



# Local Focus

The Magazine of the League of Oregon Cities

Q1 2021

## Budgeting During a Pandemic

With festivals cancelled and  
facilities closed, cities are  
getting creative

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

2021 Legislative Session

State Shared Revenues

CIS Partners with SAIF

ShakeAlert Debuts in March

Every July, the city of Woodburn hosts  
the Fiesta Mexicana festival.

Photo by the City of Woodburn



# CIS and SAIF work together for first time!

CIS will be partnering with SAIF to provide workers' compensation coverage to CIS members starting July 1, 2021.

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

## Just the Facts!

- All LOC members can participate, including those with SAIF.
- CIS provides risk management, loss control, RTW services, and training services.
- SAIF provides financial strength, coverage, and claims management services — and serves as the workers' compensation carrier.



*To determine the CIS Servicing Group (OGSERP) discount, we ask you to sign a Consent to Group Rate Form. The form does not commit your entity to participate in the SAIF/CIS servicing group.*





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# Educating residents together.

## Did you know?

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

## NLC Service Line Warranty Program:

- Educates homeowners about their service line responsibilities
- Provides solutions that help address aging residential infrastructure
- Offers affordable plans to protect homeowners from the high cost of service line repairs
- No cost to the city



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us to help protect their homeowners.

NLC Service Line  
Warranty Program by  HomeServe

Contact: Dennis Lyon • Regional Director

Dennis.Lyon@HomeServeUSA.com  
412-266-9545 • www.servicelinepartner.com

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

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

# Local Focus



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#### Vice President

Tanea Browning, Councilor, Central Point

#### Treasurer

Steve Callaway, Mayor, Hillsboro

#### Immediate Past President

Timm Slater, Councilor, North Bend

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Arlene Burns, Mayor, Mosier

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Drew Farmer, Councilor, Coos Bay

Peter Hall, Councilor, Haines

Roland Herrera, Councilor, Keizer

Beach Pace, Councilor, Hillsboro

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Dean Sawyer, Mayor, Newport

Byron Smith, City Manager, Hermiston

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# A Message from the LOC President

Keith Mays, Mayor, Sherwood

**W**hen anyone commits to leading—be it a city, a company, a nation, or the LOC—we do so irrespective of the circumstances and environment shaping our world. There will always be unknowns and uncertainties facing us for which even the best laid plans cannot prepare us. Such was the case in 2020, and so it seems it will be as we enter the New Year. It is with the backdrop of a global pandemic, devastating wildfires, an economic disaster, the events of January 6, and, yes, even more uncertainty about the future, that I humbly accept the responsibility of leading this great organization as your President through 2021.

I accept this responsibility and opportunity with gusto. In 2020, the LOC was a shining star and a beacon of hope for all our cities and stakeholders. We rose above so many obstacles and turned impediments into opportunities, repeatedly. We are poised to do that and more as we dive headfirst into 2021—which I believe will be a defining year for all of us. The role of this organization as a leader, convener and communicator in Oregon has never been so important. The LOC has turned the corner in redefining its role in the state and there is no looking back.

My message to you for the coming year is this: the League of Oregon Cities will be there for you through it all. We are focused on uplifting all 241 cities in this great state and doing so through recognizing and celebrating our differences. It is this growing diversity in Oregon that further defines our presence and actions as we move through the year, and we do it focusing on celebrating the tenets of diversity, equity and inclusion.

As we refine our vision for the future, we will not lose sight of the reason this organization was created nearly 100 years ago: for its ability to advocate powerfully, effectively and collaboratively. As we start this year with a long legislative session, we hold fast to our guiding principles and focus on the 2021 legislative priorities identified by all of you. The LOC advocacy team was directed to follow 26 legislative policy priorities this session, with economic recovery, a comprehensive infrastructure package, housing and services investment, disaster relief and recovery, water, mental health, and property tax reform leading the way.

In addition to these legislative priorities, we will stress organizational urgencies as well, to include:

- Avoiding unfunded mandates;
- Preserving local decision-making and problem-solving authority;
- Preserving local revenue streams;
- Serving—always—in a supportive role to provide local tools and resources; and

- Avoid shifting additional costs onto local government partners.



Keith Mays, LOC President  
Mayor, Sherwood

The new year is a time for optimism and opportunity, especially related to the LOC. Your 2021 Board of Directors is the most diverse and representative group of leaders this organization has ever seen, and their dedication and drive for excellence is unparalleled. We have made great strides over the past year and our presence and action this year will be further defining. We will seek out new partnerships and alignments and work to find even more direct ways to connect with all our stakeholders. We will not be complicit. We are committed, innovative and passionate about our mission to support all cities in the great state of Oregon, and I am honored to represent you as your 2021 LOC President during this year of opportunity and growth. ■

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& Hammond LLP**

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## From the Executive Director

# Moving Forward Together

Over the past year, I have heard many say that Oregon is a state divided. As an organization that represents the interests of all 241 cities, I can tell you, there is truth in that statement.

The Coronavirus pandemic has brought out both the best and worst in us. From my perspective, the LOC has never been a more integral and important resource for our cities. Since the onset of the pandemic and throughout the cascading events of 2020, the LOC reimagined its role in the state and effectively repositioned itself to be the go-to source for information and more importantly, action. Our weekly statewide calls, our regional President's Roundtable virtual events, and our topic-specific meetings and trainings have all been important touchpoints for the state. We have built essential partnerships throughout the state in the public, private and government sectors. This broad reach helped usher in—in record time—a new era for the LOC, one that the board of directors had envisioned just a short time ago.

The relationships we have developed and fostered are important. They give this organization a bigger voice and an elevated platform to influence positive outcomes for our cities.

As we have expanded our suite of services and broadened our communication channels, the dialogue with our members has become robust. We view this as extremely positive and we value the fact that we are both approachable and accessible to you.

It is through this open communication that one very specific thing has become increasingly clear: there are issues we agree upon as a state, and those upon which we differ. As I referenced earlier, the pandemic has put this under the microscope and amplified those differing viewpoints. The fact that we, as 241 cities, have different positions on common concerns is healthy and expected.

As a membership organization, it is our duty to represent the best interests of all of the cities in Oregon. We have worked hard as a team to create and build essential relationships critical to the fulfillment of this mission. As stated previously here, that charge is becoming more of a challenge given the clear differences and opinions that are presenting themselves more frequently, and more directly.

From our perspective, we take our positions based on clear direction from our board, and they, in turn, make their recommendations based on information. As a non-political organization, we are careful to weigh all sides of any argument and action and make decisions that are grounded in fact, not feeling.

This directly ties to our relationship with Governor Brown and all matters related to the pandemic and its impact on the health, safety and yes, the economic circumstances, of our cities and citizenry. We have unequivocally based our decisions to support the course of action and executive orders issued by this administration on science, backed by data. No person or organization would willingly put itself in the position

of having to weigh the importance of human health and safety against a devastating blow to our economic engine. In my eyes, this is a no-win situation for any of us, so we do the best we can, and make the best decisions possible based on available information.

This is no time to find and exploit differences in our state. On the contrary, this is the time to find common ground and support each other as we work through this unimaginable crisis. We are in this together, and we need to act as such.

After nearly 100 years of service, the LOC will not falter in its mission to support every city in this great state. We are expanding our suite of services to address these changing times and are growing our professional assets to execute on our ambitious and important program of work. One of the most important steps we have taken to hold us accountable is to open our lines of communication to an even greater extent. We want the dialogue, the positive feedback and the criticisms. We want your suggestions and ideas. It is through clear, transparent communication that we will move forward together and come through this stronger.

There is a light at the end of the proverbial tunnel and there is hope. We will come through this, and we will rebuild even better than before. That's the Oregon way. ■



Mike Cully  
LOC Executive Director



LOC President Keith Mays is inviting city officials to join him for one of nine upcoming regional **Roundtable Discussions**. These events will be virtual conversations held with cities across the state to facilitate the sharing of ideas and solutions among city officials, and to make sure the LOC hears what resources you need as we continue to operate under COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

There is no cost to participate – see the schedule below to RSVP.

**Central Oregon (Region 9)**

February 23 at 5 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

**Eastern Oregon (Region 12)**

March 2 at 5 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

**South Coast (Region 6)**

March 3 at 5 p.m. (*Rescheduled*)

[RSVP](#)

**Central Coast (Region 5)**

March 9 at 5 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

**Northeastern Oregon (Region 11)**

March 16 at 5 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

**Northern Willamette Valley (Region 3)**

March 23 at 5 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

**Southern Willamette Valley (Region 4)**

March 30 at 5 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

**South Central Oregon (Region 10)**

April 6 at 5 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

**Metro - Cities A-J (Region 2)**

April 13 at 5 p.m.

[RSVP](#)

**Metro - Cities K-Z (Region 2)**

April 14 at 5 p.m.

[RSVP](#)



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

**Current Training and Consulting Opportunities:**

- Leadership Development
- Decision Making in the Public Realm
- Planning in Oregon
- Council Goal Setting and Strategy
- Facilitation for Retreats and Meetings
- Organizational Assessments and Development

Contact John Morgan for information on these offerings  
john@thechinookinstitute.org 503-304-9401

# Meet the 2021 LOC Board of Directors

## OFFICERS



**President**  
Keith Mays  
Mayor, Sherwood

for more than 20 years, Mayor Mays is a Rotarian and currently sits on boards and committees for several local and regional non-profit and government organizations.

Mayor Mays was re-elected in March and November of 2018. He previously served four years as council president and eight years as mayor of Sherwood from 2005-13. Over the past 20-plus years, Mayor Mays has served as president of the Oregon Mayors Association, the Sherwood Chamber of Commerce, the Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge and the Willamette River Water Coalition. He has also served as a member of Metro's MPAC and on several LOC committees. A resident of Sherwood



**Vice President**  
Tanea Browning  
Councilor, Central Point

Councilor Browning is a native Oregonian, appointed in 2015 and elected in 2016 to her current position. She has served on the Central Point Urban Renewal Agency and Budget Committee. Her commitments also include the Central Point Visitor Information Center and the boards of the Rogue Valley Council of Governments and Jackson County Fire District No. 3. She is a member of the Central Point Rotary, a director with the Crater Foundation, founder of the public non-profit Direct Involvement Recreation Teaching, and executive director for the Central Point Chamber of Commerce.



**Treasurer**  
Steve Callaway  
Mayor, Hillsboro

Mayor Callaway was elected to the Hillsboro City Council in November 2010, re-elected in 2014, and became mayor in 2016. His previous experience includes the city's budget committee, the Hillsboro 2020 Vision Implementation Committee and the city's planning commission. Additional community involvement includes the Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve Board, the Hillsboro Library Foundation, the Boys and Girls Club and the Hillsboro Schools Foundation. Mayor Callaway recently retired from his position as a principal at Tobias Elementary School in Hillsboro.



**Immediate Past President**  
Timm Slater  
Councilor, North Bend

Councilor Slater was appointed to the North Bend City Council in May 1981. The next 17½ years were spent in city service, including 12 as mayor. He was re-elected to city council in November 2012. He has served as a Coos Bay North Bend Water Board member, founder of the Coos County Mayors Forum, Coos County Planning Commission Chair, and Chair of the Bay Area Enterprise Zone. He is a member of Rotary, served on the Bay Area Chamber and Coos County Library Boards, and completed a 32-year Army Reserve career.



