LOC-Data, the League's open-data portal, and online tools for legislative bill tracking—only now, these will be located in a dedicated "technology room." Come visit the tech room for these old favorites, as well as short interactive sessions on interpreting data, creating and using social media, financial forecasting, and more. These interactive sessions will allow conference attendees to try out ideas in live time in our computer lab.

## Homelessness Symposium

Homelessness permeates cities of all sizes across Oregon in many ways. On Saturday, September 29, the League's first-ever homelessness symposium will take place and you won't want to miss this important event. Join your peers in a half-day discussion that features quick-fire sessions on different topics impacting homelessness followed by a large group discussion.

### Quick-Fire Sessions

10:00 -10:25 a.m.

- Working Regionally: Using a COG
- What is Home: The Tiny Option
- Bringing the Community On Board
- Intervention Without Sanction
- Game: How quickly you can become homeless
- Serving Those that Served

10:30 -10:55 a.m.

- What Does Housing First Look Like?
- Partnering with the Private Sector
- The Homeless We Don't See
- Partnering with the County
- Game: How quickly you can become homeless
- Crisis Intervention on the Street

11:00 -11:25 a.m.

- Working Regionally: Using a COG
- What is Home: The Tiny Option
- Bringing the Community On Board
- Intervention Without Sanction
- Game: How quickly you can become homeless
- Working with Youth Facing Homelessness

11:30 -11:55 a.m.

- What Does Housing First Look Like?
- Everybody's Park
- Perspectives from the Ground – Formerly Homeless
- Partnering with the County
- Game: How quickly you can become homeless
- The Homeless We Don't See

### Round Table Luncheon with City Leaders

12:00 - 2:00 p.m.

A panel of city leaders, led by Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler, will facilitate a conversation about how cities have been and can begin addressing homelessness locally.



## GovLove: A Podcast About Local Government

By Kirsten Wyatt, ELGL Executive Director

One of ELGL's many content offerings is GovLove, a weekly podcast about the people, policies and profession of local government. Podcasts have grown in popularity in recent years; 26 percent of Americans listen to podcasts, and one-third of Americans between the ages of 25-54 listen to podcasts monthly<sup>1</sup>. Bloomberg Cities recently included GovLove in its listing of suggested podcasts for urban innovators<sup>2</sup>. You can tune in and subscribe to GovLove at: [www.elgl.org/govlove](http://www.elgl.org/govlove).

GovLove began production in 2016, and recently produced its 221st episode. The podcast's goal is to tell informative and unique stories about the work being done at the local level. From city managers to interns, and everyone in between, a rotating cast of ELGL volunteers interviews the people that work in local government to learn more about their path into the public sector and highlight their work.

The podcast also explores policy issues that impact local governments and the innovative solutions used to address them. In addition, we look deeper into the profession of local government to discuss its future and how it can be improved to attract the best and the brightest.

Recently, two Oregon cities were profiled on GovLove, both in an effort to raise awareness about upcoming recruitments in these cities. Read below for an overview of each episode or tune in and listen to the episodes in full at [www.elgl.org/govlove](http://www.elgl.org/govlove).

### August 7

#### Filling Vacancies in Top Local Government Positions with Hillsboro City Manager Michael Brown

The city of Hillsboro is currently recruiting for an assistant city manager. Mr. Brown joined GovLove to talk about his

management strategy when planning for an upcoming vacancy (Rob Dixon, the former assistant city manager, recently retired). Brown also shared his perspectives on: long-range personnel planning; how he strategized and reorganized the job description for the assistant city manager recruitment; and how he engaged his management team to align the position's job description with the changing needs of Hillsboro.

### August 21

#### Oregon's "Most Innovative" City: Independence, Featuring David Clyne and Shawn Irvine

Referenced as Oregon's "most innovative" city by the Technology Association of Oregon, City Manager David Clyne and Economic Development Director Shawn Irvine's GovLove podcast focused on Independence's reputation for innovation, some of its creative community projects on the horizon, and Clyne's upcoming retirement and the recruitment for his position. Clyne and Irvine also discussed the culture and climate of the Independence organization, citing the bold leadership of the mayor, council and community leaders, and the city's exceptional employees.

Stream these two Oregon-focused GovLove episodes, and tune in each week for more podcast content about the people, policies and profession of local government. GovLove also welcomes story ideas for future episodes; submit your ideas to Ben Kittelson at [ben@elgl.org](mailto:ben@elgl.org).



<sup>1</sup> The 13 Critical Podcast Statistics of 2018, <https://www.convinceandconvert.com/podcast-research/the-13-critical-podcast-statistics-of-2018/>

<sup>2</sup> Stream This: Podcasts for Urban Innovators, <https://medium.com/@BloombergCities/stream-this-podcasts-for-urban-innovators-3a56df89d2e3>

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE, CONTINUED

**A 10-Year Legacy**

2019 will also be a year of change for the League as we anticipate a changing of the guard with respect to the leader of our amazing Intergovernmental Relations Team.

For more than a decade, Craig Honeyman has lived and embodied the philosophy of "Let Cities Work." Respected on the local, regional, state and federal levels, Craig led his team of five policy professionals in overcoming challenges to home rule, and through the years has quietly and efficiently fought to preserve so many of the local values that we hold dear. The epitome of a professional, Craig Honeyman has earned tremendous respect here in Oregon and across the country, and is sought after for his wisdom and guidance. He has been a trusted advisor and mentor to me, and I will forever be grateful for his leadership at the League, both as interim executive director, and in his role as legislative director.

Mr. Honeyman has announced his intent to retire at the end of this calendar year. He has definitely earned this opportunity, and we will wish him well. However, we may not lose him entirely. We are working closely with Craig to develop a more robust federal outreach and connection program—something to which I have alluded before—and he has agreed to spearhead this effort. So, while he may no longer be a daily presence at the League after December 31, he will still be an integral and critical part of our new direction and vision. Thank you, Craig, for everything you have done for the cities of Oregon. ■



## Conservation Corner

### OWRD Taking Applications for Feasibility Study Grants

The Oregon Water Resources Department seeks to help individuals and communities address instream and out-of-stream water resource needs now and into the future through funding opportunities from the department's Water Resources Development Program. The program includes an opportunity to apply for Feasibility Study Grants, which fund qualifying costs of studies that evaluate the feasibility of a proposed conservation, reuse or storage project. A feasibility study is an assessment of the practicality of a proposed project, and can be used to determine if and how a project should proceed to implementation.

A Feasibility Study Grant can provide up to 50 percent of the total cost of the feasibility study, and no more than \$500,000 per project. Application materials including forms, instructions, guidance for storage projects, and FAQs are available at [www.bit.ly/2LEha1Y](http://www.bit.ly/2LEha1Y). Applications are due **October 17 by 5 p.m.**

For more information regarding this funding opportunity, please visit OWRD's Feasibility Study Grants webpage: [www.oregon.gov/owrd/Pages/Feasibility\\_Study\\_Grants.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/Pages/Feasibility_Study_Grants.aspx).

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# Veneta Engages Residents in Healthy Eating, Active Living

By Jamie Nash

When neighborhoods have safe sidewalks, crosswalks, bike paths and transit options, residents are able to more easily make the decision to be active and make healthy choices. Cities across Oregon are working to improve the built environment in their neighborhoods as well as improve access to healthy eating options as well.

With a population of approximately 5,000, the city of Veneta, located in Lane County, has made large strides in implementing innovative programs and policies that impact residents' health and the livability of the city. The HEAL Cities Campaign, and campaign funder Kaiser Permanente Community Health, are excited to award Veneta the third HEAL "Fit" level as they move up in the campaign.

Veneta has received tremendous support from both past and current city officials, including Mayor Sandra Larson, in order to support healthy food access and active transportation options across the community.

"The HEAL City membership symbolizes that commitment and motivates us to continue to factor HEAL principles into our plans for future development as well as current decisions," said Mayor Larson. "We're proud to be a HEAL City."

Here are some highlights from the city's HEAL work since they joined the campaign in 2014:

## Farmers Market

The Veneta Downtown Farmers Market is piloting the "Double Up Food Bucks" initiative this year, and the city is providing matching funds in coordination with the Willamette Food and Farm Coalition to expand the program. The city has also provided support to the market's new "Produce for Kids" program, which gives kids a free token to use for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables.



*Veneta's first "Bike Safety Day," hosted by the county sheriff's department, the city and Lane Fire Authority, included safety talks, free tune-ups and helmet giveaways.*

## Employee Wellness

City staff have been impressed with Veneta's Employee Wellness Program, which began in 2012 and is run by the city's safety committee. It is comprised of four components, including flexible work schedules, logged activities, incentives for awareness, and prevention focus. Their prevention focus has centered on increasing staff's physical fitness through activities such as walkathons, and a "Weigh the Same" initiative that encourages healthy eating and exercising habits over the holiday season.



*The Lane County Sheriff's Office co-hosted Veneta's "Bike Safety Day," giving away free helmets and teaching proper bike safety.*



## HEALTHY EATING ACTIVE LIVING CITIES CAMPAIGN

### Active Transportation

The city is updating its transportation system plan (TSP) to include prioritized solutions for bike and pedestrian safety and connectivity projects, including determining where sidewalk connectivity doesn't exist and where bike lanes could serve as a safety improvement and boost ridership. The revised TSP will also include policy language linking transportation improvements and how they will impact residents' health in two separate areas—active transportation and support for healthy living.

In 2014, the city conducted a feasibility study for a multi-use path which will provide bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between Veneta and the rural community of Elmira, which will result in improved safety for walking and biking to school and improved access to regional shopping centers, health care facilities and fitness opportunities. The design and engineering phase of the project is scheduled for completion during ODOT's 2018-2021 STIP program cycle.

### Safe Routes to School

Veneta is currently in the process of developing an application for grant funding through the Safe Routes to School program that will be available this coming fall. The proposed project

would include the installation of bike lanes and sidewalks along a busy collector that provides direct access to Veneta Elementary School. The city has a strong relationship with the school district which has a really active wellness initiative thanks to their superintendent.

The city's first "Bike Safety Day," a free event hosted by the county sheriff's department, along with the city and Lane Fire Authority, was held July 18 at the city's community pool parking lot. Safety and "rules of the road" talks were provided, a mechanic conducted bike tune-ups, and helmet giveaways kept the attendees engaged.

### Summer Meal Program

Food For Lane County, which sponsors the city's Summer Meal Program, offers free lunches for all kids five days a week at Veneta City Park. The meal site is co-located next to the Veneta Community Pool, where a full slate of youth programs are offered, including swim lessons, swim team, and specific teen and family fun events. ■

*Ms. Nash is a project manager with the Oregon Public Health Institute.*

# LOC Partners with NLC Service Line Warranty Program to Help Cities Protect Residents

By Bill Coffey

Water main breaks seem to be happening with alarming frequency lately, and the American Society of Civil Engineers estimates that Oregon drinking water and wastewater infrastructure will require more than \$9 billion in upgrades over the next 20 years.

Many cities have seen a steady increase in water infrastructure problems, and local officials are often contacted by residents with water and sewer line issues, which can cause a financial hardship. As a result, many cities across the country are partnering with the National League of Cities (NLC) Service Line Warranty Program (administered by Utility Service Partners, Inc., a HomeServe company), the only program of its kind endorsed by the NLC that offers important protection to homeowners.