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## DIRECTORS



**Arlene Burns**  
Mayor, Mosier

Mayor Burns is in her fourth term in Mosier, where she has helped the community navigate three major fires and helped lead the city's major infrastructure upgrades. Elected mayor in 2014, she also served as Council President from 2012-14. Mayor Burns is a member of the Safe Energy Leadership Alliance and the Climate Mayors network, and serves as a representative on Travel Oregon's Gorge Tourism Studio Steering Committee.

In 2019, the governor appointed her co-convenor of the Oregon Electric Vehicle Collaborative. Prior to public service, Mayor Burns was a world-class expedition kayaker, exploring remote waterways and leading commercial expeditions in the Himalayas, South America, and the former Soviet Union.



**Scott Derickson**  
City Manager,  
Woodburn

Mr. Derickson has more than 22 years of local and regional government experience in communities across Oregon. A graduate of the University of Oregon's Planning, Public Policy & Management's undergraduate and graduate programs, and an ICMA Credentialed Manager for 10 years, he has been recognized for his emphasis on integrity, community leadership and managerial accomplishments, particularly during times of crisis.



**Drew Farmer**  
Councilor, Coos Bay

Councilor Farmer has been a city councilor in Coos Bay since 2016. Prior to his time on the council, he served as the treasurer for the city's library board. He is the director of an employment-based non-profit for persons with disabilities and serves on multiple work groups in Coos County pertaining to homelessness and housing. He served in the United States Navy from 2005 to 2009, and holds a bachelor's degree in sociology.



**Peter Hall**  
Councilor, Haines

Peter Hall was born and raised in the Seattle area and worked as a chef at various resorts in the west, where he cooked for CEOs, celebrities and politicians as well as for travelers from around the world. In retirement, he moved to northeast Oregon because of its low housing costs and access to year-round mountain activities. He first got involved in his rural community of Haines as a member of the city's budget committee and planning commission, and was recently appointed to the city council. He also ran for the Oregon House of Representatives in 2006 and again in 2014 to give people a choice of candidates and advance the conversation about the issues facing rural communities.



**Roland Herrera**  
Councilor, Keizer

Councilor Herrera was elected to the Keizer City Council in 2014 and re-elected in 2018. After retiring from a 30-year career in public works, Herrera co-founded the Latino Action Committee and was instrumental in the formation of the LOC's first People of Color caucus. Councilor Herrera serves on the board of directors for Mana a Mano, the St. Vincent Dual Language Catholic School, and the Marion County Public Safety Coordinating Council. He was recently appointed by the governor to the Oregon Commission on Judicial Fitness and Disability.



**Beach Pace**  
Councilor, Hillsboro

In her first run for elected office, Councilor Pace was elected to the Hillsboro City Council in 2018. She currently serves as the CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of the Columbia NW and on the board of the Westside Queer Resource Center. Previously, she served at-risk youth as vice president and executive director of City Year San Jose/Silicon Valley. Councilor Pace holds a bachelor's degree from the United States Military Academy at West Point and an MPA from Northern Michigan University. She served in the U.S. Army in the Ordnance branch both domestically and overseas as a Bomb Squad Executive Officer and Commander.

*(continued on page 10)*

## 2021 LOC BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Carmen Rubio**  
Commissioner,  
Portland

Commissioner Rubio began her public service career as a policy advisor for Multnomah County Commissioner Serena Cruz, then later for Portland Mayor Tom Potter and Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish. From 2009-2019, she served as executive director of Latino Network, advocating for Portland's growing Latinx community while expanding the network's team to 140 individuals who focused on elevating youth and families to achieve their potential and define their futures.

Commissioner Rubio was born and raised in Hillsboro, the granddaughter of immigrants who came to this country as migrant workers. She is the first in her family to graduate from college and is the first Latina on the Portland City Council.



**Dean Sawyer**  
Mayor, Newport

Mayor Sawyer served with the Newport Police Department for 30 years in supervisory and command positions. In retirement, he worked for 10 years as the emergency management planner for the Siletz Tribe. In 2010, Mayor Sawyer ran for city council, and served as a council member until 2018, when he was elected mayor. He has lived in Newport for 42 years and is married to Marie and has two grown sons.



**Byron Smith**  
City Manager,  
Hermiston

Byron Smith has served the city of Hermiston since 2014. Previously, he served as city manager in Fort Madison, Iowa for five years, as assistant city manager/city planner in Poplar Bluff, Missouri for four years, and with the League of Arizona Cities and Towns from 1998 to 2004. Mr. Smith holds a master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas, a bachelor's degree in business management from Brigham Young University, and an associate's degree in business administration from Eastern Arizona College.



**Kevin Stine**  
Councilor, Medford

Elected in 2014, Councilor Stine currently serves as the Medford City Council President. He served for nine years in the U.S. Navy, completing three submarine deployments. Councilor Stine is currently a member of the Navy Reserves and serves on the Navy Funeral Honors Team. He is also substitute teacher for the Medford School District. Previously, he worked at the non-profit ACCESS, working to house homeless veterans, and at Rogue Community College, where he assisted veterans with utilizing their education benefits. He has a bachelor's degree in political science from Southern Oregon University.



**Steve Uffelman**  
Councilor, Prineville

Councilor Uffelman has served on the Prineville City Council for more than 28 years since he was first appointed in 1985, including five terms as mayor. He has also served on the Oregon Mayors Association Board of Directors. Mayor Uffelman was born and raised in Oregon and a graduate of Oregon State University. He is a retired pharmacist and real estate broker.



**John Walsh**  
City Administrator,  
St. Helens

Mr. Walsh has overseen the day-to-day operations for the city of St. Helens since 2012. He previously served as the city manager of Myrtle Point, Ore. and held management roles in the cities of Centralia and Pacific, Wa. With more than 20 years of public sector experience, Mr. Walsh has led many large and complex capital improvement projects, including infrastructure and brownfield redevelopment projects, as well as several community and economic development initiatives. He is a credentialed city manager through the International City/County Management Association (ICMA-CM) and has earned recognition for excellence and good governance from the LOC. ■

# LOC Board of Directors Meets Virtually in December

The LOC Board of Directors met on December 4, 2020 via Zoom and accomplished the following:

- Appointed Kathryn Greiner to the CIS Board of Directors;
- Directed the LOC Executive Committee to meet and develop recommended goals and performance metrics for the executive director to achieve during calendar year 2021 following a positive performance evaluation;
- Supported proposed amendments to the LOC Constitution and Bylaws as proposed by the Bylaws Committee and directed LOC staff to advise the membership of the proposed changes during calendar year 2021;
- Adopted the LOC Equity Lens Framework as approved by the Equity Lens Subcommittee and edited by the Equity and Inclusion Committee;
- Appointed Independence Mayor John McArdle as the LOC Foundation President and reappointed the following members: Keizer Mayor Cathy Clark, Forest Grove Mayor Peter Truax and King City Mayor Ken Gibson; and
- Approved a 1.82 % increase in membership dues for fiscal year 2021-2022.

For more information on the LOC Board of Directors please visit [www.orecities.org](http://www.orecities.org).

## 2021 LOC Board of Directors Meetings

- Cancelled, new date to be determined  
~~February 17 – 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.~~  
Virtual, via Zoom
- April 2 – 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Seaside
- June 18 – 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Sherwood
- October 20 – 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Riverhouse on the Deschutes, Bend
- December 10 – 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Local Government Center, Salem



## What do Oregonians do when their neighbor needs a little help?

They help. If members of your community need help with their energy bill, they can call PGE at **503-228-6322** or visit [portlandgeneral.com/covid19](http://portlandgeneral.com/covid19).



An Oregon kind of energy.<sup>SM</sup>



## LOC Welcomes Christy Wurster as Operations & Member Engagement Director



The LOC has hired Christy Wurster, most recently the city manager for the city of Silverton, as its new operations and member engagement director. She started January 4.

“We are extremely excited to bring Christy’s talent and experience to our team,” said LOC Executive Director Mike Cully. “Her extensive knowledge of city operations, proven leadership skills and connections with city leaders across the state will elevate

our operations and service delivery to the next level. This is a big win for the LOC and the 241 cities we represent.”

Wurster’s responsibilities include management of the LOC’s Members Services team; and oversight of daily operations, including facilities management, information technology, training programs and conferences. In addition, she will serve as the organization’s diversity coordinator.

“I’m looking forward to joining the professionals at the LOC and helping facilitate the solutions our member cities and affiliate organizations need to support and improve their communities,” Wurster said. “I’m excited to serve all of the cities we represent through enhanced outreach, education and assistance programs.”

Wurster began her local government career in 1995 with the city of Dallas, Ore., where she eventually served as assistant public works director/administration. She has also served with the cities of Dayton, Salem, Creswell, Fairview, and Sweet Home. Wurster holds a master’s in public administration from Portland State University, and a bachelor’s degree from Western Baptist College (now Corban University). She is a past president of the Oregon City/County Management Association and currently serves as president of the Silverton Rotary Club. Wurster served as a member of the LOC Board of Directors from 2015-2018.



## LOC is Hosting a One-Day Emergency Preparedness Spring Symposium

**May 7, 2021**

Registration Opens February 22

Stay tuned for more  
details at  
[www.orcities.org](http://www.orcities.org)





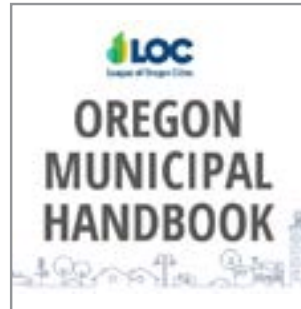
## SMALL CITIES

### LOC Small Cities Meetings to Resume in Second Quarter

Due to uncertainties related to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, the LOC has begun virtual introductory meetings in the first quarter of 2021. The regular programming for the small cities meetings is anticipated to begin in the second quarter of 2021.

Cities are invited to contact LOC staff with questions or feedback by emailing Christy Wurster, Operations and Member Engagement Director: [cwurster@orcities.org](mailto:cwurster@orcities.org)

## Chapters Added to the Oregon Municipal Handbook



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

LOC staff is in the process of performing a comprehensive review and update of the *Oregon Municipal Handbook*, originally created in 1980. As chapters are revised and new chapters are created, they will be added to the webpage.

Chapters added this quarter include:

- [Municipal Employees & Personnel Matters](#)
- [Municipal Courts](#)
- [Purchasing and Public Contracts](#)

[See all Handbook chapters](#)

# What if?

What if we showed you how we're solving Oregon's greatest challenges by transforming intangible ideas into intelligent solutions for a more connected, sustainable world?