When a water line breaks, a homeowner is generally responsible for the portion of the line from the house to the water meter, called the “private-side,” and a city is responsible for the portion of the line from the water meter to the water main, called the “public-side.” When private-side service lines break, many homeowners call the city or utility first, and then are surprised to learn that the city can’t help solve this expensive problem. Unfortunately, this often results in anger and dissatisfaction with the city.

Homeowners across the country have been enthusiastic about the NLC Service Line Warranty Program, and those who have had claims have been very satisfied with the service they have received. Endorsed by the League, there are four Oregon municipalities currently offering the program with 3,800 homeowners enrolled to date. In the last three years, Oregon residents have saved in excess of \$700,000 in repair costs through this program.

“The Service Line Warranty program helps protect our citizens from the unanticipated major expenses of water or sewer service line repairs,” said Cottage Grove Mayor Jeff Gowing. “Those repairs can have an overwhelming impact on a family’s budget.”

An unexpected expense can cause significant hardship on household finances. According to the Federal Reserve’s recently-published Report on the Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households in 2017, four out of 10 Americans can’t afford a \$400 emergency expense (and would have to sell something or take out a loan to cover it). HomeServe USA, a leading provider of home repair solutions and administrator of the NLC Service Line Warranty Program, conducts a State of the Home



survey which illustrates that homeowners are unprepared for repair emergencies.

According to the report, one-third of homeowners surveyed have less than \$1,000 set aside for home repairs, while one-fifth of respondents reported to have no savings at all set aside for an emergency repair. Beyond a homeowner’s ability to pay for an emergency repair, the survey found that many American homeowners are unsure of who is ultimately responsible to pay for the work.

As many homeowners are unaware of their responsibility for their service lines, educational marketing is a key component of the program. Residents receive information about the program via direct mail, bill inserts and through digital media.

Aside from any financial hardship, many homeowners don’t know who to call to repair a water or sewer line, especially in an emergency where time is of the essence. An important benefit of the repair service plan is immediate access to fully-vetted local contractors with just one toll-free phone call.

Furthermore, while there is no cost to cities or utilities to participate, the program helps cities to generate ancillary non-tax revenue. Cities use these funds for many purposes including low-income assistance and affordability programs, conservation initiatives and community education programs, to name a few.

For more information on the National League of Cities Service Line Warranty program, please visit [www.utilitysp.net](http://www.utilitysp.net) or contact [partners@utilitysp.net](mailto:partners@utilitysp.net) or (866) 974-4801. ■

Mr. Coffey is a Regional Account Director for Utility Service Partners Inc.

# City Deadline Calendar

## Dates Cities Need to Know

### SEPTEMBER

September 5

#### **Quarterly Certification for State Shared Revenue Marijuana Tax**

Cities must complete the Oregon Liquor Control Commission quarterly electronic certification survey in order to receive state marijuana tax distributions for this quarter.

(Or Laws 2015, ch 1, section 44, as amended by Or Laws 2015, ch 699, section 14; Or Laws 2015, ch 767, section 219; and Or Laws 2017, ch 725, section 32)

September 6

#### **November Election: File Statements of Offices, Candidates and Measures with County Elections Filing Officer**

Last day for city elections officer to file with the county clerk a statement of the city offices to be filled, information concerning all candidates, and measures to be voted on. (ORS 254.095)

September 18

#### **ELECTION DAY**

*Note: Double majority rules apply for property tax measures.* (Oregon Constitution Art. XI, section 11(8))

September 30

#### **Budget: Submit Budget Documents to County Clerk**

Cities that certify a tax on property must provide a complete copy of the budget document to the clerk of the county in which the city is located. The complete budget document includes the budget message, budget detail sheets, meeting notices or affidavits of publication, all resolutions, tax certification and a sample ballot for any new tax.

*Note:* Although the budget process may begin sooner or later than noted, all the documents referenced above must be submitted to the county clerk by September 30. (ORS 294.458(5)(a))

### NOVEMBER

November 1

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

State law prohibits public bodies from operating an “unmanned aircraft system” without first registering the system with the Oregon Department of Aviation. If a public body registers one or more unmanned aircraft systems, the public body must submit an annual report to the Oregon Department of Aviation that summarizes the frequency of use of the unmanned aircraft, summarizes the purposes for which the unmanned aircraft was used, and indicates how the public can access the public body’s policies and procedures established pursuant to Oregon Laws 2016, chapter 72, section 7. The law does not specify, however, when the public body must submit the annual report to the Oregon Department of Aviation. (ORS 837.360)

November 6

#### **ELECTION DAY**

(Oregon Constitution Art. II, section 14; Oregon Constitution Art. II, section 14a)

November 12

#### **Veterans: Veterans Get Veterans Day Off**

City employees who are eligible veterans are entitled to take Veterans Day off if certain requirements are met. Whether the time off is paid or unpaid is at the discretion of the employer. (ORS 408.495(1)) ■

#### **PERS Reports**

Cities must remit a regular report to the PERS Board no later than three business days after the end of the city’s pay cycle. (ORS 238.705; OAR 459-070-100)

#### **REMINDER: Deposit Construction Tax Revenues**

As soon as practicable, cities that impose a construction tax pursuant to Oregon Laws 2016, chapter 59, section 8, shall deposit the construction tax revenues collected in the fiscal quarter just ended in the general fund of the city. (Or Laws 2016, ch 59, section 9)



Photo by Jasperdo



# LET CITIES WORK

## LEAGUE ANNOUNCES 2019 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

By Craig Honeyman, Legislative Director

**T**he LOC Board of Directors has established six priorities for the 2019 legislative session under the banner, “Let Cities Work.” These priorities resulted from a process involving eight policy committees, which identified

30 legislative proposals for review and recommended prioritization by Oregon’s 241 cities. Largely based on that input, the LOC Board decided that the priorities for the League’s advocacy efforts in 2019 should be:

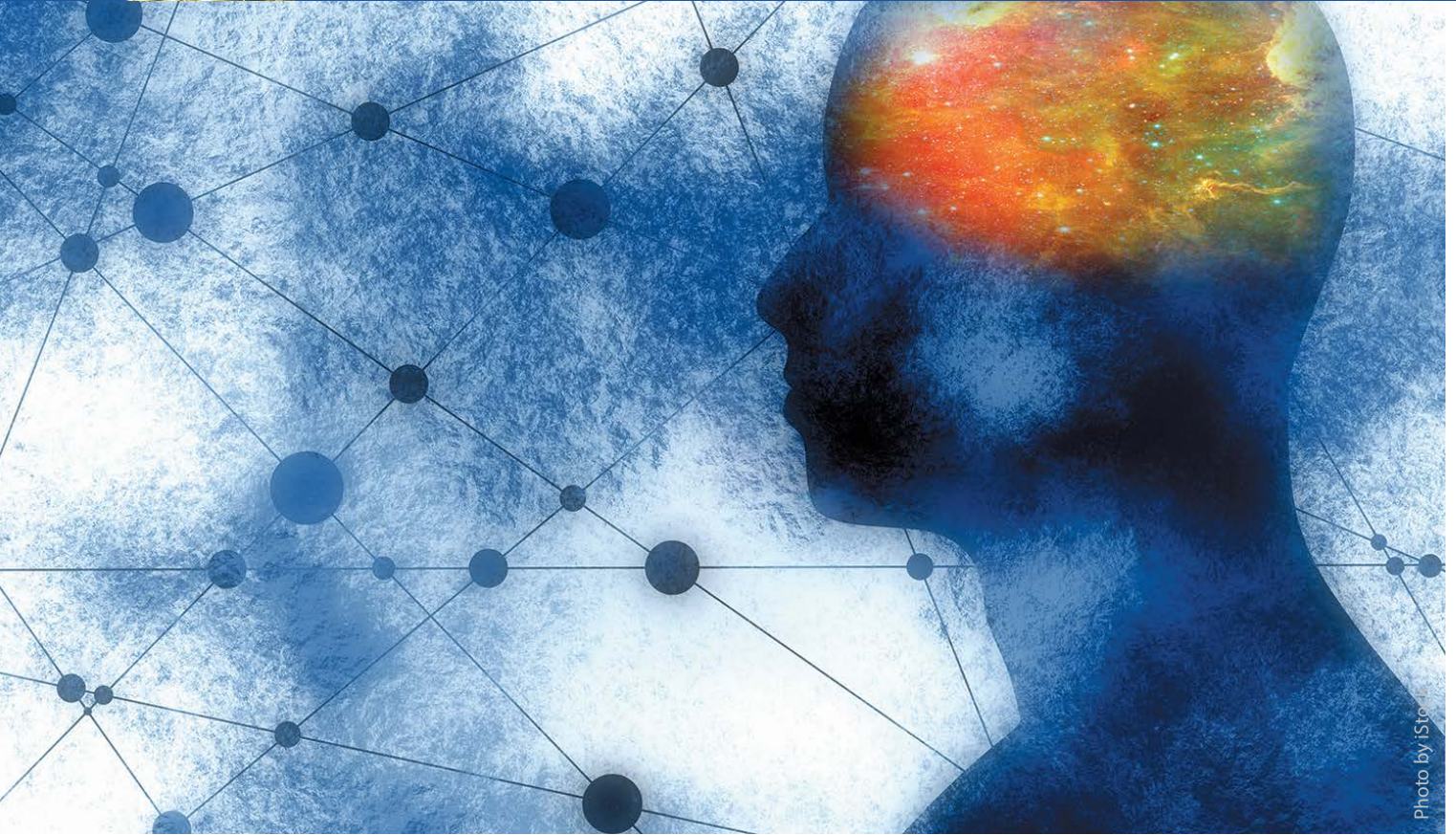
1. Mental Health Investment
2. Revenue Reform/Cost Containment
3. Housing/Homelessness Improvement
4. Infrastructure Finance and Resilience Investment
5. Right-of-Way and Franchise Fee Authority Preservation/Broadband Investment
6. Third-Party Building Inspection Preservation

In addition, the board adopted the slogan “Let Cities Work,” to emphasize that these legislative priorities are about seeking state investment in city solutions for systemic problems, while allowing cities to address the needs and goals of their communities with the necessary authority and tools.

“The focus that this member-driven process provides to the League’s advocacy efforts gives clarity to our message and benchmarks by which to measure our efforts in Salem,” said LOC President Timm Slater, a member of the North Bend City Council, expressing his satisfaction with both the process and the outcome.

Executive Director Mike Cully added, “Our theme of ‘Let Cities Work’ is intended to let the Legislature know that we are intent on working with them as a full partner in solving the municipal challenges within the state.”

The League’s legislative priorities will be the subject of further discussion at the LOC Annual Conference in Eugene later this month, as well as with cities and individual legislators in the days preceding the opening of the 2019 legislative session on January 22, 2019. In addition, all member cities are invited to mark their calendars to participate in City Day at the Capitol on January 24 in Salem.



# 1 MENTAL HEALTH INVESTMENT

## Priority

The League will advocate for adequate resources to protect and enhance the services available to persons suffering from mental health conditions.

## Background

In 2015, the state made several strategic investments in mental health service delivery. First, the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training added two instructors to train police officers in crisis intervention. Second, rental assistance was provided to mental health clients and improvements were made to emergency care. Finally, a grant program established multi-

disciplinary proactive outreach teams that combined law enforcement with mental health professionals. These investments have helped make Oregon a more humane place for those suffering mental disorders.

## Desired Outcome

The League of Oregon Cities' minimal goal is that service levels to mental health clients not be reduced. But the League also holds an aspirational goal that Oregon expand on its existing efforts to house and treat its mentally ill citizens.



## 2 REVENUE REFORM/ COST CONTAINMENT

The League recognizes that Oregon faces fiscal challenges at both the state and local government levels. Cost increases are outpacing revenues, even in a healthy economy. Revenue reform and cost containment necessarily must go hand-in-hand. The League will insist upon the inclusion of two items in any package undertaken by the Legislature: property tax reform and PERS reform.

### Property Tax Reform

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#### Priority

The League of Oregon Cities proposes that the property tax system be constitutionally and statutorily reformed as part of the Legislature's work in 2019 on state and local tax reform and improving funding for schools. The League is not seeking property tax revenue increases from the Legislature for cities or other local government taxing districts. That must remain a local choice for local elected officials and voters, as each community across the state has different needs and revenue circumstances. Instead, the League priority is to ask the Legislature for reforms to the property tax system that would reestablish tax fairness and allow local governments to make

real tax choices again. The present caps, permanent rates and growth limits have hamstrung communities arbitrarily. The result has been more city fees, deferred maintenance, and service cuts because costs increases are outpacing revenues. The limits of Measures 5 and 50 on the property tax system simply do not allow cities to work effectively. The League will ask the Legislature for reform to allow the property tax system to work again.

The League's efforts for reform will be focused on advocating for an updated system that is marked by the following principles adopted by the LOC Board of Directors:

*(continued on page 20)*



## 2. REVENUE REFORM/COST CONTAINMENT

- Stability/predictability;
- Fairness/equity;
- Simplicity/clarity;
- Adequacy/sustainability;
- Voter/local option;
- Home rule is protected; and
- Competitive environment to retain/attract business.

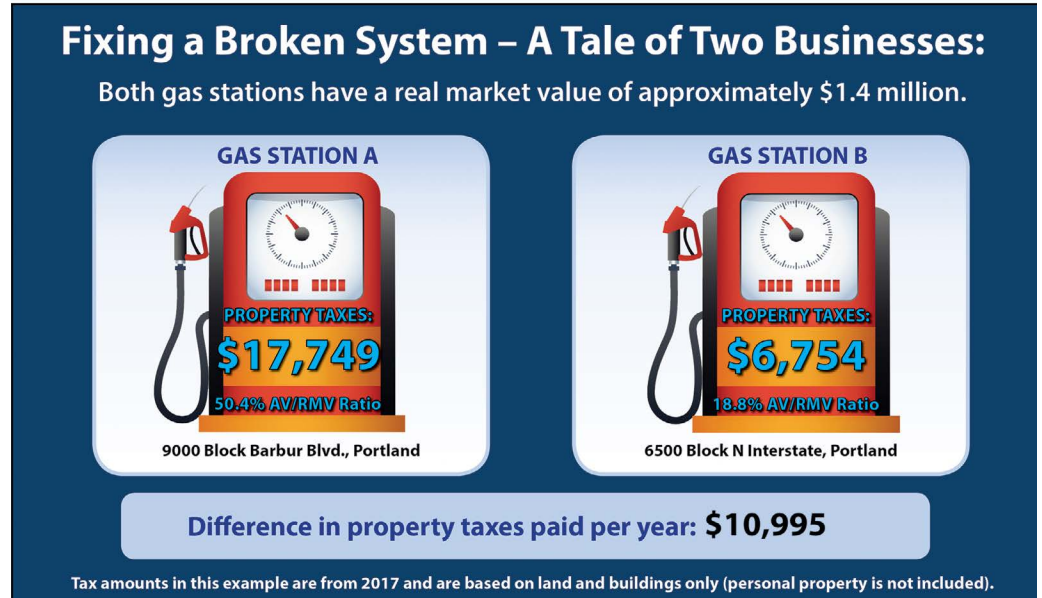
### Background

Property taxes are the largest source of revenue for cities, with \$1.39 billion collected in FY 2017-18. Property taxes play a vital role in funding capital projects and the essential services that cities provide, including police, fire, roads, parks and more. They are also a key revenue source for counties, special districts and school districts—providing approximately one-third of the state’s education budget.

Property tax revenues have been outpaced by rising costs due to the harsh limits and restrictions on the property tax system. This system is broken and in need of repair due to Measures 5 and 50, which are both now more than 20 years old. The tale of two houses (and two businesses) is the norm—this is the phenomenon of two properties with similar values having widely disparate tax bills. Compression is also the norm for a majority of taxing districts—this is the phenomenon of voters approving tax increases, but the tax bill getting reduced due to Measure 5 limits.

### Desired Outcome

The League is participating in coalitions and work groups to help draft and advocate for both comprehensive and incremental property tax reform option packages that are consistent with principles adopted by its board of directors. The League will remain flexible in



its support of all legislation that improves the system, with a focus on a property tax package that includes these elements:

- To achieve equity, a transition to a market-based property tax valuation system (RMV) rather than the present complex valuation system from Measure 50 (requires constitutional referral).
- To enhance fairness and adequacy, a system that makes various statutory changes, some of which would adjust the impact of a return to RMV. For example, the League supports a new reasonable homestead exemption (percentage of RMV with a cap) but also supports limiting or repealing various property tax exemptions that do not have a reasonable return on investment.
- To restore choice, a system that allows voters to adopt tax levies and establish tax rates outside of current limits (requires constitutional referral).

The League’s ultimate goal is a constitutional referral to voters and a companion bill that makes the statutory changes to reform the property tax system.

## PERS Reform

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### Priority

Provide employers with Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) rate relief by: sharing the cost of pensions with employees; improving earnings by achieving efficiencies in our investment system; and fully funding the Employer Incentive Fund.

### Background

Due to adverse court rulings, investment losses in 2008, and improved retiree longevity, Oregon's pension system is currently \$22 billion underfunded. As a result, employer rates are expected to increase in 2019, 2021 and possibly 2023 before leveling off and slowly decreasing over the next 20 years.

Additionally, because of the tiered nature of previous reform efforts, current employees who receive the Oregon Public Service Retirement Plan (OPSRP) will receive a reasonable pension, but not one nearly as generous as the plans received by previous generations. Reforms should take these generational inequities into account by requiring Tier I and Tier II employees who are currently working to pay greater shares of their pension costs. Currently, the only contribution an employee makes to their retirement benefit is 6 percent toward an individual account plan similar to a deferred compensation program. Requiring the 6 percent contribution, or a portion thereof, to fund the defined benefit pension would allow the employer rate to be shared with employees.

Rate relief may also be provided by continuing to modernize the state's investment system. Moving more investment officers in-house, and away from private sector firms, has improved investment earnings and reduced costs of managing the state's portfolio. This trend should continue.



In 2018, at the urging of the governor, the Legislature established the Employer Incentive Fund, which is intended to provide matching dollars to local employers for contribution to their side accounts. Oregon's PERS problems are the result of decisions made by the state, and it is therefore appropriate that the state should provide direct funding assistance to cities to correct the challenges these problems have created.

Other reform options continue to be discussed by stakeholders, including the creation of a fourth pension tier, and the potential of the state using its taxing authority to capture revenue from existing retirees who receive exorbitant pension benefits that are well in excess of their final salaries.

### Desired Outcome

The achievement of employer pension cost relief.



# 3 HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS IMPROVEMENTS

## Priority

The League will seek additional tools and resources to address statewide difficulties in developing affordable housing, and to meet the varying needs of the homeless population statewide. This includes maintaining the flexibility to address these issues in ways that work for individual cities.

## Background

Across Oregon, the price of housing is rising at a pace faster than the state's economic growth. This is particularly felt in Oregon's rural and frontier regions. Moreover, high-growth, metropolitan areas are under increasing strain to meet market demands resulting from the high rate of in-migration. The state economist has identified multiple constraints that contribute to the

inability of the construction industry to meet this need, such as a shortage in construction workers, the price of land, the number of shovel-ready lots, and the availability of financing.

Similarly, cities across the state are seeing more homelessness, representing a variety of populations including: families, youth, and those impacted by mental health issues or addiction. City employees, particularly public safety officers, are often the first contact for those experiencing homelessness, but cities do not directly provide social services or crisis housing. Instead, cities rely on private, county and state programs to provide these services.

The availability of affordable housing will address a segment of the homeless population's need. People who are displaced from a limited supply of housing are often

# LET CITIES WORK

living in cars or co-habiting with other families in single-family homes. If more affordable housing is created, these residents will have a stable place from which they can rebuild their family's security and financing. However, there are other segments of the homeless population that need more than a house they can afford. They need programs and services that provide support, social services, and job training to stay housed. Therefore, investment in affordable housing is not enough to meet their needs. Investment in the services that help people stay in housing is the only means to prevent their return to homelessness.

Cities have expressed the desire to be partners in both creating more housing and ensuring that people can stay in these homes once they are housed. However, cities also recognize that their role is as a partner and

facilitator. Cities cannot become the social service provider, nor do most have the resources to directly develop housing projects. Nevertheless, cities can work to plan for increased housing, help developers find the means to create housing, assist those that they encounter to find shelter, and bring all partners to the table to address housing and homelessness issues.

## Desired Outcome

Housing and homelessness issues defy a single answer. To assist cities in addressing these issues, the League will focus on: additional technical assistance that will help cities plan for affordable housing; a stronger partnership for long-term solutions to homelessness; and an increased state investment in housing development and services for the homeless.

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# 4 PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

## Priority

The League will work during the 2019 legislative session to maximize both the amount of public infrastructure funding and the flexibility of funds available to better meet the immediate and long-term needs of cities across the state.

## Background

A key issue that most cities are facing is how to fund infrastructure improvements (including maintaining, repairing and replacing existing infrastructure and building new infrastructure to address capacity and regulatory requirements). Increasing state resources for programs that provide access to lower-rate loans and infrastructure-specific grants will help cities invest in vital infrastructure improvements. Infrastructure development impacts economic development, housing and livability. The level of funding for these programs has been inadequate compared to the needs over the last few biennia, and the funds are depleting and unsustainable without significant program modifications and reinvestments.

A 2016 LOC survey identified a need for \$7.6 billion over the next 20 years to cover water and wastewater infrastructure projects for the 120 cities who responded. A significant reinvestment in the state's Special Public Works Fund (SPWF) is needed to help meet the needs of local governments. Current funding levels are insufficient to cover the long-term needs across the state. While past legislative sessions have focused on finding resources for transportation infrastructure, the needs for water, wastewater and storm water have not been given the same attention. In addition, there is a critical need to improve upon the seismic resilience of public drinking water, publicly-owned/operated dams and storage facilities, and wastewater systems.