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# Budget Now to Attend the 96<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Bend

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

## For Your City's Budget

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

Costs per attendee	If registered July 12 - August 27	If registered after August 27
LOC Member full registration	\$375	\$425
LOC Business Partners/Associates	\$375	\$425
Non-Member Government	\$475	\$525
Non-Member Corporate	\$1,000	\$1,050
Guest	\$150	\$150
Awards Dinner	\$50	\$50
Special Tours/Workshops/ Seminars (includes OMA, OCCMA, Councilors Workshop and Tours)	\$50-150	\$50-150

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

## For Your City's Calendar

### April/May

The LOC Conference Planning Committee will be developing session ideas for the conference program (submit your ideas by contacting Lisa Trevino at [ltrevino@orcities.org](mailto:ltrevino@orcities.org))

### May

Award Nominations Open – watch the *LOC Bulletin* every Friday for information on how to submit an entry for one of these prestigious awards.

### July

Registration, hotel reservations and conference scholarships open July 12. Watch the *LOC Bulletin* for more information on how to register, reserve your hotel room and apply for financial assistance for registration fees as well as for other conference details.

### October

See you at the conference!



## MAKE EVERY DROP COUNT WITH CASH INCENTIVES

Uncover hidden opportunities to generate clean, renewable energy in municipal water delivery systems. Installing in-conduit hydropower can offset electricity costs and reduce pressure, making the most out of your water resource. To make these projects more affordable, tap into Energy Trust of Oregon's cash incentives.



For more information, visit [www.energytrust.org/hydropower](http://www.energytrust.org/hydropower).

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# Apply Now to Serve on the 2021 LOC Conference Planning Committee

Are you interested in helping shape the content of the LOC's 96<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, scheduled for next October in Bend? If so, then we invite you to apply to serve on the 2021 LOC Conference Planning Committee.

The committee will be comprised of 13 individuals, appointed by the LOC Board of Directors—one from each of the LOC's 12 [Small Cities Regions](#), and the 13th representing the host city. Beginning in May, the committee will hold monthly meetings via conference call to review content and other programming components for the upcoming conference.

To apply, complete this [online application](#), or this [fill-able application](#), and email it to [ltrevino@orcities.org](mailto:ltrevino@orcities.org). Applications are due by **March 19**.



## Annual Conference Session Ideas & Speakers Wanted!

The LOC is now accepting innovative, cutting-edge ideas for breakout sessions for its 96<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, October 21-23 in Bend.

Breakout sessions:

- Are 60-90 minutes long;
- Must be educational and non-commercial;
- Provide ideas, experiences and/or resources attendees can take back to their communities; and
- Must be submitted on [this electronic form](#) to be considered.

The deadline to submit an idea is **5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 16, 2021**.

**Questions? Contact:** Lisa Trevino, Program Manager – [ltrevino@orcities.org](mailto:ltrevino@orcities.org)

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## Keeping Oregon's communities connected

Public servants need high-performance solutions that can help keep communities safe and running smoothly. Your constituents count on you, and you can count on us for:

- ✓ **Reliable coverage**  
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## Q: What is LOC's Member Inquiry Program & How Does it Help City Officials?

**A:** The League of Oregon Cities (LOC) has a long-standing Member Inquiry Program designed to assist elected and appointed city officials in a variety of manners. Have a question about what the Oregon Revised Statutes require of you to hold a public meeting? The Member Inquiry Program can help you find the answer. Does your city want to adopt a business license ordinance but doesn't know where to start? If you use the Member Inquiry program, you'll be provided examples of business license ordinances adopted in other Oregon cities.

### 1. What is the Member Inquiry Program?

The LOC's Member Inquiry Program is a resource which provides information and technical assistance to locally elected city officials and city staff who have questions about their duties, city operations, city governance, and various state statutes. This service is not a substitute for seeking legal advice, however LOC staff will assist members in answering questions about best and common practices, statutory requirements (such as public meetings law, local government budget law, election law, etc.) and how to find other LOC, state, or federal resources to assist them in overcoming challenges and meeting their community's goals. The general rule of thumb is, if you have a question or don't know where to start in resolving an issue you're experiencing, contact the Member Inquiry Program. If LOC staff can't provide the assistance you need, chances are staff will know someone who can provide the needed assistance.

### 2. How Much Does It Cost to Utilize the Member Inquiry Program?

Nothing! The LOC Member Inquiry Program is a resource that is included with your city's annual dues payment. And there is no limitation on the amount of time or number of instances in which you can use the program. Whether you never use the program, or you are someone who uses the program multiples times a week, the cost is free (aside from your city's annual dues payment of course).

### 3. What Types of Issues Does the Member Inquiry Program Help Resolve?

The types of issues that can be handled by the Member Inquiry Program is almost infinite in nature. The week this article was written saw LOC staff provide the following assistance within the program:

- Provided a city with council rules of procedures adopted by 10 other cities in Oregon to use as a starting point in their city's desire to create its own locally adopted rules of procedure;
- Directed a city to the attorney general's opinion and guidance on the implications of the Oregon Public Meetings Law as it relates to a council team building retreat;
- Helped a city find the correct section of the Oregon Secretary of State's Retention Schedule for certain records the city wanted to destroy;
- Provided a new mayor with examples of best practices on how to run an efficient and effective council meeting;
- Identified the cities in Oregon that have residency requirements for city managers in their charters so a city could determine if its residency requirement was in line with other cities of its size and in its region;
- Helped a city official locate and understand the reasons a city council can hold an executive session; and
- Provided a city official with a copy of an Oregon court case they needed.

### 4. Which LOC Staff Provides Support to the Member Inquiry Program?

Most of the time, the LOC staff supporting the Member Inquiry Program are the organization's three attorneys: LOC General Counsel Patty Mulvihill; Assistant General Counsel Jayme Hafner; and Honors Attorney Colton Totland. That said, other LOC staff are issue experts in their own right and are also able to provide support and assistance to the Member Inquiry Program. For example, LOC's lobbyists regularly help members on matters that fall within their issue portfolios.

### 5. How Can I Access the Member Inquiry Program?

There are two ways to access the program:

- Email your inquiry to [loc@orcities.org](mailto:loc@orcities.org); or
- Call the LOC at (503) 588-6550.

Regular users of the program often email one of the three LOC attorneys directly, and a few will even call those attorneys on their direct LOC office line or cell phone.

## 6. How Long Does It Take to Get a Response from LOC Staff When Using the Member Inquiry Program?

LOC staff prides itself on acknowledging an email submitted to the Member Inquiry Program within 24 hours of its receipt (absent the request coming in over the weekend or during an LOC holiday). Now, that doesn't mean your inquiry can be fully answered or resolved within 24 hours, but LOC staff will attempt to acknowledge your inquiry and identify how quickly you need an answer. Unless the inquiry is complicated, it is reasonable to expect that you will have an answer to your inquiry within two business days.

## 7. How Many Inquiries Does the Member Inquiry Program Receive Each Year?

With only one day left in calendar year 2020, LOC staff had responded to 277 inquiries within the Member Inquiry Program. In calendar year 2019, LOC staff responded to 350 inquiries through the program.

## 8. What Are the Most Common Topics Being Handled by the Member Inquiry Program?

The top 10 most common topics being handled by the program include:

- Public Meetings;
- Ethics;
- City Council Rules and Roles;
- City Charters;
- Public Records;
- Issues Related to Public Employees;
- Sample City Ordinances;
- Public Contracts;
- Marijuana; and
- Elections Laws and Processes

## 9. What is the Longest Amount of Time Spent by LOC Staff on a Question Posed to the Member Inquiry Program?

The most amount of time spent by a LOC staff person on a member inquiry in the last four years was a little more than three hours. That said, on average, LOC staff typically spend approximately 25-30 minutes on each inquiry.

## 10. Who Utilizes the Member Inquiry Program the Most?

In terms of regions, the South Willamette Valley, South Coast, Central Oregon, South-Central Oregon and Northeastern Oregon are the biggest users of the Member Inquiry Program. With regards to the person asking the question, 38% of all inquiries come from elected officials. The next most common inquirers are city recorders, city managers and city attorneys. ■

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# Municipal Fundamentals

## Do You Know What Your Charter Says?

A city's charter acts as a local constitution. It is the document that dictates and defines the powers and functions of the city itself, including the roles and authorities possessed by the mayor, council president, council, city manager/administrator, recorder, city attorney, municipal judge, and potentially other city officials. If you're a city official in Oregon, you should ask yourself: Do I know what my city's charter says?

While city charters across Oregon often have similar provisions, each city decides how it will be designed and the roles given to its various officials, which means your city charter may look differently than the charter of your neighboring cities. And while differences between charters exist, most will provide you the answers to the following common questions:

1. What powers does my city possess?
2. How are the powers between the various city officials distributed in my city?
3. How many people serve on my city council and what is the duration of their terms?
4. Does my city have term limits for its elected officials?
5. What happens if an elected official resigns their position in my city?
6. What authority does my city council have over city staff – can it hire or fire all city staff or only certain identified staff members?
7. How many meetings a year does my city council have to hold?
8. What is the Mayor's role in my city?
9. What is the purpose of the Council President in my city?
10. What are the job duties assigned to the City Manager/Administrator?
11. How are ordinances and resolutions adopted in my city?
12. How does my city create committees and decide who gets to serve on them?

13. How does my city decide how much debt it is allowed to incur?
14. Does my city have any restrictions on when or how it can annex other properties?
15. How can my city amend its charter?

All of the above questions, and more, can typically be answered simply by reading your city's charter. It should be the first document you review when you have any question related to how your city operates or the processes it needs to follow.

Charters are living documents, meaning they can be regularly evaluated and, if needed, updated. Some cities review their charters on a regular schedule; for example, the city of Portland convenes its Charter Review Commission every 10 years to review and recommend amendments to its charter.

Other cities review their charter when there is a specific issue they are trying to address. For example, the Cove City Council recently underwent an extensive review of its charter which included making amendments to comply with state law, providing details on how resolutions are adopted, and requiring elected officials to take an oath of office.

Sometimes, the citizens themselves can take action to require an amendment of the charter. In 2019, the citizens of North Bend, unhappy with a public safety fee, put forth two measures to amend their charter. The measures, which passed, reduced the public safety fee from \$30 to \$15, and restrained the North Bend City Council by requiring any future fees to first be approved by the voters.

If you have never read your city charter, LOC staff strongly encourages you to do so. And, if you are someone who's read your charter, LOC staff further recommends it be a document you review every six months or so to ensure the details contained therein remain fresh in your mind. Finally, if your council believes it's time to undertake a comprehensive review of your charter, LOC staff can provide you with examples of how other cities in Oregon have undertaken reviews and amendments of their charters.



## Elected Essentials Video Trainings Available On-Demand

The LOC's Elected Essentials program provides newly elected officials, experienced elected officials, and city staff with free training on the basics of municipal governance in Oregon. Held live in December 2020, the recordings, including live Q & A sessions, are available to watch anytime at [www.orcities.org](http://www.orcities.org) or LOC's [YouTube channel](#).

### Topics include:

#### **Roles & Authority of a High Functioning Council**

Learn about the council/manager form of government, the roles and responsibilities of council and city managers, and how responsibilities are shared between council and their administrator.

#### **Public Meetings in Oregon - Legal Requirements & Best Practices**

Learn what constitutes a meeting for purposes of the state's Public Meeting Law, the legal requirements associated with public meetings, serial meetings, executive sessions, and free speech implications of public participation during meetings.

#### **Ethics Awareness - Understanding Your Legal Obligations**

Learn about how elected officials are prohibited from using their office to their benefit, conflicts of interest, gifts, nepotism, outside employment parameters, restrictions on subsequent employment once they no longer work for or represent a city, and statements of economic interest.

#### **Public Records in Oregon - What City Officials Need to Know**

Learn the purpose behind Public Records Law, what is considered and is not considered public record, the state's retention schedule, requirements related to the inspection and disclosure of public records, and legal challenges related to the denial of access to public records.

#### **Legal Powers & Impediments Affecting Elected Officials**

Learn the common mistakes elected officials make that result in them being sued, identify ways that cities can utilize CIS to assist them in employment law matters, and identify ways to keep your city safe from legal exposures.

## FAQs Available in the LOC Reference Library

The LOC offers a wide variety of resources to help municipal officials, both elected and appointed, support their cities effectively and legally. One type of resource available is FAQs, short, easy-to-read documents that answer questions posed to the LOC by member cities.

Find FAQs on the following topics in the [LOC's Online Resource Library](#):

- Emergency Procurement
- Single-Use Plastic Bags and Straws
- Small Wireless Facilities
- Vacating the Public Right of Way
- Oregon's Rent Control Laws
- Public Improvement Least Cost Contracting Requirements
- Public Records Fees
- Veteran's Preference
- Urban Renewal
- Municipal Audits
- Surplus Property
- Oaths of Office
- Notice Requirements for Public Meetings

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# ALJETS

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# Statements of Economic Interest (SEI): What You Need to Know

State law requires certain public officials to complete and electronically file a Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) with the Oregon Government Ethics Commission (OGE). Whether you are a veteran of the SEI filing process or a first-time filer, this article will provide you with the basics.

## What is a Statement of Economic Interest?

The SEI is an annual financial disclosure form that certain public officials, as specified in ORS 244.050, are required to file with the commission.

## Who Must File?

Not all city officials must file an SEI. The filing requirement generally applies to those elected city officials, municipal judges, city recorders, and appointed members of city planning, city zoning or city development commissions, and the chief executive officer of a city or another person who performs the duties of a manager or principal administrator. The SEI filing requirement applies to individuals who hold one of those offices on April 15 of each filing year.

## When is the Due Date?

**April 15 of each filing year.** For the filing year of 2020, a complete and electronically signed SEI must be submitted via the commission's electronic filing system no later than **April 15, 2021**. Failure to complete and file an annual SEI by the April 15 deadline may subject a city official to an automatic civil penalty of \$10 for each of the first 14 days the SEI is late and \$50 for each day thereafter, up to a maximum penalty of \$5,000. The OGE's electronic filing system is available 24/7.

## What Disclosures are Required?

SEIs disclose information regarding the previous calendar year. Therefore, city officials will disclose economic interests they held between January 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020. Note: Even if you did not hold your position during 2020 disclosure period, if you hold the position as of April 15, 2021, you will have a filing requirement.

ORS 244.060, 244.070 and 244.090 describe the required content of the filing. The electronic filing system has a helpful [Instructional Handbook](#) that you can use while completing

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the filing. You will be asked to provide information about the following:

- Businesses with which a city official or members of their household are associated;
- Names of businesses under which a city official or members of their household did business;
- Certain sources of income to a city official and members of their household (note that only sources, not amounts, of income must be disclosed);
- Certain holders of debt owed by a city official or members of their household (excluding credit card debt and mortgages);
- Certain investments in real property located in a city official's city (excluding the city official's primary residence);
- Payments made on behalf of a city official for certain office-related events;
- Honoraria received by a city official or member of their household;
- The name of any compensated lobbyist who, during the preceding calendar year was associated with a business with which the public official or candidate or a member of the household of the public official or candidate was also associated; and
- Office-related events.

### Where are SEIs Filed?

The SEI is required to be filed via the OGE's electronic filing system. The commission's electronic filing system is available 24/7.

### How to Register as a User in the Electronic Filing System (EFS)

OGE staff has identified the positions held by public officials who must file the SEI form and has them listed by jurisdiction. Each jurisdiction (city, county, executive department, board or commission, etc.) has a person who acts as the commission's point of contact for that jurisdiction [OAR 199-020-0005(1)].

The **contact person** for each jurisdiction has an important role

in the annual filing of the SEI forms. It is through the contact person that the commission obtains the current name and email address of each public official who is required to file. It is imperative you provide a valid email address to this contact person; this should be an email account you monitor. When there is a change, through resignation, appointment or election, in who holds a position, the contact person should update the jurisdiction's list in the EFS.

Once the contact person has entered you into the electronic filing system, you will receive an email from the commission that contains a link to the filing system. You then create your personal profile. Once you have successfully registered, you will be able to file your report during the open filing period each calendar year.

### Where Can I Find More Information About the SEI?

The OGE's website contains training tutorials and handouts on the use of the electronic filing system. Live online training sessions are scheduled each filing year to assist filers. You can visit the OGE's website at [www.oregon.gov/ogec/public-records/Pages/SEIS.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ogec/public-records/Pages/SEIS.aspx) or call directly at (503) 378-5105.

*Because of the complexities of SEI disclosures, this article is necessarily general and is not intended to provide legal advice. City officials are advised to please consult with their city attorney, in accordance with their council rules for doing so, with private legal counsel or with the OGE to ensure full compliance with SEI disclosure requirements.*

## Supreme Court Midterm Summary Available

The State and Local Legal Center has published [Supreme Court Midterm Summary Available](http://www.stateandlocal.org/Supreme-Court-Midterm-Summary-Available), an article covering current cases that could impact cities and local governments. More information is also available on their website, [www.stateandlocal.org](http://www.stateandlocal.org).

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# Tips for Participating in Virtual Meetings

With the COVID-19 pandemic, more and more meetings, including city council meetings, are conducted virtually. If you find yourself participating in a virtual meeting, LOC recommends you consider utilizing and following the following five tips.

## 1 Prepare to Use the Technology/Platform Hosting the Meeting

If you have never used the virtual platform used for the meeting, you should test the platform out well in advance of the meeting. This will allow you an opportunity to familiarize yourself with how the platform operates. Also, even if you feel comfortable using the platform, you should still try and arrive at the meeting early in case you suddenly experience some technical glitches.

## 2 Check Lighting and Sound Quality

Most people probably don't have a professional recording studio in their own homes, so achieving a professional lighting and sound standard is no doubt unattainable. That said, you should make sure that the lighting you do have allows those attending the meeting to see you clearly. You also want to make sure that your sound quality allows those attending the meeting to clearly hear you, while also avoiding any distracting background noises like barking dogs and laundry machines.

## 3 Mute is Your Friend

Many virtual platforms will allow the host of the meeting to automatically mute anyone who joins the meeting. By using this feature, your meeting is less likely to be

interrupted by unintentional, or maybe even intentional, background noises from attendees. It is a good idea for the meeting chair to ask everyone who has not been recognized by the chair to remain continuously muted (and the chair should ask those that have been recognized to unmute themselves before they speak).

## 4 Remain Professional

We are always much more casual at home than we are at work or in an in-person meeting. But, if you are participating in official city business, like a city council meeting, we recommend that you remain professional in your dress and your words. If you wouldn't attend an in-person city council meeting in only your pajamas, you probably shouldn't attend a virtual meeting wearing only your pajamas either. Again, if you wouldn't swear or use derogatory words during an in-person city council meeting, one shouldn't do so in a virtual city council meeting either.

## 5 Stay Engaged

It's a lot easier to get distracted in virtual meetings than it is during an in-person meeting. You're attending the meeting from your computer, which arguably makes it easier to take a peek at your email or do some quick online shopping. Ignore the temptation to multitask during your virtual meetings, the business that is being conducted is still important city business and it demands you full attention.



## Municipal Information at Your Fingertips

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



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# Communities Adjust Budgeting Strategies Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

By Melody Finnemore

The ongoing Coronavirus pandemic looms large as cities statewide are engaging in their budgeting process for the next fiscal period.

**A**s the COVID-19 pandemic reached Oregon, many cities already were in the process of implementing their budgets for 2020 and beyond. Then the statewide stay-at-home order forced closures of both public and private venues that draw tourists, house community events and generate revenue.

Florence had to shutter its Events Center, a major source of revenue for the coastal town. “It’s made to be a place for gathering and obviously that came to a close right away,” said City Manager Erin Reynolds.

With the cancellation of Klamath Falls’ summer Downtown Third Thursday event and annual Klamath Cruse, both of which attract people from outside the area to stay in local hotels, the city saw a 25% reduction in transient room tax (TRT) receipts compared to what it typically receives in a normal year.

Meanwhile, Woodburn’s robust parks and recreation program took a direct hit, and all staff members were laid off. People who worked in the city’s library also lost their jobs, with nearly 30 full-time equivalent positions cut due to the pandemic.

Dayton also saw a decrease in its TRT revenue as attractions such as The Vintages Trailer Resort and local wine tasting rooms lost visitors. Utility payments fell because residents lost their jobs and had a long wait for unemployment checks, and the city suspended utility late fees and shutoffs. Small businesses trying to stay afloat with curbside service, deliveries and catering services scrambled for guidance as state regulations changed in response to infection rates.

“I’ve gotten some really heart-wrenching calls and, honestly, sometimes I just cry with them,” said Mayor Beth Wytoski.



The Dallas Aquatic Center plays a major role in the city's revenue stream. City Manager Brian Latta said the city had to lay off all 40 of the center's employees and its revenue was down 20% just from its closure.

### Financial Ripple Effect

Reynolds and Megan Messmer, Florence's project manager and public information officer, said their city incurred additional expenses last year to address health and safety, including installing sanitation stations throughout the community and purchasing technology to equip city staff to work remotely.

In order to keep infrastructure projects moving, Florence's public works crew has had staggered schedules. While not as efficient as normal operations, it has helped keep them safe and employed while also meeting the needs of local business owners, Reynolds said, adding the city redirected economic development funds to support businesses.

While cities can recoup some costs from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the CARES Act, Florence saw significant revenue losses forced by the Events Center closure and a reduction in revenue from wastewater, water and other utilities.