## Desired Outcome

It is anticipated that Business Oregon will request an additional \$85 million for the SPWF that can fund critical infrastructure projects, including seismic improvements for water systems. In addition, the League will pursue opportunities for seismic bonding capacity for public infrastructure.





## 5 RIGHT-OF-WAY & FRANCHISE FEE AUTHORITY PRESERVATION/ BROADBAND INVESTMENT

### Priority

The League will once again oppose any legislation preempting local authority to manage public right of ways and cities' ability to set rates and receive compensation for the use of these right of ways. This applies to existing technology, as well as the deployment of new small cell and 5G technology. In addition, the League will seek additional state support and funding for increased and equitable broadband infrastructure deployment, especially in rural areas, while opposing any legislative efforts restricting municipal authority to provide their own broadband services.

### Background

In its commitment to the protection of home rule and local control, the League often has to combat

legislative efforts to restrict city authority to manage local right of ways, including being compensated for that management via franchise fees and privilege taxes—this notwithstanding the fact that the court system, all the way up to the Oregon Supreme Court, has consistently found in favor of local authority in these matters.

In addition, the existence of a widely-deployed telecommunications and broadband infrastructure network throughout Oregon is critical to cities in terms of economic development, education, health and safety, and the ability of residents to be linked to their governments. Large areas of the state are either not served, or are underserved, by competitive broadband technology. Additional funding from state and federal government is critical, and would be allocated for increased or new broadband infrastructure, especially for fiber

*(continued on page 26)*



## 5. RIGHT-OF-WAY & FRANCHISE FEE AUTHORITY PRESERVATION BROADBAND INVESTMENT

connections to schools, community libraries and public safety buildings.

Finally, it is important that private internet service providers, should they choose not to serve certain areas, not be allowed to block local government efforts to provide such service within their jurisdiction.

### Desired Outcome

The League seeks to protect the status quo in terms of local authority to manage public right of ways, and further to ensure that the ability to receive just compensation from occupants of those right of ways is

maintained. With the rapid onset of new technology, local governments also must control their own destinies with respect to how and where the deployment of new small cell technology occurs.

Additional funding for broadband infrastructure deployment will bring this technology to all parts of the state, especially its more rural areas. Finally, for underserved areas where the private sector chooses not to provide services, or at least competitive services, local government must continue to have the option and the authority to provide the technology itself.



# State of Oregon

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## 6 THIRD-PARTY BUILDING INSPECTION PRESERVATION

### Priority

The League will clarify the ability of local government programs to have private party building officials and building inspectors provide services for local building inspection programs, including recognizing that privately-employed specialized inspectors can perform specialized inspections.

### Background

Beginning in 2017, the League has been working to defend local building inspection programs that contract with third-party companies which provide building officials and inspectors to run local programs. A number of cities, particularly smaller jurisdictions, provide local services using contracted firms that provide building officials, building inspectors, and similar development review services. These firms also provide services to cities that have city-employed building officials and inspectors when there is more work than the city employees

can perform. Often, the choice to use these third-party providers is based on the efficiencies of meeting the construction needs within a community when there is insufficient work to justify a full-time position. These businesses have been in service to cities and counties for decades.

However, concerns have recently been raised that the use of third-party building officials may not be legal. The proposed solution would require all local programs to hire building officials directly, or to contract between governments to have a shared, government-employed building official. There have been further suggestions to require more inspectors to be government employees as well. Without this base of business, many third-party building inspection companies are unsure if they will be able to survive on overflow work alone. This is further complicated by the limited number of qualified inspectors and officials available to work in the state. Without clarification that use of third-party companies to provide these services based on a contract with a city is

*(continued on page 28)*



## 6. THIRD-PARTY BUILDING INSPECTION PRESERVATION

legally permitted, these smaller cities will likely have to return the inspection program to their county, which has proven less efficient for these communities. At a time when housing shortages are impacting cities across the state, it is vital that new housing is inspected in a timely and efficient manner.

In addition to the concerns about using third-party building officials, there is currently a statutory prohibition on specialized inspectors that are employed in the private sector to perform specialized inspections. There are a limited number of these inspectors, and without removal of this prohibition, some projects will be delayed

or forgone because of the inability to get them inspected. Currently, only inspectors with the specialized education and license and that are also employees of a government may perform these inspections.

### **Desired Outcome**

The League will work to draft a bill assuring that decisions on the provision of local inspection services are at the discretion of local officials, allowing communities to provide timely and efficient building inspections to the builders in their communities. ■

# LOC Staff to Lead Statewide Advocacy Workshops in October

This year the League is rolling out its 2019 legislative priorities in a new way. A series of two-hour workshops entitled “Effective Local Priority Advocacy” will be conducted by the League’s advocacy staff for city officials at regional sites throughout the state.

During the month of October, 16 workshops will provide background to League members on the 2019 legislative priorities developed through the LOC policy committee and priority survey process. In addition, these workshops will focus on issues specific to each region, and offer training to city officials on the art of meaningful and effective communications with legislators. Unlike past years, League staff will organize and conduct these meetings.

Thank you to the following cities who have volunteered to host a workshop.

Region 1 – Warrenton

Region 2 – Hillsboro, Happy Valley and Wilsonville

Region 3 – Salem

Region 4 – Springfield

Region 5 – Newport

Region 6 – Coos Bay

Region 7 – Roseburg and Medford

Region 8 – The Dalles

Region 9 – Redmond

Region 10 – Klamath Falls

Region 11 – Burns and Baker City

Region 12 – Hermiston

More details such as dates and times for the workshops will appear in the Friday *LOC Bulletin* in the coming weeks.

**Contact:** Jenna Jones – [jjones@orcities.org](mailto:jjones@orcities.org); or Craig Honeyman – [honeyman@orcities.org](mailto:honeyman@orcities.org)



## ASK LOC

# How Can My City Get Involved in the League's Advocacy Efforts?

By Scott Winkels, LOC Intergovernmental Relations Associate

**T**he Legislature and the legislative process have changed over the last decade, along with the ways in which people communicate about and seek policy changes. In recognition of these changes, the League will be rolling out new methods and practices on how it as a collective entity engages members, state policy makers and the public generally over the coming months.

The first change members will see is the evolution of “City Hall Week” away from a direct communication of the League’s legislative priorities into a statewide effort to organize city leaders ahead of the 2019 legislative session. Instead of holding a single conversation with legislators, the League is seeking to build a sustained level of engagement that keeps city issues in the fore in the coming legislative discussions.

Additionally, we will be asking city leaders to amplify the League’s message by pitching stories to their local media and using their social media accounts as a means of explaining to the public the importance of local control for the livability and vitality of their communities. Using these tactics, cities were able to convince the Oregon Department of Business and Consumer Services to reverse the decision of its Building Codes Division to disallow third-party building inspectors. We believe the same tactics will be successful in achieving victories

on mental health reform, finance reform, housing and homelessness issues, and infrastructure investments.

We will also be asking members to share their stories of the challenges state mandates and programs create for the effective management of their cities. Whether it’s a state preemption on drone regulation, or the continued adverse impacts retirement costs are having on budgets—we want to create an environment where local control becomes valued by the public. To do that, we must communicate early, often and with discipline.

Finally, the League will need to show gratitude when legislators vote with us, and hold them accountable when they don’t. Members may expect to see more vote tallies on bills in the Friday *LOC Bulletin*, with requests for follow-up communications to publicly thank or express disappointment on votes.

City leaders are asking the Legislature to continue to invest in mental health services, enact cost containment and revenue reform, address the housing and homelessness crises, and build infrastructure. We will be making these requests as legislators are considering competing priorities from other interest groups. To succeed in this environment, the League must communicate with a unified voice the benefits its agenda has for Oregon. ■



Photo by Bk Stock

# Recycling Market Changes Cause Disruptions in Oregon

*By Peter Spendelow, Waste Reduction Specialist, and Julie Miller, Materials Management Communications Specialist, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality*

For several years, Oregon and the rest of the world have relied on China to take much of the recyclable paper and plastics generated by residents and businesses. In 2016, more than one-quarter of all paper collected for recycling in the United States was exported to China. In January 2018, that changed when the Chinese government banned the import of certain plastic and paper grades and set stringent quality standards on what they would accept. Suddenly, processors had to slow down their sort lines, in an effort to reduce contamination, so they could sell their material to other manufacturers. This left piles of material with nowhere to go. While China's ban had worldwide effects, Oregon was hit especially hard and has attracted worldwide media attention as one of the first states to feel the brunt of the import restrictions.

## Why Has This Happened?

For years, Oregon's recycling has gotten dirtier, a term the industry calls "contamination." Contamination happens when things enter the recycling stream that don't belong there, such as plastic bags or dirty food containers. These contaminants can ruin clean materials around them, and can often slip

through the mechanical sorting at processing facilities. As a result, they end up baled in materials that are sold to manufacturers, creating extra expense for the manufacturers, or damaging the products they produce.

In the past, most of Oregon's recycled paper stayed local, using a regional paper mill that only accepted high quality paper. Due to increasing contamination and the decline in newsprint production and newspaper circulation, Oregon's newsprint mills closed down in 2015. Until now, Chinese markets had a large appetite for recyclables, and were willing to buy contaminated paper from Oregon and the rest of the world. The costs to transport recyclables to China was also very low. With so many ships reaching our shores to unload goods, it was cheap to transport our recyclable materials to China on freight ships that would have otherwise returned to China empty.

Although China's paper mills and plastics recyclers were willing to accept contaminated material, the mismanagement of those contaminants and the perception that China was becoming the world's dumping ground led the Chinese government to: restrict the garbage entering their country; improve their environment; and help build China's internal

“ From September 2017 through June 2018, nearly 11,500 tons of recyclable materials collected in Oregon have been disposed because either the collector could not find a recycler willing and able to accept that material, or the cost of recycling that material was so high that it no longer met Oregon’s legal definition of ‘recyclable material.’ ”



recycling infrastructure. The result was a series of actions, collectively called “National Sword,” culminating in the import restrictions and bans in January 2018. The ban cut off all post-consumer plastics and placed a contamination standard at 0.5 percent. United States contamination levels in paper bales often exceeded 10 percent, and even with enhanced efforts, it is difficult for commingled recycling processing facilities to produce bales with less than 2 percent contamination. This sent shock waves through the system, and by October 2017, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) was convening recycling stakeholder meetings with local governments, processors, haulers and other industry partners to discuss how to address these current challenges and work toward long-term solutions.

### What’s the Impact?

China’s importation restrictions and bans have created substantial challenges to Oregon’s recycling systems, and communities across the state have responded differently. In some cases, cities have changed the material they collect, dropping materials that are more difficult to recycle, such as plastic tubs, pails, drink boxes and shredded paper. Many cities have had to increase garbage rates to cover the lost revenue and increased expenses incurred by their recycling collector. Recycling companies “used to get paid” by selling off recyclable materials, said Peter Spendelow, a policy analyst for the Department of Environmental Quality in Oregon. “Now they’re paying to have someone take it away.”