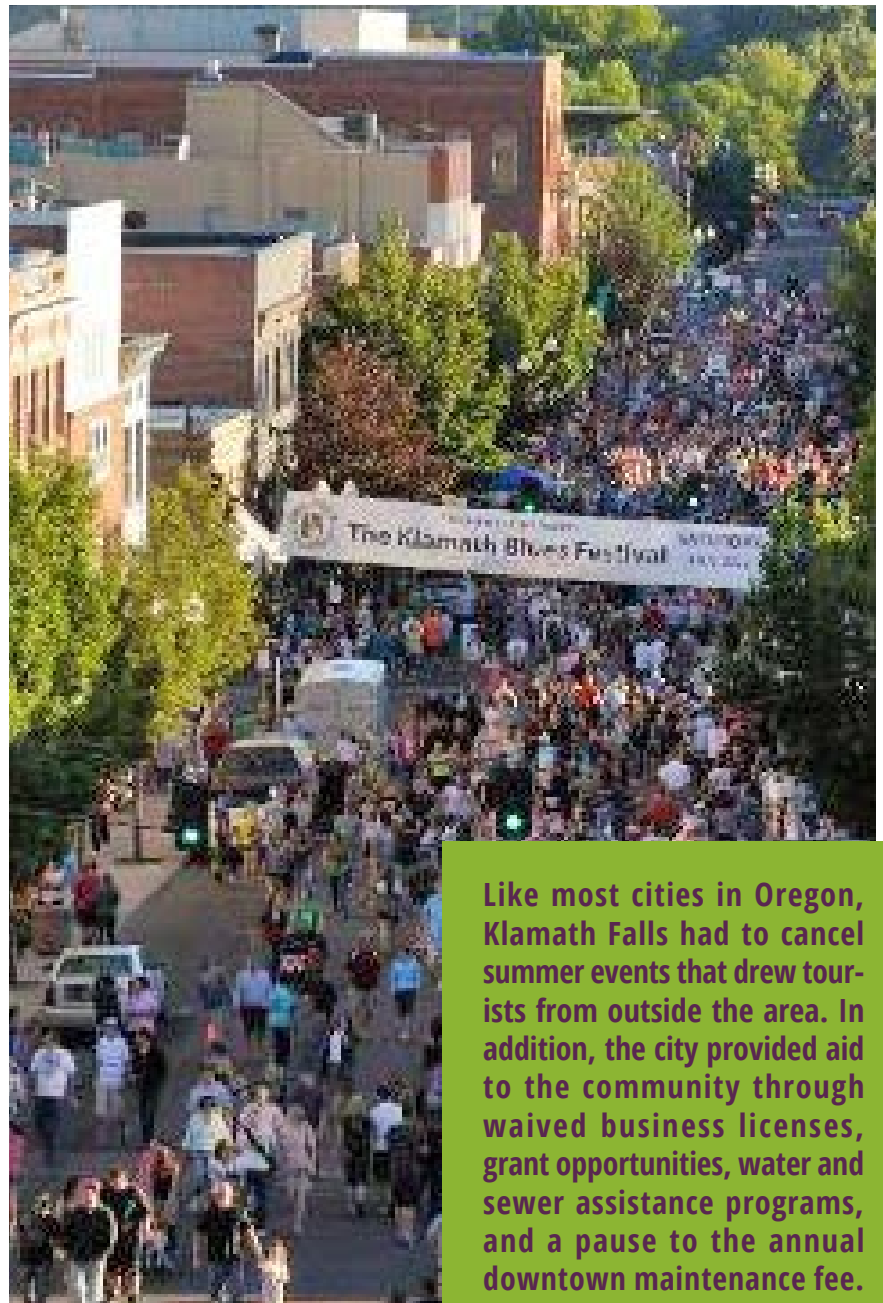
"Most people aren't typically in their homes all day and now there is greater demand on utilities," Messmer said. "Utility relief requests are difficult when the city has budget shortfalls in other areas."

Scott Derickson, Woodburn's city administrator, said that in addition to laying off several staff members, the city has cut more than \$1 million in general fund expenses. The Woodburn Aquatics Center, typically a large revenue generator, also is financially impacted by COVID-related restrictions.

Some expenses directly related to the pandemic include the cost of providing more than 60,000 face coverings for the community, and launching a culturally relevant education campaign to inform Woodburn's residents about how to slow the spread of the coronavirus and, more recently, how to obtain the vaccines.

Derickson noted that the city had to cancel last year's annual Fiesta Mexicana and several of the companies that sponsored it have gone out of business. "We will

*(continued on page 26)*



Like most cities in Oregon, Klamath Falls had to cancel summer events that drew tourists from outside the area. In addition, the city provided aid to the community through waived business licenses, grant opportunities, water and sewer assistance programs, and a pause to the annual downtown maintenance fee.



**The city of Central Point hosts Movies in the Park during the summer, so in 2020 they pivoted to Drive-In Movies to keep families safe while still having fun. The city also turned their annual Halloween Trunk or Treat celebration into a drive-thru event due to COVID restrictions.**

have to rebuild that event over time and it depends on vaccines and when people can gather again,” he said, adding Woodburn also is developing a post-COVID start-up plan for its parks and recreation department.

As this year unfolds, Woodburn will watch the TRT impacts related to its outlet mall, which drives about \$500,000 in taxes towards the city’s budget and supports its chamber of commerce, public safety and other community services.

Similar to Woodburn, Dallas has an aquatics center that plays a major role in its revenue stream. City Manager Brian Latta said the city had to lay off all 40 of the center’s employees and its revenue was down 20% just from its closure.

While CARES Act funding helped cover the cost of personal protective equipment (PPE) and sanitation supplies, Dallas has had to close its library, eliminate a couple of positions there and hold off on filling public safety positions. It also suspended its library and utility fees and halted utility shutoff notices, which reduced revenue.

Central Point City Manager Chris Clayton said that although his city is not necessarily a tourist destination, hotel and motel tax revenue is a significant part of its two-year budget cycle. As the pandemic reached Oregon, early predictions were that the city would collect about 60% of the \$500,000 it sees in hotel and motel tax revenue in a typical fiscal year. Instead, the city lost only 30% of that revenue.

“It was interesting because one of the things that helped us recover was the fires because many people were displaced and the Red Cross started purchasing hotel rooms for them,” Clayton said. “That unique situation did help us a little bit.”

The city has seen some fluctuation in franchise fees, and its property tax and gas tax revenues were down in 2020. Central Point typically gains about \$1.3 million in gas tax revenue, which

rebounded slightly after dropping last spring and summer and, ultimately, the city saw just a \$50,000 decrease by the end of the year, he said.

Meanwhile, Nyssa City Manager Jim Maret anticipated a 20-40% drop in gas tax revenue, but it actually remained steady. He added that he underestimated the amount of alcohol consumption that would take place during the pandemic, and that alcohol and cigarette taxes did not decrease, either.

Nyssa did incur some unexpected expenses such as PPE and disinfecting equipment, along with thousands of dollars to retrofit ventilation systems in its older buildings, as required by the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division. However, the city made the most of its \$100,000 worth of COVID-relief funding as well as grants and other financial resources. Some of the COVID-relief funding helped pay first responders to lead a public education campaign.

“That was a big wage deal for us because I don’t think anybody anticipated how much would be spent on COVID-19 education for the public,” Maret said.

## Communities Adapt Amid Adversity

Dayton’s Wytoski noted that the city’s gas, liquor and marijuana taxes have remained steady throughout the pandemic. However, planning for 2021’s budget has been difficult because bids for public improvement projects have gone up due to the rising cost of materials and work slowdowns forced by quarantines.

The city was able to complete a major sewer project, is currently working on a bridge replacement and is developing pedestrian safety improvements such as new sidewalks.

“Fortunately, our engineer is an incredible rock star. He is worth his weight in gold and we have been able to progress with those projects,” she said.



Summer Matteson, councilor for Gold Beach, said city and county leaders planned to revisit their budget at the end of January to ensure they are “on target and are not going to get caught off guard in April or May.” While the city did have to spend money on PPE for first responders and technology for remote meetings, communications and other functions, it was largely reimbursed by the CARES Act.

Initially during the pandemic, Gold Beach’s transient lodging tax revenues were down, so it had to lay off staff at its visitor’s center. That revenue source returned in the summer as more people flocked to Gold Beach to get away from larger cities. In addition to revived tourism, the city was able to help support its restaurants and other small businesses through a gift card program.

Klamath Falls Councilor Todd Andres said his city provided aid to the community through waived business licenses, grant opportunities, water and sewer assistance programs, and a pause to the annual downtown maintenance fee. Although the city was financially in a position to do these programs, the loss of revenue was unbudgeted.

“With the state providing COVID-19 financial assistance this will be mostly a cash flow issue we are able to withstand,” he said. “If continued reduction in city revenue occurs, we will have some tough decisions ahead of us.”

Andres said Klamath Falls is fortunate in that its property values, its largest source of general city revenues, continue to hold strong. If there is a negative impact to property values, he said, it will most likely have an impact in mid-2022, allowing the city time to adjust.

“We continue to watch both our transient room and gas tax revenue projections. This is where we may see an immediate impact. We are hopeful, as we learn more about COVID-19 and the distribution of a vaccine, travel will return to pre-pandemic numbers,” Andres said.

Clayton said Central Point also is developing its 2021-2023 budget with the vaccine in mind and is hoping to recover more of its hotel and motel tax this year. That revenue is dedicated to tourism promotion and events such as the Oregon Cheese Festival, Wild Rogue Pro Rodeo and Fourth of July celebration. Central Point’s leaders do anticipate a recovery this year,

but will hold off on event spending until they are sure the recovery is underway.

“We’ve had a solid financial position with a healthy reserve so we’re not too concerned, and we didn’t have to reduce staffing or service levels,” he said. “Commercial development has remained particularly strong during the pandemic. Our hope is that this is just kind of a blip on the radar and by late 2021 and early 2022 we’ll be back to where we were.”

Maret noted that Nyssa has never had a large budget and spending will continue to be tight amid uncertainty regarding how much, if any, funding the city will receive from the state and gas, cigarette and liquor taxes.

“I will continue to watch those and make sure we’re spending only what we need to spend, so we’re talking with our departments about what they need and what they want,” he said, adding he also will continue to search for additional relief funding, grants and other resources. “There’s a lot of money out there as long as you look for it and continue to do the best you can with it.”

Latta said Dallas closed its city hall and other public buildings, and he looks forward to re-opening them in the coming months. “We’ve been pretty cautious with remaining open to the public. Moving forward we expect to open up more and we’re going to start expanding those operations a bit so we can get back to normal.”

## Unexpected Silver Linings

Unlike other cities, Sisters is not a full-service city so services such as its fire department and library are funded separately. Its property taxes, gas tax and other revenue sources are pretty consistent each year, and its capital replacement accounts and reserves position them well to weather emergencies, said City Manager Cory Misely.

Still, as city leaders were working on their budget last March, they adjusted it with the expectation that TRT revenues, a large component of its general fund, would decrease. They also were unsure about what travel restrictions were forthcoming, so they expected reduced revenues from popular events such as Sisters’ Outdoor Quilt Show, rodeo and folk festival.

*(continued on page 28)*



**While the city of Sisters had to cancel popular events including the Outdoor Quilt Show, rodeo and folk festival, tourism remained steady as visitors were escaping bigger cities and enjoying the outdoors.**

"None of those occurred, but thankfully, and because of safety measures, we did still have quite a bit of a tourism season," Misely said. "We saw a lot of people coming into town to get out of the bigger cities and get outdoors. They weren't on airplanes so they were traveling more within the state and regionally."

In addition to serving as a councilor for Gold Beach, Matteson is the economic development coordinator for Curry County and said the relationship between the region's communities has grown stronger during the pandemic.

"COVID has been a blessing for us in a lot of ways," she said. "We haven't really been forced to work together outside of the Chetco Bar Fire. It's helped us really come together and collaborate on ideas."

In Florence, Reynolds said the experience has given her and Messmer a chance to educate the public that coastal cities like theirs share a lot of similarities as well as many differences. "We've all had great opportunities to educate our communities about the roles of government during this process and we're still in the process," she said.

Maret noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has provided an opportunity to look at this time in history compared to previous health emergencies, and think of innovative ways to move forward.

"Are we ever going to go back to normal again? I don't know, but you can't let the fear of disease run your life and we need to strive to keep some normalcy within the community during this time," he said.

To that end, Nyssa held its annual Thunderegg Days & Festival and Holiday Nite Lite Parade, albeit with limitations, and its annual fundraiser to provide families with food and gifts for Christmas. The 2020 event raised \$4,000 that helped 14 families.



**Striving to maintain some normalcy in Nyssa, the city held its annual Holiday Nite Lite Parade with safety precautions and limitations in place.**

"You have to be able to keep folks in the loop and help them understand that you care about them and we're all in this together," Maret said. ■

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

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# Budgeting Basics

## A look at the budget process, common elements and current law

A city's adopted budget is one of the most important and informative documents city officials will use. In simple terms, the city's budget is a financial plan that is prepared for one fiscal year or a two-year (biennial) cycle. Cities in Oregon operate within a fiscal year that begins July 1 and concludes the following June 30, or some cities will use a biennial budget, which covers a 24-month period beginning July 1 of the first fiscal year and ending on June 30 of the second fiscal year.

The adopted budget is a legal document that establishes the authorization to receive and spend money, and limits how much money can be spent for a specific activity or program. It presents the estimated costs of expenditures (goods or services the city plans to purchase in the coming fiscal year) and other budget requirements (contingency for unanticipated expenses) that must be planned for, but may not actually be spent. It also presents the anticipated and actual revenues that will be available to pay for those expenditures.

Budgeting is actually a cycle, which takes 12 months to complete. The budgeting process in Oregon has nine required steps, composed of four phases in which the budget is: prepared, approved, adopted and executed. After adopting the budget, the governing body makes the necessary appropriations and certifies to the county assessor the tax to be imposed. In order to levy taxes through a county assessor, cities must prepare a budget following the specific process as set out in state law.

### OREGON'S LOCAL BUDGET LAWS

In Oregon, cities are required to adhere to the state's local budget law, a group of statutes that requires local governments to prepare and adopt annual or biennial budgets following a very specific process. Budget laws have been written to accomplish very specific objectives, including:

- Setting standard procedures for preparing, presenting and using budgets for most of Oregon's local governments;
- Encouraging citizen involvement in the preparation and deliberations of the budget before it's formally adopted;
- Providing a method for estimating expenditures, resources and proposed taxes; and
- Offering a way of outlining the programs and services provided by the local governments, and the fiscal policy used to carry them out.

Preparing a budget allows a city to look at its needs in light of the funds available to meet those needs. In Oregon, all local governments must plan a balanced budget, meaning that the resources and requirements are equal. A city cannot plan to purchase more items or services than it has money to pay for them.

### A CITY'S BUDGET PROCESS

#### Phase 1: The Budget Officer Prepares a Proposed Budget

The first step in the budget process is to appoint a budget officer, who may be appointed by the governing body (the city council) or designated in the city's charter. The budget officer reports to the executive officer or the governing body and is responsible for preparing the proposed budget or supervising its preparation. The budget officer must prepare the proposed budget in a format that meets the requirements set out in state statutes.

The budget officer develops the budget calendar, which maps out all the steps that must be followed for the legal adoption of the city budget. A budget calendar is not required by law, but is highly recommended. By scheduling the steps of budget preparation, a city can be more certain that it is allowing

*(continued on page 30)*



sufficient time to complete the entire budget process before June 30, as required by state law. After the budget calendar is set, the budget officer begins to develop the estimates of resources and requirements for the coming year or biennial cycle. A sample budget calendar, including all of the required steps, is shown on page 32.

Every city budget will have at least one fund, the general fund, which accounts for the daily operations of the city. In practice, a city budget will have a number of funds, each designed to account for a specific purpose. A budget should include enough different types of funds to clearly show what services and programs a local government is doing and how it is paying for expenditures. However, it is advisable to not have too many funds, as this makes the budget harder to read and understand.

There are seven types of funds used in most city budgets:

**General Fund** – records expenditures needed to run the daily operations of the local government and the money that is estimated to be available to pay for these general needs.

**Special Revenue Fund** – accounts for money that must be used for a specific purpose and the expenditures that are made for that purpose.

**Capital Project Fund** – records the money and expenditures used to build or acquire capital facilities, such as land, buildings or infrastructure. This is a type of special purpose fund and is only used while a project is being completed.

**Debt Service Fund** – records the repayment of general obligation and revenue bonds and other financing obligations. The expenditures in the fund are the principal and interest payments. Money dedicated to repay these obligations cannot be used for any other purpose.

**Trust and Agency Fund** – accounts for money that is held in trust for a specific purpose as defined in a trust agreement or when the government is acting as a custodian for the benefit of a group. *Example:* gifts of investments or securities given to the city with provisions that the income be used to aid the library or park system.

**Reserve Fund** – accumulates money to pay for any service, project, property or equipment that the city can legally perform or acquire. It functions as a savings account. A special resolution or ordinance of the governing body is needed to set up a reserve fund. *Example:* money set aside to pay for the future replacement of city vehicles at the end of their useful lives.

**Enterprise Fund** – records the resources and expenditures of acquiring, operating and maintaining a self-supporting facility or service—such as a city water or wastewater utility.

Oregon budget law requires that each year a city's budget provides a brief financial history of each fund. To meet this requirement, the annual budget will include detailed information on: the actual revenues and expenditures for the prior two years; the budgeted revenues and expenditures for the current year; the estimated balanced budget as proposed by the budget officer for the coming year which includes columns for the budget approved by the budget committee; and the final

budget adopted by the governing body. The budget also includes a column for the descriptions of expenditures and resources. The box on page 31 illustrates typical resources and expenditures found in a city budget.

## Phase 2: The Budget Committee Approves the Budget

As defined by statute, a budget committee is an advisory group comprised of the city council and an equal number of appointed members. If the city council cannot identify enough citizens willing to serve on the budget committee, then the committee is made up of the citizens who have volunteered to serve along with the entire city council.

The appointed members of the budget committee must be electors of the city, meaning they must be qualified voters who have the right to vote on the adoption of any measure. The members of the budget committee are appointed for staggered three-year terms, and cannot be employees, officers or agents of the city. No member of the budget committee can receive compensation for serving on the committee except reimbursement of expenses incurred while serving.

Among its many functions, the budget committee conducts public meetings to hear the budget message and review the budget proposed by the budget officer. One of its most important functions is to listen to comments and questions from interested citizens and consider their input while deliberating on the budget. The budget committee can revise the proposed budget to reflect changes it wants to make in the local government's fiscal policy provided that the revisions still produce a balanced budget. When the committee is satisfied, it approves the budget. (Note: the budget committee does not have the authority to negotiate employee salaries.)

## THE BUDGET MESSAGE

The budget message gives the public and the budget committee information that will help them understand the proposed budget. It is required by statute to contain a brief description of the financial policies reflected in a proposed budget and, in connection with the financial policies, explain the important features of the budget. The budget message must also explain proposed changes from the prior year's budget and any major changes in financial policies.

The budget message is prepared in writing so it can become part of the budget committee's records. It is delivered at the first meeting of the budget committee by the budget officer, the chief executive officer or the governing body chair.

## BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETINGS

A quorum, or more than one-half of the committee's membership, must be present in order for a budget committee to conduct an official meeting. Any action taken by the committee first requires the affirmative vote of the majority of the membership. In the event that only a quorum is present at a meeting, all members must then vote in the affirmative for an action to be taken. Local budget law requires that a budget committee hold at least

## Common Resources & Expenditures in a City Budget

### Resources:

**Net Working Capital** – fund balance from previous year

**Taxes** – estimated collections from property taxes or voter-approved special levies to be received during year

**Franchise Fees** – user fees charged to utility and refuse companies by the city for use of public rights-of-way

**Fines and Forfeitures** – payments imposed by the city for traffic, criminal and code violations and offenses

**Charges for Services** – charges for services provided to individuals by the city such as water and wastewater charges

**Interest Income** – interest earned by investing city funds

**Intergovernmental** – revenues received from other governments such as grants, shared revenues and gas taxes

**Transfers In and Inter-fund Loans** – the receipt of money or loan proceeds made between city funds that is authorized by a resolution or ordinance

**Licenses, Fees and Permits** – revenues from the sale of municipal licenses such as business licenses, fees for services such as planning fees and park user fees, and permits issued by the city

**Miscellaneous Revenue** – revenues that do not fit within one of the other major categories

### Expenditures:

**Personnel Services** – employee wages, employer taxes, health insurance, workers' compensation, retirement and other employment benefits

**Materials and Services** – includes a wide range of operating expenditures such as property and liability insurance, utilities, building maintenance, supplies, vehicle maintenance, fuel, training and professional services contracts

**Capital Outlay** – purchase of items that are considered to be capital assets. Capital assets are defined either by a set amount in financial policies or based on the useful life of the item. Capital outlay can include furniture, vehicles, buildings, land, software systems and other types of equipment.

**Debt Service** – annual principal and interest payments made on city loans and bonds

**Transfers Out** – cash transfers to another city fund to pay for expenditures or to repay an inter-fund loan that is authorized by resolution or ordinance

**Contingency** – money that is appropriated for use during the year to deal with unanticipated operating expenditures. Use of contingency funds must be authorized by a resolution or ordinance

**Unappropriated Ending Fund Balance** – money that is not budgeted and purposely remains in the fund at the end of the current fiscal year to be used as a cash carryover to the next year's budget. The purpose is to ensure that the city begins the following year with enough net working capital to operate until tax revenues are received. It cannot be spent during the year it is unappropriated except in qualifying emergency situations as defined by state statute such as a natural disaster or civil disturbance.

one meeting for the purpose of receiving the budget message and the budget document, and to provide the public with an opportunity to ask questions about and comment on the budget. The city must give public notice for the meeting(s) held for these two purposes, either by printing notice two times in a newspaper of general circulation, or once in the newspaper and posting it on the city's website. If the budget committee does not invite the public to comment during the first meeting, the committee must provide the opportunity in at least one subsequent meeting. The notice of the meeting(s) must tell the public at which meeting comments and questions will be taken.

When approving the budget, the budget committee must also approve a property tax rate or the tax amounts that will be

submitted to the county assessor. The budget committee should make a motion to approve the property tax so that the action is documented in the committee meeting minutes.

Upon approval of the budget by the budget committee, the budget officer completes the budget column labeled "approved by budget committee," noting any changes from the original proposed budget. A summary of the approved budget, which includes a narrative description of prominent changes to the budget from year to year, is published in the newspaper with the notice of a public hearing to adopt the budget five to 30 days before the hearing date.