In some instances, materials collected for recycling have been disposed of in a landfill when recyclers have been unable to

find markets for their materials or the cost of recycling those materials was prohibitively expensive. From September 2017 through June 2018, nearly 11,500 tons of recyclable materials collected in Oregon have been disposed because either the collector could not find a recycler willing and able to accept that material, or the cost of recycling that material was so high that it no longer met Oregon’s legal definition of “recyclable material.” This disposal tonnage is approximately 4 percent of the total commingled recycling collected during this time in Oregon, and less than 2 percent of all material recycled.

### What is Oregon Doing?

In May, the DEQ launched a recycling steering committee to shift the conversation from short-term solutions to longer-term changes needed to strengthen Oregon’s recycling systems and to implement Oregon’s 2050 Vision for Materials Management in Oregon. The committee is comprised of 13 industry, local government and non-profit representatives. To identify what Oregon’s recycling systems should look like in the future, the group is researching how to identify materials for recycling, markets for those materials, processing technologies, structures and policy changes.

The current disruptions have also been a wake-up call for residents to reduce the amount of trash in what they place in recycling bins, and a reminder to focus on reduce and reuse prior to recycling.

More information about recycling market changes and DEQ’s response can be found on the agency’s recycling webpage at [www.oregon.gov/deq/recycling](http://www.oregon.gov/deq/recycling). ■



**Kristan Mitchell**  
Executive Director,  
Oregon Refuse and  
Recycling Association

# Recycling Markets 101: What You Need to Know

**K**ristan Mitchell, executive director of the Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association, recently talked with *Local Focus* about the national impacts of China's decision to stop purchasing recycled materials from other countries, and why cities throughout Oregon will see major implications.

**LF:** Why has the Chinese market been so important for Oregon recyclables?

**Mitchell:** One of the misconceptions is that it's a U.S. or Oregon issue, but it's really a worldwide challenge. Until recently, China handled about 60 percent of the world's recyclables. When China changed its contamination standards, it effectively shut its doors to the entire world's market. The West Coast felt the impact more quickly, because up to 80 percent of West Coast recyclables went to China.

How did we get here? As China developed into a manufacturing powerhouse, producing 30 percent of the world's goods, it needed recyclable material to use as feedstock, and the supply and demand created a really efficient loop. China would send products to us, and then we could send recycling back in those empty shipping containers. Based on the need for material—China doesn't have domestic resources like forests or petroleum, nor did it have recycling collection and processing infrastructure—it was more willing to accept greater contamination in the recyclables than what was allowable in the remaining U.S. domestic markets. Now, finding markets to replace the Chinese market has been difficult and more expensive, too.

**LF:** Are there other markets available and, if so, what challenges exist to access those markets?

**Mitchell:** Other markets exist, but they cannot fill the hole created by the loss of China. Markets in Vietnam, Indonesia and India combined cannot offer the same capacity. They lack the shipping lanes and deep ports, and they don't have the same level of manufacturing coming here, so we don't have the same efficiency of routing.

Oregon processors have found markets, and that's important to remember—very little of what is collected for recycling is being thrown away. They are finding markets for some of the materials, but they are paying a lot more to deliver the materials to these markets. That's a huge concern for local government recycling collection programs because they have to make hard choices—increasing rates paid by their citizens for programs or modifying what is being collected, or both.

**LF:** What are some of the biggest changes you've seen at the local government level since China's ban went into effect?

**Mitchell:** It depends on where you are. Recycling is a global activity, but recycling and collection programs are very locally driven. In parts of Southern Oregon we've seen the biggest changes, and programs that have really shrunk in what they are accepting at the curb. Maybe they only take cardboard, newspaper, aluminum and tin cans, things like that, because they would have to pay more money to process other materials, and they aren't ready to take that step. They have chosen to accept materials they know can be marketed, and it's a mix that allows for efficient identification of contaminants.

We see a different response outside of the Portland region and different views of what programs should look like. In the Willamette Valley, Eugene, Salem and other communities have adopted a more limited acceptable recycling list and are working with the processors to define what products they can work with. In the Portland area, we have seen the fewest program changes, but consistent rate increases to cover the additional costs. That's a value that citizens are willing to pay for and local officials are willing to find ways to fund the programs.

**LF:** This has been a big wake-up call for many Oregonians. What are some of the most important messages the public should be aware of?

**Mitchell:** Pay attention to what goes in your recycling. One of the messages you hear is "recycle right." Make sure it's clean, make sure it's dry and make sure it's a product that is accepted. Many well-intentioned people think, "Oh, this is okay to recycle because it's got the three chasing arrows on it. I'll just recycle it." What they end up doing is making really expensive garbage because the processors have to pull that contamination out and that affects their ability to find a market for the good stuff.



Also, recycling is the last “R,” not the first one. You can be thoughtful about your consumption, “Reuse” the things you can, and “Reduce” the waste you create in the first place.

**LF:** It seems that many local governments have made adjustments to their programs to respond to this new reality in recycling.

Now that we have made it through the initial months of crisis adaptation, what do you think are the most important issues for local governments to be thinking about in the coming year?

**Mitchell:** We all share responsibility for these programs, and local governments have been great partners in this difficult time. I think cities should be thinking about what they want their programs to look like in the long run and what the acceptable markets are for them. We’re all working with the DEQ to talk about these issues and find an “Oregon solution.” I think we all need to be aware that changes will continue in the coming year. Recycling isn’t free and it never was. There are costs for recycling programs, and those costs are likely going to increase as we try to find different models for programs.

“ Cities should be thinking about what they want their programs to look like in the long run and what the acceptable markets are for them. ”

**LF:** The definition of “recycling” in Oregon statute is an economic one. Can you explain why this matters in terms of how the state and local governments are responding to the new recycling reality?

**Mitchell:** As defined by state law, a material is recyclable if it can be collected and sold for recycling at a net cost equal to or less than the cost of collection and disposal of the same material. This is the economic test, and it is important because it is the first

step that local government programs take when they assess their recycling collection programs. The market has changed so much that something that once was recyclable no longer is because it costs more to recycle it now than to throw it out.

State law requires programs to go through the economic test first, but if recycling fails the test it doesn’t mean the material has to be thrown away. It just means the law allows the material to be thrown away. At that point, it becomes a political test. Some jurisdictions will continue to pay higher costs to continue recycling collection programs because that’s what their citizens want; others will choose to change their programs to control costs. ■

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# Local Governments Adapt to New Realities in Recycling

By Melody Finnemore

China's decision to ban a variety of recyclable materials from being imported into its market has forced city leaders across Oregon to make some tough decisions about how to handle what is now a much narrower market for what materials can be recycled locally, the number of processors available to accept those materials, and the cost of processing them.

Several city officials recently spoke with *Local Focus* about their strategies for balancing these new realities with their respective community's attitudes toward recycling and responses to rising rates.

## Ashland Increases Rates to Preserve Recycling Program with Franchise Partner

The city of Ashland has a franchise agreement with Recology, an integrated resource recovery company based in San Francisco. Jamie Rosenthal, waste zero specialist with Recology Ashland, said the impacts of China's ban on Ashland's recycling program include: a complete loss of revenue from depressed commodity prices; the addition of new costs to maintain recycling operations; higher processing costs for recyclers; and concerns from the community about the future of recycling.

"These impacts have influenced the decision to redirect our recyclable material to a new Recology-owned sort facility in Northern California," she said.

Last November, Recology presented the emerging situation in China and its potential impacts to the Ashland City Council. In December, city and Recology staff presented a draft resolution to establish a recycling surcharge to be applied to all Recology customer accounts. The surcharge addressed increased costs associated with maintaining recycling operations to ensure that recycled materials in Ashland were reaching recycling commodities markets in lieu of being disposed of at the regional landfill.

The city council unanimously approved the resolution, agreeing that a commitment to recycling aligned with Ashland's core values and policies, Rosenthal said.



The Ashland Recycling Center is an important part of the city's recycling program.

"As the market continues to change, I foresee further education and focus on reducing contamination in our community. None of us have a crystal ball, but we have a reasonable expectation that the market for recyclable material will eventually stabilize," she said. "We continue to remind our customers to double-check our list of what we are able to take and limit 'wishful recycling,' the act of putting something into a cart, simply hoping it can be recycled, but not really knowing for sure."

## Eugene Launches Education Campaign, Public Outreach

Michael Wish, Eugene's waste prevention and green building program manager, said his city works closely with Lane County, though the county acted first in making changes to the recycled materials it accepts and banned several varieties of plastics.

"Our haulers weren't having the same issues with the processor so we were able to accept plastics for a few months longer," he said.

However, being located farther from processors raises the cost and that eventually caught up with the city, forcing it to begin limiting the plastics it accepts last spring. Now, the city of Eugene only accepts plastic water bottles.

*It can't go in the cart,  
so where should it go?*

Contamination at the curb? What's the big deal? **Recycling works best when done properly.** Let's all do our part to keep the recycle stream free of contamination to ensure an efficient recycling system. Check out this list of common contaminants below and how to dispose of them appropriately.

Contaminant							
<b>Napkins &amp; Paper Towels</b>	<b>Pet food bags</b>	<b>Plastic bags</b>	<b>Plastic clamshells</b>	<b>Styrofoam</b>	<b>Prescription bottles</b>	<b>Clothing</b>	<b>Food residue</b>
Why not at the curb?							
Paper can be recycled only so many times. Paper fiber gets shorter each time it's recycled; by the time it becomes towel or tissue, the fiber is short, making this the end of life phase in the recycling process.	Lined with plastic. Nearly impossible to separate the plastic from the paper fiber for recycling.	Clog machinery at sorting facility. Therefore it needs to be collected separately.	No market for this low grade plastic (all clamshells regardless of the # on bottom). End of life phase.	Breaks into tiny pieces when compacted in recycle truck. No local recycling facility; uneconomical to transport	No markets currently exist for amber-colored plastic recycling program.	Clothing and fabric are not part of the curbside recycling program.	Food residue inside containers contaminates commingled recycling (e.g. yogurt spilling onto paper) and leads to mold and germs. Always rinse or wipe out containers so no food will spill onto other recyclable materials in the cart.
Where should it go?							
Put in your home compost system or in your trash cart.	Place in your trash cart.	Take to Recycle Center at 220 Water Street or to participating retail store.	Place in your trash cart.	Place in your trash cart.	Either place in your trash cart or ask your pharmacy if they refill bottles.	See the Jackson County Re-Directory ( <a href="http://jacksoncounty.org/Departments/Solid-Waste/ReDirectory">http://jacksoncounty.org/Departments/Solid-Waste/ReDirectory</a> ).	Rinse and to remove food residue before recycling.

For more information on recycling in Ashland and Talent please go to [Recology.com](http://Recology.com), call 541-482-1471 or email [jrosenthal@recology.com](mailto:jrosenthal@recology.com)

**Are you a wishful recycler?**

Do you put items in your bin that you are unsure of but hope they may be?



You're a good person, but you're a wishful recycler.

Wishful recycling can get an entire load of recycling rejected at the Material Recovery Facility, due to high contamination rates. Yes, that can happen!

There is no recycling fairy at the end of the line.

Wishful Recycling = Contamination.

**Recycle Smarter, Not More.**  
When in doubt, keep it out.

Please call (541) 482-1471, go to [RecologyAshland.com](http://RecologyAshland.com) or email [J.Rosenthal@recology.com](mailto:J.Rosenthal@recology.com) for further information about what goes in your recycling cart.