*(continued on page 32)*

Sample Budget Calendar	Sample Dates	Your Dates
1. Appoint budget officer	December 8	
2. Appoint budget committee members	January 30	
3. Prepare proposed budget	February 28	
4. Publish first notice of budget committee meeting (not more than 30 days before the meeting)	March 10	
5. Publish second notice of budget committee meeting (not less than 5 days before the meeting)	March 20	
6. Budget committee meets	March 30	
7. Budget committee meets again, if needed	April 6	
8. Publish notice of budget hearing (5 to 30 days before the hearing)	April 19	
9. Hold budget hearing (governing body)	May 4	
10. Enact resolutions to: adopt budget, make appropriations, impose and categorize taxes ( <i>can be done at the same meeting as the public hearing</i> )	June 15	
11. Submit tax certification documents to the assessor by July 15	July 12	
12. Submit copy of complete budget document to county clerk	September 30	

## Phase 3: The Budget is Adopted and Property Taxes are Certified (when appropriate)

The city council must conduct a budget hearing by June 30 to receive the budget committee's approved budget, conduct deliberations and consider any additional public comments. The council can make any adjustments that it deems necessary (with some restrictions) to the approved budget before it is adopted prior to July 1. The budget hearing and the resolutions or ordinances necessary to adopt the budget and impose taxes can be conducted at the same public meeting. The types of changes the governing body can make are:

- Increasing expenditures in any fund in the annual budget up to \$5,000 (\$10,000 in a biennial) or 10 percent, whichever is greater. If the increase needs to be greater than these limits, the council must republish the budget summary and hold a second public hearing (before July 1);
- Reducing expenditures of any fund—does not require republishing;

- Increasing the amount or rate of taxes to be imposed above what the budget committee approved. This can only be done if the budget is republished and a second budget hearing is held. However, the council cannot raise taxes above legal limits—the city's permanent rate limit, a voter-approved local option tax rate or dollar amount, and bond principal and interest requirements;
- Reducing the tax rate or amount approved by the budget committee—does not require republishing; and
- Adjusting the other resources in each fund—does not require republishing.

## ADOPTION OF THE BUDGET

Interestingly, it is not a requirement that the budget be adopted at the hearing. The council has the option to wait until closer to the end of the fiscal year to formally adopt the budget. By waiting, the budget can include a better estimate of resources. However, the budget must be adopted by June 30.



To adopt the budget, the city council enacts a resolution or ordinance which provides the legal authority to: establish or dissolve funds; make appropriations for expenditures; adopt a budget; impose and categorize taxes; and perform all other legal actions pertaining to budgeting and authorizing tax levies. To accomplish this, cities do not have to pass multiple resolutions (or ordinances). All the enactment statements can be combined into one resolution (or ordinance), which must be signed by the mayor before submission to the county assessor's office.

By July 15 of each year, a city must submit two copies of the resolution (or ordinance) adopting the budget, making appropriations, and imposing and categorizing the tax to the county tax assessor. In addition, the notice of property tax certification (form LB-50) and successful ballot measures for local option taxes or permanent rate limits must be submitted.

In addition to the county tax assessor's copies, a copy of the resolutions required by Oregon Revised Statutes 221.760 and 221.770 must be submitted to the Oregon Department of Administrative Services by July 31. Finally, a copy of the published adopted budget document, including the publication and tax certification forms, must be submitted to the county clerk's office by September 30.

## Phase 4: Changing the Adopted Budget

On July 1, cities begin operating within the appropriation authority that was adopted by the council for the budget. While it is possible for changes to be made to an adopted budget once the fiscal year begins, this can only happen under specific circumstances. Two such examples are council-approved resolution transfers of funds and supplemental budgets that make changes to adopted expenditure appropriations and estimated resources. These are actions that must be taken before more money is spent beyond what is appropriated in the adopted budget. Any changes made to the adopted budget require that the budget remain in balance after the change.

It is unlawful to spend public money in excess of the amounts budgeted. Public officials can be sued for such actions if the expenditure is found to be malfeasance in office or willful or wanton neglect of duty. Creating a supplemental budget or a resolution transfer after the expenditure is made does not protect the governing body members from a lawsuit. ■

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR CITIES

City officials interested in learning more about the Local Budget Law should consult with the Oregon Department of Revenue's [Local Budgeting in Oregon Manual](#) and its [Local Budgeting Manual](#) (more in-depth and comprehensive manual).

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# 2021 State Shared Revenues

Information and forecast estimates in this report are based on the best information available as of late January. The material is subject to forecast and law changes made throughout the year.

## Per Capita State Shared Revenues for Cities

Per capita distributions for revenue sources are calculated based on [certified population statistics](#) from Portland State University's Center for Population Research (PSUCPR). Population estimates compiled each July are typically certified on December 15, and thereafter begin to govern the distributions.

	<b>Highway Trust Fund Revenues</b> (Gas Tax)	<b>Liquor Revenues</b> (20% of Total Share)	<b>Marijuana Tax Revenues</b> (75% of City's Share)	<b>Cigarette Tax Revenues</b>	<b>9-1-1 Tax Revenues</b>
<b>2018-19 Actuals</b>	\$71.15	\$16.58	\$2.74	\$1.15	\$5.05
<b>2019-20 Actuals</b>	\$69.21	\$17.66	\$3.46	\$1.10	\$6.09
<b>2020-21 Estimates</b>	\$68.61	\$19.25	\$3.06	\$0.93	\$7.21
<b>2021-22 Estimates</b>	\$75.84	\$18.51	\$1.27	\$0.76	\$9.12
<b>2022-23 Estimates</b>	\$76.32	\$19.27	\$1.26	\$0.73	\$9.15

## Non-Per Capita Based State Shared Revenues for Cities

State marijuana tax and liquor revenue distributions are not exclusively based on population. The 14% liquor revenue share to cities uses an adjusted population formula that factors in per capita property taxes and per capita income of each city (see ORS 221.770). The 25% state marijuana tax share to cities is distributed based on the number of licensed marijuana premises in each certified city compared to the total number of licensed marijuana premises in all certified cities. The estimates for the total share for all cities are provided to allow cities to see trends that will assist cities in their individual computations.

	<b>Liquor Revenues</b> (Based on Formula, 14% of Total Share)	<b>Marijuana Tax Revenues</b> (Based on Licenses, 25% of City's Share)
<b>2018-2019 Actuals</b>	\$33,424,766	\$2,331,214
<b>2019-2020 Actuals</b>	\$36,054,118	\$2,989,758
<b>2020-2021 Estimates</b>	\$39,771,000	\$2,673,042
<b>2021-2022 Estimates</b>	\$38,770,000	\$1,125,000
<b>2022-2023 Estimates</b>	\$40,939,000	\$1,125,000

# 2021 State Shared Revenues

## City Budgeting Basics for the Five State Shared Revenues

By Mark Gharst, LOC Tax and Finance Lobbyist

Cities are expected to again receive payment from five different state shared revenue programs during the new fiscal year. Most shared revenues are distributed to cities based on population, but some use more complex distribution mechanisms. **The five revenue sources are summarized below and include descriptions of each revenue source, forecast projection trends, and key legislative updates that may impact the revenue.** The LOC encourages cities to join its advocacy efforts to protect and improve each of these vital revenue sources.

Using state projections, the LOC has produced estimates of state shared revenues for cities to utilize when formulating their budgets. Projections for distributions to cities may be revised throughout the year as revenues come in or as laws change. For more detailed estimates and explanations of each shared revenue, see the LOC's State Shared Revenue Report, which will soon be available [online](#). Cities are reminded that they must take necessary steps, including completing various required certifications and reports, to receive the revenues. Those requirements are detailed in the online report.

### State Shared Revenue Background

City general funds in Oregon primarily come from property taxes, franchise fees, transient lodging taxes, fees for services and state shared revenues. As a key revenue source

for cities, state shared revenues help provide basic services and meet community needs. When state shared revenue formulas were first established, local governments were generally preempted by the state from enacting or continuing to enact local taxes on the same item in exchange for a specified portion of the revenues collected by the state. Thus, these revenues should not be viewed as "shared revenues" as much as historical city and county revenues that are now collected by the state. Despite continued local revenue challenges and rising service costs, state shared revenues are often threatened through decreased shares for local governments as a tactic to help balance the state budget. In addition, when the state increases its tax rate, it often does not include the increased revenues in the share provided to local governments.

2019-20 Total City Share	
Highway Trust Fund	\$201,873,572
Liquor Revenues	\$87,560,000
Marijuana Tax	\$11,959,031
Cigarette Tax	\$3,233,333
9-1-1 Tax	\$17,696,956

### The Five State Shared Revenues

#### 1. Highway Trust Fund Revenues (Gas Taxes, etc.)



In 2017, the Legislature approved a comprehensive transportation funding package (HB 2017) that significantly increased cities' per capita funding, and the results will be seen more fully in the coming years as rates continue to phase in. The package included a 10-cent gas and use fuel tax increase, a 53% increase in the weight-mile tax, registration fee increases, and title fee increases—all graduated increases occur over a seven-year period, with the last increase in 2024. For all tax and fee revenues, distribution occurs two months after the revenue is collected.

From the total allocation for cities (which is about 16% of the fund), \$2.5 million is directed annually off the top to the special city allotment fund (the \$2.5 million allotment began in 2018 and had previously been \$500,000). The allocation is matched and administered by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to provide competitive grants to small cities (populations less than 5,000) in addition to their per capita allocation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected driving behavior, with highway revenues for the 2019-20 fiscal year coming in about 5% below projections, and our estimates for 2020-21 have been revised downward by slightly more than 12% as compared to last year's report. Our 2021-22 projections are based on ODOT assumptions that a vaccine will get more widespread distribution in summer and fall of 2021, and that the economic recovery will accelerate. There is uncertainty in any forecast, but the pandemic has proven especially unpredictable and caution is warranted.

#### 2. Liquor Revenues



Cities' share of this revenue source is projected to continue trending upward over the long term, but will likely see a slight dip from the recent historic high as we come out of the pandemic and residents spend more time away from their homes. Cities' share of this state shared revenue is 34%, of which 20% is distributed per capita and 14% is distributed using a formula that factors in property taxes, population and income.

The three major contributors to this revenue source are: the sale of distilled spirits; taxes on beer, wine and cider; and liquor licensing fees. Distilled spirit sales make up more than 95% of this revenue source. The state maintains the exclusive right to sell packaged distilled spirits and sets the mark-up on products using a wholesale price formula. This means that the bulk of this state shared revenue source technically is based on profits,

*(continued on page 36)*



and not taxes. At approximately 8 cents per gallon, or about 4 cents on a six-pack, Oregon's beer and cider tax is one of the lowest in the country. In fact, Oregon's beer tax rate has remained unchanged since 1978. Meanwhile, the state wine tax is in the middle compared to other states and is 67 cents per gallon. The wine tax has not been increased since 1983. With tax rates presently so low, it would take large tax increases to generate any significant revenue.

Distillery tasting room compensation and liquor store agent compensation continue to be the subject of extensive conversations at the Legislature, and any increase in compensation will likely come out of distributions. The Oregon Liquor Control Commission's (OLCC) warehouse is reaching capacity, and the Legislature will likely approve construction of a new facility using bonds that would also be paid for out of distributions. The numbers presented in the LOC's State Shared Revenue Report reflect current law, and legislative changes could reduce these estimates if net revenues decline and distribution formulas are not adjusted. The LOC will continue to advocate against any changes without long-term benefits to this revenue stream.