The Ashland City Council's commitment to recycling includes education and outreach, including these ads that ran in the local newspaper.

"We did that not only because that was what the market would allow but also because we felt like that was the easiest messaging for the public," Wisth said, adding the city received some backlash from people who were caught off guard by the change.

"We also had people who were concerned and wanted to know how they can make things better and what role they can play as individuals," he said.

The outreach and education campaign also gave the city a chance to expose "massive misconceptions" about the materials that can be recycled, and reiterate which materials should not be included in recycling containers.

"The bright side of this recycling crisis is the opportunities to create educational materials to correct longstanding misconceptions about recycling in the first place," Wisth said.

He noted that the city of Eugene continues to monitor the market for recyclable materials, though it seems to have stabilized since China made its announcement about the ban.

"I feel that we're pretty well set for the future and I don't see us making many more changes," Wisth said. "Again, this is pretty unprecedented and you never really know what's going to happen, but we feel like we're pretty well positioned to handle any other changes in the market."

### Grants Pass Among Several Communities to Receive Disposal Concurrence

As recycling processors began struggling to find markets for mixed paper and plastics, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) worked with representatives from the recycling industry and local governments to develop a short-term solution to the backup of materials in the collec-

tion and processing system. The measure, called a disposal concurrence, allows communities to send materials to a landfill after all options to find markets for the materials have been exhausted.

Grants Pass is among the communities that received a disposal concurrence from the DEQ, and Public Works Director Jason Canady said the step was taken as both of its franchises were losing money on the materials.

"We didn't keep it a secret but we didn't overly advertise it. The paper picked up on it and did a couple of stories but we didn't really hear much about it, which was kind of surprising," he said.

On October 1, the city will roll out its revamped recycling program, in which its curbside collection will include only milk jugs, newspapers and newspaper inserts, corrugated cardboard, and tin and aluminum cans.

"We have had to increase our rates to cover our additional cost, and the sole goal in taking those items is to reduce the contamination to ensure we can take our product to market again," Canady said. "What I personally would like to see in the U.S. is more places to take our products to market or stricter laws on packaging so we don't generate so much waste."

### Milton-Freewater Takes on Recycling Program Itself After Partnership Ends

For nearly 30 years, Milton-Freewater contracted with Horizon Project Inc., a local nonprofit that provides jobs for people with disabilities, to process its recyclable materials. When the organization announced last December that it needed to end the partnership because it was no longer financially sustainable,

*(continued on page 36)*



*Milton-Freewater's public works department has taken on the city's recycling program, which includes two depot stations where residents can bring their materials.*

city leaders were alarmed, said City Manager Linda Hall. "We had a few panicky moments of breathing into a paper bag so we didn't hyperventilate because we also own a landfill that is permitted under specific conditions with the DEQ, one of which is having a recycling program," she said. "When Horizon Project announced it was quitting, I literally begged them to keep operating at a loss for a few months while the city figured out what to do."

Hall tasked her public works department with exploring possible solutions. When it became apparent that no other

entities were willing to accept the city's recyclables, city leaders determined that they would oversee the program themselves.

"No other cities are doing this. Everything around us is going into the landfill, but that just seemed like the wrong thing to do," she said.

The city cannot afford curbside pickup for its recycling, so it created two depot stations where residents can bring their materials and then city crews take them to a processor as they fill up.



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MIXED RECYCLING

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Latas de acero (estaño)  
Latas de aluminio

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Magazines  
Newspaper  
Phone Books  
Paperback Books

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Tarjetas de felicitación (sin aluminio o glitter)  
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# MAJOR RECYCLING CHANGES

EFFECTING YOUR CART

**W**e love to recycle in Marion County, but we've been putting the wrong things into our recycling rollcarts in hopes that they'll be recycled. This can slow or break sorting machinery and contaminate good materials. It's also one of the reasons China—the biggest buyer of recycled materials worldwide—has recently placed tougher restrictions on what they'll accept.

The companies that sort our recycling, like Garten Services, have had to slow down their processes to remove non-recyclable items and materials are piling up as they search for other

markets to sell to. Some recycling companies have asked permission to temporarily dispose of recyclables that they can't sell. This has been granted for a few materials for a limited time.

This is how you can help. The following items can no longer be recycled and must be placed in the trash: egg cartons; plastic jars; clamshells/take out trays; cups; tubs (like yogurt or cottage cheese containers); caps; lids; pump bottles; aerosol cans; scrap metal. And when in doubt, toss it out.

Don't stop recycling; but please only recycle items on the approved recycling list above! We work closely with recycling processors to create an accurate list based on what can be sorted and sold.

For more information about what's in and what's out, visit [mcRecycles.net](http://mcRecycles.net)

# TRASH IT

These materials are now considered contaminants. When it doubt, toss it out, *si tienes duda, a la basura.*

**Scrap Metal**  
Chatarras de metal

**Egg Cartons**  
Cartones de huevos

**Aerosol Cans**  
Latas de aerosol

**Shredded Paper**  
Papel triturado

**Plastic Cups**  
Vasos de Plástico

**Aluminum Foil**  
Papel de Aluminio

**Plastic Jars**  
Frascos de plástico

**Plastic Tubs**  
Contenedores de plástico

**Clamshells & Take Out Trays**  
No canastas de plástico o contenedores de comida para llevar

**Pro Tip!**  
Clip and post next to your in home recycling.

The city of Salem's primary goal is to educate people about what materials can be recycled and which cannot.

"We did have to spend about \$85,000 to get set up to do so and we had to hire an additional staff member to run the program," Hall said, adding a recent review of the program's financials make it clear the city will not profit from it.

"I'm hoping we can break even. We're down to only one material we can get any money for and that's cardboard and that's a penny a pound," she said. "It's one of those situations where doing the right thing isn't always the most profitable, but we're committed to trying it, at least for the interim."

### Salem Focuses Efforts on Informing Public About High Cost of Contamination

Salem's recycling is handled by Marion County, which earlier this year implemented a stricter collection program and enforced it by monitoring the materials residents put in their bins. Ryan Zink, Salem's franchise administrator, said the primary goal has been to educate people about what materials can be recycled and which cannot.

"The big issue is contamination and there were things going into our commingle carts that never should have gone in there in the first place. We tried to simplify what should go in and what shouldn't go in," he said.

Zink said the city received mixed reactions during public testimony, and it continues to work with haulers to streamline the materials that can be recycled and minimize the impact on local residents.

"It's something we've worked with them to try to message and communicate," he said.

In addition, Salem is reevaluating a rate increase that would take effect Jan. 1, 2019, to address the new market realities of recycling.

Ms. Finnemore is a Portland-area freelance writer. Contact her at [precisionpdx@comcast.net](mailto:precisionpdx@comcast.net).

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# Cities Facing More Sophisticated Cyber Attacks

By Bill LaMarche, CIS Member Relations Manager

**O**n March 22, hackers crippled the city of Atlanta’s online systems, causing chaos for staff and residents alike. For nearly a week, the ransomware attack impacted water billing, the courts and even the police department. The story made national headlines and served as another reminder about the vulnerability of cities to malicious hackers.

Today, Oregon’s cities also are under constant cyberattack.

In July, a CIS member had 79,000 emails containing personally identifiable information (PII) downloaded. The incident happened when an employee clicked a download button in

an email. CIS aided them with forensic help to analyze the breached emails, as well as to comply with the breach notification law.

“The first thing we did was to enlist the help of our contracted partners,” said CIS’ Senior Property Claims Consultant Eric Ramm. “It’s important that we do everything we can to help our members, whether it’s recovering from an arson fire at a water treatment plant or a cyberattack where people’s personal billing information is stolen.”

Even though CIS helped the member get through the ordeal, it took a lot of time away from their regular day-to-day work.

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## Cyber Threats Cities Should Take Seriously

Cities with CIS liability coverage also have cyber coverage through CIS, and they're using it. CIS' Property/Casualty Trust Director Scott Moss has identified seven cyber issues that cities are now confronting more often:

- **Impersonation Fraud:** Where funds get transferred based on someone impersonating a city leader via a faked email address or website.
- **Ransomware:** Where an unsuspecting employee opens an email (and the accompanying malware attachment) and the network becomes encrypted and inaccessible.
- **Cyber Theft:** Hacking into members' networks to obtain PII or to receive transferred city funds.
- **Open Data:** Where critical data is placed on a city's website and is vulnerable to hackers.
- **Identity Theft:** Accessing city records that have confidential information.
- **Viruses:** Inadvertently downloading malware.
- **Cyber Mischief:** Hacking into members' networks to operate equipment, reader boards, etc.

Cities must prepare for the constant hacking attempts through a variety of actions, including regular staff trainings. Moss added that in addition to the base \$50,000 of coverage, cities should also consider purchasing higher cyber limits made available by CIS.

## CIS Working with Cities to Address Threats

CIS is working with the Center for Internet Security to help its member cities prepare for the cyberattacks that will surely happen. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security contracts with the Center for Internet Security to help local governments prepare for and defend cyberattacks.

CIS' risk management consultants (RMCs) are trained to help members with a cybersecurity risk assessment. Many member cities have already gone through the 29 best-practices questions recommended by Homeland Security and the Center for Internet Security. Each question has a corresponding recommendation for a best practice to improve cybersecurity.

## City Staff Often Serve as Point of Entry to Hackers

When it comes to cyber-related crime, an untrained city employee is an agency's weakest link.



City staff continue to be victims of phishing, which is typically an email targeting a city employee with the intent to steal data or install malware. The email arrives from what seems to be a trusted source. But when they click the link, it takes them to a malware website.

"Many of these issues above can be avoided by proper training so employees recognize suspicious emails or questionable websites," said CIS' Chief Information Officer Mark Snodgrass. "Citywide trainings can prevent these types of incursions."

## CIS Identifies Free Resources Cities Can Access

"There are internal phishing tests to make staff more aware of these cyber-related issues," said Snodgrass.

One free resource for cyber testing is the website KnowBe4 at [www.knowbe4.com](http://www.knowbe4.com). The site has free tools cities can use to conduct phishing tests on their employees and determine their response to ransomware simulations.

"Cities can initiate these tests and see firsthand what their success and failure rates are," said Snodgrass. "It's a great tool to see how a city is doing."

Another free resource is Microsoft's Secure Score <https://securescore.office.com>. For organizations that use Office 365, Microsoft provides them with a score and a list of areas where they need to improve. Microsoft walks the user through securing their environment and providing various IT management tools.

Lastly, the Department of Homeland Security has free resources available and will conduct physical security audits of buildings. They also have a cyber security advisor. For more information, contact Chass Jones at [chass.jones@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:chass.jones@hq.dhs.gov).

## Steps to Protect Networks from Cyber Attacks

CIS advises cities take cyber threats more seriously by implementing seven action items:

- Ensure all computers are on the latest Windows operating system and have the latest anti-virus solution;
- Have a written cyber security policy on which all employees are trained;

*(continued on page 40)*



## Recognizing Cyber Attacks

### Business Email Compromise (BEC)/CEO Fraud

A BEC is a phishing attack where a hacker often impersonates a city manager, so they'll receive sensitive information or funds. Email scams like this one can easily slip through a city's spam filters and can be difficult for staff to recognize that the city manager's email has been faked. Hackers hijack the city manager's email address and then send an email posing as the city leader to a staff member that can send wire transfers. The employee is instructed to send the funds to the hacker's account.

### Invoice Scams

Here hackers access a city manager's email account, looking for invoices that are almost due. They then contact the finance person and have them change the invoices payment location to the hacker's account.

This scam can be convincing. In 2017, Southern Oregon University lost \$1.9 million in an attack like this one.

### Data Theft

Data thefts also use a city manager's email account to request sensitive city information. These requests are made to HR or finance regarding W-2s or financial documents. Once the hackers have this data, they can do much more damaging attacks.

## Avoid Getting Played

### Avoid Email Requests for Money/Data

Create a policy that bans email requests for wire transfers of funds or confidential information. If an email comes in after this policy is implemented, it will be immediately flagged.

### Require Multi-Factor Authentication

Having a multi-factor authentication as a security policy makes it difficult for hackers to access an employees' email and much harder to launch a BEC attack.

### Run Regular Email Checks

Hackers often send emails that look legitimate and appear as though they're from the city's leadership. Use KnowBe4's domain to determine if the city is vulnerable.

### Train City Staff to Spot Phishing Scams

City employees must be trained to know when something doesn't look quite right and what to do when they encounter phishing.

- Make use of Microsoft's Secure Score service to ensure that a city's email and user environment is following best practices;
- Assess IT staff to determine if they have the correct skill-sets to maintain a secure environment. If they don't, then consider contracting with an outside vendor like Sophicity, which can monitor computers, firewalls and switches;
- Implement training plan for all employees to build awareness—and conduct regular phishing exercises;
- Require employees to change passwords regularly with "strong" passwords; and
- Post cyber security articles to the city's intranet to keep staff up-to-date on the latest threats.

## FBI Urges Cities Not to Pay Ransomware

So, what happened in Atlanta? Did the city pay the hackers to have its network released? In the end, the city did not pay the \$52,000 ransom. However, this ordeal was an expensive one for the city. It's estimated that responding to the ransomware cost the city up to \$17 million to recover from the attack, which included clean up, improved security and new devices.

"If I were a city manager, what would keep me up at night is that one employee clicking a phishing link—and giving a hacker access to all of our data," said Snodgrass. "These attacks are becoming more and more sophisticated. We need to be ready." ■

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# Building Diverse Civic Leadership: Hillsboro's Success Story

By Chris Carlson

Hillsboro is one of the most racially diverse cities in Oregon. The city is approximately:

65% White;

25% Latino;

9% Asian;

2% African American;

1% Native American; and

Less than 1% Pacific Islander.

The fifth-largest city in Oregon and the county seat, Hillsboro is located on the western edge of Portland. Home to several high-tech companies, including Intel, Hillsboro is growing rapidly. From a population of 37,000 in 1990, it is now more than 100,000.

As Hillsboro has grown in size and diversity, city leaders haven't seen that diversity reflected in civic leadership. This awareness led them to look for ways to reach out and engage more citizens from diverse segments of the community. They wanted to develop Hillsboro's capacity to respond to the needs of their increasingly diverse community.

Hillsboro isn't the only city experiencing rapid growth and demographic change. Increasingly, cities across the country are facing new challenges as their populations grow and change, and new influences shape politics at all levels.

For one thing, changing demographics have impacted the way people get positioned to participate in local government. In the past, if you looked at the background of the typical person who sought public office, many had been involved in local service clubs, fraternal societies, civic leagues or women's organizations. Today those organizations are not as prominent as they once were. Organizations that serve Latinos, Asian Americans, and other ethnic groups have typically focused on cultural, educational and human service activities and not on helping people move into civic leadership positions. In addition to language barriers, members of some immigrant communities have had negative experiences with their home governments that discourage them from participating here.

Growing political polarization is another factor motivating local leaders to look for new ways to connect with citizens. As a by-product of cable news and the rise of social media,



we have witnessed growing incivility and outrage in interactions between people and government officials. People are exposed to the use of tactics that provoke emotions—anger, fear, hate—not only in national politics, but also at the local level. Politics has become increasingly polarized as groups and individuals employ tactics they have seen or read about to disrupt, shout down or shut down public meetings.

These kinds of experiences create barriers to engagement between citizens and government officials. They make people less open to hearing the political ideas of others. Without opportunities to talk civilly with fellow citizens, people can become less tolerant of differing views. In fact, they grow fearful of discussing political issues with others. In the face of these factors, local leaders are looking for ways to develop and maintain good communication and relationships with all local citizens.

Hillsboro leaders decided that something needed to be done to cultivate future leaders who can represent the community's diversity, not only in terms of ethnicity but also gender and age, and who understand how to work collaboratively with others from different segments of the community to address the issues the city is facing. City Manager Michael Brown consulted with the National Policy Consensus Center at Port-

*(continued on page 42)*

land State University and together they began planning the Hillsboro Citizens Academy.

## The Evolution of Civic Leadership Programs

Since the 1960s, community leadership programs have been created throughout the country, often sponsored by local chambers of commerce. They have served as the seedbed for new generations of local leaders. In a relatively recent development, city governments in Charlotte, Chicago, New Orleans and Pittsburgh have begun launching their own city-sponsored leadership development programs.

Leadership development programs come in all shapes, sizes and formats. They typically bring together emerging leaders from business, government, and nonprofit organizations to develop better understanding of their communities, build individual leadership capacity, and develop new relationships across those sectors of the community. These programs offer participants the opportunity to learn how their city government operates and the challenges they face, and to identify how they can participate in strengthening their communities.

The Hillsboro effort points toward a new direction for these programs—intentionally building a diverse network of informed and active citizens, drawn from different neighborhoods and ethnicities. The training focuses on building the skills for collaborative leadership and joint problem solving, learning how to work across different perspectives and interests to find common ground.

## The Hillsboro Civic Leadership Academy

The purpose of the academy is described on the city's website:

“To engage a diverse group of Hillsboro residents—representing different neighborhoods, perspectives, and backgrounds—and help prepare them to serve in a range of civic leadership capacities within the City.

The Academy is designed to promote new connections, establish working relationships between participants, develop greater knowledge of how the City of Hillsboro's government works, explore the key elements of community leadership, and create an enhanced level of fun and excitement around civic engagement.”

Hillsboro has now hosted two leadership academies. The city opted to have the academy occur over a concentrated, intensive period of time—just six sessions. They wanted the academy to be a small group experience that would help build new working relationships among participants and staff, so they limited its size to 12 participants.

The city publicized the academy and solicited applications through the media, an open house and their website: [hillsboro-oregon.gov](http://hillsboro-oregon.gov).



Twelve participants were selected for each academy. The groups were composed of members from various ethnic and racial groups within the community, with ages ranging from 20 to 70. The majority were women.

The planning group, working with the National Policy Consensus Center, decided to focus on three objectives, providing: information about how the city works; training in skills that support collaborative governance; and an opportunity to employ those skills.

They had the group work together collaboratively on a real issue the city was facing. To help ensure that the group's work complimented the work of city staff, they involved staff in identifying several issues the group could choose from to work on. In the first year, the issue chosen was affordable housing. In the second year, the city focused on how it could promote and support entrepreneurship.

Over the course of two months, each group met in six, two-hour evening sessions. Box suppers, featuring the many cultures represented in the city, and childcare were provided. Participants had the opportunity for informal conversations at the beginning and end of each meeting.

The sessions were led and facilitated by Consensus Center staff. In addition to information about the structure and operations of city government, each session focused on some element of civic leadership—principles of effective group leadership, the changing nature of governance, interest-based negotiation, and how to frame issues for joint problem solving and consensus building.

Every session ended with work assignments. In between sessions participants did their homework. They consulted with city staff and identified and interviewed stakeholders to learn about their perspectives on the issues. During the sessions they talked about how to frame the issues and what to report to Hillsboro City Council.



At the conclusion of each academy, the class presented their findings at a city council meeting. Participants were delighted when the council, in acknowledgement of their work, presented each person with a street sign with their name imprinted on it.

### The Impact

As a result of the first two academies, attended by a total of just 24 citizens, six of the participants are now serving on city boards and commissions—the Hillsboro Planning Commission, the Budget Commission and the Parks and Recreation Board. The city has seen an increase in the number of applicants

volunteering for these offices. In just one year, applicants jumped from 10 to 45. City staff think that academy participants went out and helped recruit others—friends and neighbors—through word of mouth.

Participants stated in their evaluations that they particularly valued the diversity within their groups, getting to know people from different neighborhoods and backgrounds, and the chance to talk over the issues with them. They said the sessions helped them develop a deeper understanding of some of the demographic issues the community faces—population growth, poverty, lack of affordable housing, etc.

Hillsboro leaders are enthusiastic about these results and want to share their success story with other cities. By offering its Civic Leadership Academy, the city of Hillsboro is improving its civic capacity for addressing the complex challenges all cities will face in the 21st century. ■



### About the Author:

Chris Carlson helped found the National Policy Consensus Center at Portland State University, and has previously served as a local elected official in the state of Ohio. She has been a mediator, facilitator and trainer for more than 30 years, teaching and writing about the use of consensus building and problem solving to address public issues.

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## WEST LINN Repair Fair & Student Art

### Reduce, Reuse, Repair

That is the mission of the repair fairs regularly held at Robinwood Station, a neighborhood-operated resource center located in West Linn. Every few months, individuals dedicated to improving their community, and the health of the environment, come together at Robinwood Station to give new life to items that may otherwise become buried in a landfill. The city of West Linn provides the space where the fairs are held.

At these repair fairs, skilled volunteers offer their time to fix items ranging from small appliances to jewelry to bicycles. Not only do those in need of some minor assistance receive the services they need for free, but it also brings community members together. Individuals are able to watch and chat with the volunteers to learn more about the process, and about the person.

“From a materials management perspective, this is a best practice to avoid depleting natural resources and adding carbon to the atmosphere when we can keep using items we have already,” said Robinwood Station Repair Fair organizer Lisa Clifton. “These events connect people too, great community building opportunities.”

At the most recent event, 55 items were repaired, and 143 pounds of repaired materials were diverted from the landfill. Over the last five years, five repair fairs have been hosted at Robinwood Station.

Several neighboring cities also hold them, including Lake Oswego and Oregon City.

The next Robinwood Station Repair Fair is scheduled for Sept. 22.

### Art Brightens Police Station

Students in the advanced placement (AP) art class at West Linn High School recently made the city’s police department a little brighter.

At the request of West Linn School Resource Officer Jeff Halverson, 18 students spent several weeks conceptualizing and painting a once blank wall in the staff parking area adjacent to the city’s police facility.

The class decided to do a mural of Mt. Hood. The catch? Each student would have their own square to paint, creating a patchwork type feel to the city’s “neighboring” mountain. This approach brought the group together, while also allowing each individual to express themselves on a more personal level.

“It was so much fun to do this project, get out of the classroom, and interact with the officers as they were coming



*One of the many volunteers at the Robinwood Station Repair Fair takes time to try and fix a sewing machine. Although the sewing machines can be quite complicated to fix, volunteers are eager to offer their time a broad range of projects.*



*West Linn High School art students painted this mural inside the West Linn Police Department’s staff parking area. The bigger picture is that of Mt. Hood, but the patches are representative of each individual student’s own artistic style.*

and going,” teacher Diane Gauthier said. “I think it gave our students a big boost of confidence that their work was valued and their input was appreciated.”

The mural will stand for three years until another art class is recruited to again freshen up the police department.

Reaching out to the students and staff at West Linn School through this mural project is just one of many community outreach events the West Linn Police Department has recently supported. On Father’s Day, the department, along with the West Linn Public Library and West Linn Public Works Department held a “Touch-a-Truck” event. In addition, “Coffee with a Cop” events are held regularly, as are visits to local schools, lemonade stands and other hyper-local events.

*Submitted by: City of West Linn*

# SEASIDE

## Civic and Convention Center

The city recently broke ground on a \$15 million renovation and expansion of the 45-year-old Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

While previous upgrades were done in 1986 and 1991, the current project will result in some significant improvements. Among them, it will add about 10,000 square feet to the existing facility for a total of nearly 55,000 square feet. The ballroom and meeting rooms will be expanded; the restrooms and staircases will be relocated; and carpeting and lighting are being replaced. A two-story addition on the east side of the building will overlook Broadway and the Necanicum River.

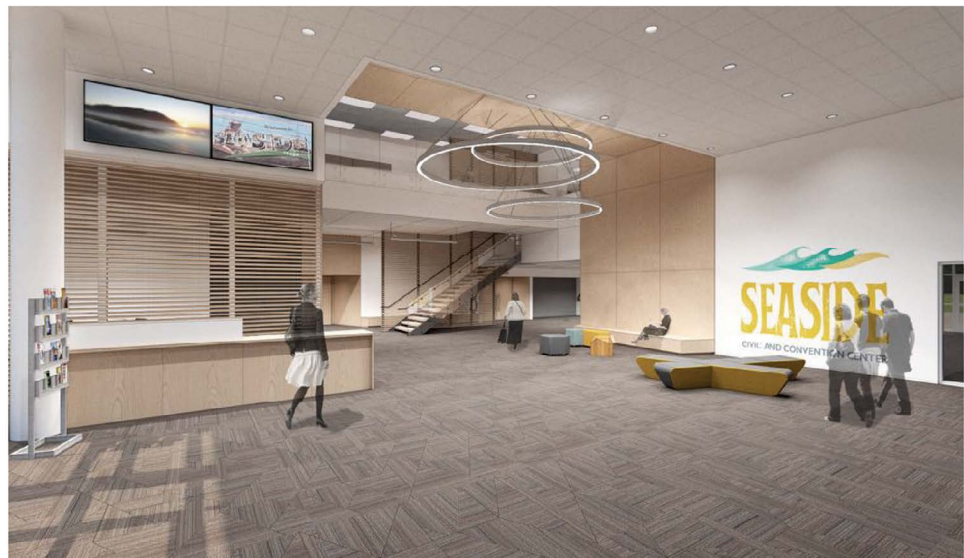
Russell Vandenberg, CVE, the center's general manager, said demand drove the need for the renovation and expansion. He noted that about 80 percent of the center's client base is made up of groups that represent return business, and research showed that some clients' needs were changing.

"We started hearing, 'You need to grow or we need to find a new place to hold our events.' We wanted to keep who we already have instead of losing them to other venues," he said. "We'd love to see new events as well and I think this opens our doors to new markets. There are groups out there that use larger facilities and can now consider coming to Seaside."

Vandenberg noted that the larger ballroom will play a key role in attracting new and larger events. The expansion will allow the ballroom to accommodate 350 people at a time, compared to its current 250 capacity, and provide more options for groups that want to serve meals as part of their events.

"That's pretty substantial when it comes to a larger conference or convention," he said.

Groups typically book their events three to five years in advance, so the center won't see an immediate uptick in business. However, it already is reserved for about 250 days a year and



will continue to be occupied throughout construction, which is scheduled for completion in August 2019.

City councilors unanimously approved the renovation and expansion project, and a 2 percent increase in the city's lodging tax took effect July 1, 2017, to pay for the \$15 million project.

The project team includes Klash Group LLC, Holst Architecture, Convergence Design and O'Brien and Company Construction. For more information, including project updates and photos can, visit: [www.seasideconvention.com/renovations](http://www.seasideconvention.com/renovations).

*Submitted by: City of Seaside*

# COTTAGE GROVE

## YAC Makes Positive Impact

As students kick off the new school year, a select group in Cottage Grove already has some impressive achievements to celebrate.

Just last year, the city's Youth Advisory Council played an instrumental role in the passage of legislation that prevents retail stores from selling nitrous oxide canisters to anyone under the age of 18. The impetus was a local mother who spoke about her son's addiction to the substance during a city council meeting. She described how easy it was for him to buy it at area convenience stores and then inhale it from the canister to get high, said City Manager Richard Meyers.

A member of the Youth Advisory Council sits in on the city council meetings, and the student who was present for that particular meeting reported the issue to fellow YAC members. With support from Meyers and other city leaders, the students connected with Sen. Floyd Prozanski and Rep. Cedric Hayden, who both represent Cottage Grove, and drafted the legislation.

"When they presented to the committees, they did better than a lot of adults do. They were really good. They were very excited and most of them took a photocopy of the statute," Meyers said, adding the YAC members also sent a letter to mayors across the country describing the problem and encouraging them to lobby for similar legislation in their states. "Hopefully that will put a dent in making those cannisters available."

The YAC, which ranges from 12-17 participants and was first formed during the 2004-05 school year, includes students in the 7th through 12th grades who live within the South Lane School District. The students meet monthly with the city manager and other city leaders to discuss local issues that affect youth in the community, and the YAC members take turns attending the city council meetings.

Among their other accomplishments, the YAC initiated movie nights in the park, a fly-in at the armory where people can fly remote-controlled planes and helicopters during the winter, an amateur RC club, and "sockball fights" in which donated socks were washed and given to homeless people after the fight. In addition, the YAC compiled a book called "101 Things to Do in Cottage Grove."



Participating in the YAC gives students a chance to tour city hall and engage in a mock planning commission meeting, as well as tour the local utilities, take part in an emergency tabletop exercise with the fire department, and witness a mock felony traffic stop complete with a takedown by the police department's canine colleagues.

"We've got adults who don't have a clue what the city does on a day-to-day-basis, and now we've got this group of kids who can go home and share that information with other people," Meyers said. "The community fully supports them and the council loves to have them at meetings. They comment on agenda items and they've even commented on agenda items when council members are at odds with each other."

*Submitted by: City of Cottage Grove* ■

## Have City News to Share?

Email us your copy (500 words max.) detailing your city's notable achievement (i.e., a project, initiative, award or individual honor), preferably with an image.

**Contact:** Kevin Toon, [ktoon@orcities.org](mailto:ktoon@orcities.org)

# City Events

## September

- 6-9 **Seaside** – Wheels and Waves Car Show ([www.seasidedowntown.com](http://www.seasidedowntown.com))
- 7-9 **Bandon** – Cranberry Festival ([www.bandon.com](http://www.bandon.com))
- 7-9 **Enterprise** – 37th Annual Hells Canyon Mule Days ([www.hellscanyonmuledays.com](http://www.hellscanyonmuledays.com))
- 7-9 **Sublimity** – Sublimity Harvest Festival ([www.sublimityharvestfest.com](http://www.sublimityharvestfest.com))
- 8 **Carlton** – Carlton Crush Harvest Festival ([www.carltoncrush.com](http://www.carltoncrush.com))
- 8-9 **North Bend** – Mill-Luck Salmon Celebration ([www.oregonsadventurecoast.com](http://www.oregonsadventurecoast.com))
- 12-16 **Joseph** – Wallowa Valley Festival of the Arts ([www.wallowavalleyarts.org](http://www.wallowavalleyarts.org))
- 15 **Columbia City** – Columbia City Celebration ([www.columbia-city.org](http://www.columbia-city.org))
- 15 **Forest Grove** – Sidewalk Chalk Art Festival ([www.valleyart.org](http://www.valleyart.org))
- 15-16 **Coos Bay** – Bay Area Fun Festival ([www.bayareafunfestival.com](http://www.bayareafunfestival.com))
- 15-16 **Woodburn** – Community Celebration ([www.woodburn-or.gov](http://www.woodburn-or.gov))
- 16-17 **Independence** – Hop & Heritage Festival ([www.hopfestival.org](http://www.hopfestival.org))
- 22-23 **Corvallis** – Fall Festival ([www.corvallisfallfestival.org](http://www.corvallisfallfestival.org))
- 22-23 **Troutdale** – Fall Festival of the Arts ([www.fallfestivalofthearts.com](http://www.fallfestivalofthearts.com))
- 27-30 **Joseph** – Oregon's Alpenfest ([www.oregonalpenfest.com](http://www.oregonalpenfest.com))
- 29 **Garibaldi** – Tillamook Coast Food Festival ([www.tillamookcoast.com](http://www.tillamookcoast.com))

## October

- 6 **Baker City** – Taste of Baker City ([www.bakercitydowntown.com](http://www.bakercitydowntown.com))
- 6-7 **Grants Pass** – Art Along the Rogue (541-476-7574)
- 6-7 **Lincoln City** – Fall Kite Festival ([www.oregoncoast.org](http://www.oregoncoast.org))
- 13 **Florence** – Oktoberfest ([www.eventcenter.org](http://www.eventcenter.org))
- 13 **Huntington** – Harvest Festival and Flea Market ([www.visithuntingtonor.org](http://www.visithuntingtonor.org))
- 14 **Astoria** – Great Columbia Crossing ([www.greatcolumbiacrossing.com](http://www.greatcolumbiacrossing.com))
- 19-20 **Merrill** – Klamath Basin Potato Festival ([www.klamathbasinpotatofestival.com](http://www.klamathbasinpotatofestival.com))
- 20 **Tualatin** – West Coast Great Pumpkin Regatta ([www.tualatinoregon.gov](http://www.tualatinoregon.gov))

## November

- 9-11 **Yachats** – Celtic Music Festival ([www.yachats.org](http://www.yachats.org))
- 11 **Albany** – Veterans Day Parade ([www.albanyvisitors.com](http://www.albanyvisitors.com))
- 16-18 **Ontario** – Festival of Trees (541-820-3605)
- 17 **Prairie City** – Christmas on the Prairie ([www.gcoregonlive.com](http://www.gcoregonlive.com))
- 17 **West Linn** – Holiday Bazaar ([www.westlinnoregon.gov](http://www.westlinnoregon.gov))
- 23-25 **Seaside** – Yuletide in Seaside ([www.seasidechamber.com](http://www.seasidechamber.com))
- 23-12/1 **Silverton** – Christmas in the Garden ([www.oregongarden.org](http://www.oregongarden.org))
- 29 **Sisters** – Fresh Hop Festival ([www.sistersfreshhopfest.com](http://www.sistersfreshhopfest.com))
- 29-12/1 **Baker City** – Festival of Trees ([www.saintalphonus.org](http://www.saintalphonus.org))

Send your city event to  
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