### 3. Marijuana Tax Revenues



The state imposes a 17% tax on recreational marijuana products. Until the end of 2020, cities received 10% of the state's total tax revenues (minus expenses) on recreational marijuana products. With the passage of Measure 110 in November 2020, which decriminalized possession of small amounts of street drugs, there will be a

massive shift in the allocation of state marijuana distributions. Starting in March of 2021, quarterly revenue distributions to cities from state marijuana taxes will see roughly a 74% decrease from the fourth quarter 2020 distribution (the final distribution under the old formula). Going forward, under Measure 110, cities will share \$1,125,000 quarterly, or \$4,500,000 annually, which is not indexed and will not grow with the market.

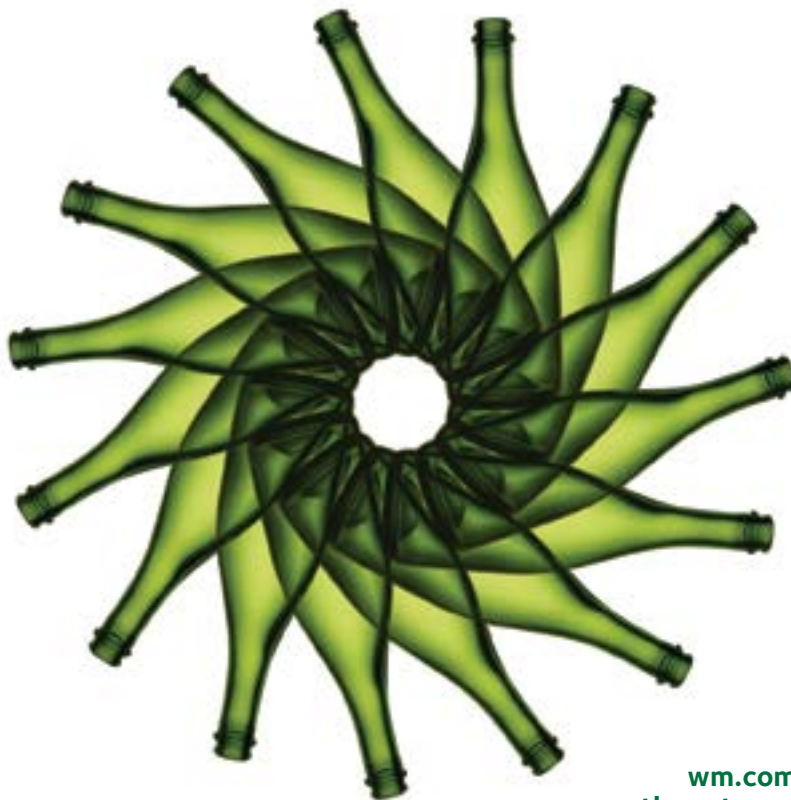
Revenue distributions to cities are made quarterly, however only individual cities that certify will receive a distribution. This certification had been required quarterly with the OLCC, but in 2020 was moved to an annual certification with the Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) similar to other shared revenue certifications. Since 2017, 75% of the shared revenue is distributed to eligible cities on a per capita basis, and 25% is distributed based on the number of licensed recreational and medical premises in the city (grower, processor, wholesaler, and retailer). Note that the license portion (25%) of the distribution is particularly hard to forecast as shops are frequently opening and closing.

Cities may impose up to an additional 3% local tax on recreational marijuana products. Most cities have an agreement with the Oregon Department of Revenue to have the state collect their local tax at the same time the state tax is collected. However, that local tax revenue is not considered a state shared revenue.

The LOC will advocate on behalf of cities for additional marijuana revenues in the 2021 legislative session, but the numbers reflected in this report assume no change from the Measure 110

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formula. There has been interest in legislation raising the 3% cap on local taxes, and the LOC will continue to be supportive. Governor Brown has also included a special purpose appropriation in her recommended budget that would backfill at least a portion of the Measure 110 losses to local governments, and the LOC will support that request as well.

#### 4. Cigarette Tax Revenues


 This revenue source is projected to continue trending downward—which it has for more than 10 years—as smoking decreases. In November 2020, voters passed Measure 108 to increase cigarette taxes by \$2.00 per pack effective January 1, 2021; increase the cap on the cigar tax from 50 cents to \$1.00; create a tax on vape products at 65% of the retail price; and preempt cities from taxing vape products. After the increase, cigarette taxes are at \$3.33 per pack, and cities' share of that revenue is a meager 0.6% of the tax, or about 2 cents per pack. It's important to note that while cities receive a share of tax revenues for cigarettes, no shared revenue is distributed for taxes on other tobacco products, including cigars, moist snuff, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, and now vape.

This measure will likely have the effect of decreasing revenues to cities; cities do not get a share of the \$2.00 increase, and as prices increase by 33% on average demand will decrease. Estimates vary widely, but during discussions at the Legislature, reductions in sales as high as 25-35% were discussed due to reduced smoking rates in Oregon and a reduction of cross border sales into Washington and California. For our estimates, we have included a 7.5% reduction for 2020-21 and a 15% reduction for 2021-22.

This is a larger reduction than what is projected in the latest state forecasts but may still be too optimistic.

The LOC had received commitments that should the ballot measure pass there would be a discussion about changing the distribution formula, but it seems likely that given the timing of the 2021 session there may be a short-term loss in revenue at the very least.

#### 5. 9-1-1 Tax Revenues

 Oregon's 9-1-1 tax was increased to \$1.00 per line or pre-paid transaction effective January 1, 2020 and further increased to \$1.25 effective January 1, 2021. Before this change in 2019's HB 2449, the rate had been 75 cents since 1995. Most cities will not directly receive this state shared revenue, as the city share is directed to the public safety answering point (PSAP) provider connected to the statewide network. Less than 20 of the 45 PSAPs in Oregon are operated by cities; most are managed by counties or a regional entity.

The PSAPs are only partially funded through the state's Emergency Communications Tax, with the balance of operating costs coming primarily from property taxes. Local governments receive approximately 60% of 9-1-1 taxes, but the taxes generally covered less than 25% of the costs of total PSAP operations before the recent rate increases. Ratios of individual PSAP costs to taxes received vary. The local government share of the state tax is distributed 1% to each county, with the remainder distributed per capita.

**Contact:** Mark Gharst – [mgharst@orcities.org](mailto:mgharst@orcities.org) or (503) 540-6574 ■



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# Unprecedented Legislative Session Underway

*By Jim McCauley, Legislative Director*

**F**ollowing a two-day delay, the 2021 session started on January 21. We are in a much different place now than in 2019 or 2020, and I don't see the virtual legislative process changing until late spring at the earliest. Whenever that change comes, it will be completely dependent on metrics associated with the world-wide Coronavirus pandemic. These are truly unprecedented times, and hopefully Oregon will not have to experience a legislative session in this format in the future.

Given our legislative experience since last March, we have all been challenged to find methods of communicating with members of the Legislature, the governor's office, and legislative leadership. With the amount of LOC weekly briefings, which I think we are now north of 40, our communication has been limited to a virtual world. There is no ability to have a cup of coffee, meet a legislator in their office, or simply have a conversation in the hallways of the Capitol or between committee hearings. My personal legislative experience has been to pull legislators off the House floor during votes, or catching a legislator between committee meetings. Preset meetings in offices were typically rare, because of the volume of bills and speed that legislation can move.

Since last March, the Legislature has convened three times for special sessions to advance priority legislation determined by Governor Brown and the Democratic leadership in the House and Senate. In addition, the state's Emergency Board has met 13 times to allocate funding for a variety of programs to address the ongoing public health emergency and economic crisis brought on by the pandemic. The LOC's ability—or literally any organization's ability—to impact these conversations has been limited at best. Despite the constraints, we did have success advancing a broadband bill, which will generate \$10 million annually to leverage expansion and connectivity to communities and regions currently without high speed internet. We also had success supporting elements of a police reform package that the LOC has been trying to advance for years.

Once the November elections were complete, the LOC's government relations team focused on the immediate need to communicate our collective set of priorities to the new legislators within the virtual environment. The primary take-home message for all of us was that we must remain diligent with our communications, and we are going to need help from LOC members to advance legislation that makes sense to cities and stop the annual onslaught of damaging legislative concepts. The other take-home message was that we have some new legislators with local government experience, which I will say is a great addition to a Legislature that largely does not have a lot of former mayors, council members or individuals with any local government experience.

## Grass Roots Lobbying Critical

I want to stress a simple message: the grass roots component of our legislative work will largely define how the session goes for LOC. The LOC's membership has done a great job in the past answering the call on any number of our requests for testimony or outreach to legislators. During the interim, this effort was critical in getting more than half the Legislature to endorse the idea that local governments needed a greater share of the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) from the state. While this effort fell short of what we had hoped for, it did cause state leadership to pause, because we had a lock on votes. The point of this recent example of member lobbying is that every mayor and council member play a critical role in communicating with the Legislature. All you have to do is provide the education necessary for the Senate or House member to at the very least make a decision with "eyes and ears wide open." Your legislator may not ultimately make a decision you agree with or that is the best outcome for your city on a particular bill—but don't give up! Lobbying is not a perfect process, and if we can get some legislators to be 50% supportive of our priorities, it would be a significant step forward!

So, stay diligent, stay in touch, and keep in contact with your legislator. ■



A photograph of the Oregon State Capitol dome, featuring a golden statue on top, set against a clear blue sky. The dome is made of light-colored stone or concrete.

# 2021

## Legislative Priorities

### ISSUES CITIES NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

In addition to the six priorities voted on and approved by our member cities and board of directors last fall (see page 41), the following is a comprehensive overview of issues your LOC team is working on this session.

#### **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INVESTMENT**

HB 2086, introduced at the request of Governor Brown, makes several policy changes and investments in Oregon behavioral health and addiction treatment centers. In this package of reforms and changes, of particular interest to the LOC are investments in crisis care, respite care, and equitable access to behavioral health care. HB 2086 also seeks to enhance the mental health workforce to address the lack of trained professional mental health workers along the entire spectrum of mental health providers.

#### **COMPREHENSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT**

City needs for infrastructure investment have continued to increase over the course of many decades, and the cost of infrastructure projects has increased over time as well. This has resulted in a backlog of critical infrastructure maintenance and improvements that are necessary to ensure ongoing community livability and support the expanded capacity resulting from population growth and higher density housing options. Cities, especially those with smaller populations, simply can't afford to fund needed infrastructure investments alone. Infrastructure investment plays an important role in overall economic recovery, revitalization and job creation and the LOC is recommending additional investment in these areas.

#### **Broadband Investment**

The deployment of broadband and telecommunications networks and services (public and/or private) throughout Oregon is critical to economic development, education, health and safety. Broadband connectivity has become increasingly critical to participation in everyday life during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Governor Brown's proposed budget has allocated \$100 million toward the expansion of broadband infrastructure projects and additional funding for the State Broadband Office to hire staff to aid in technical assistance on broadband planning. The LOC will support Gov. Brown's efforts legislatively by advocating that the tri-chairs of the Ways and Means Committee allocate similar amounts as broadband funds for Business Oregon to administer as grants. Additionally, the LOC will advocate to protect local right-of-way authority while balancing the need for increased deployment of broadband. Bills that would threaten right-of-way (ROW) authority include: HB 2613, which would mandate all government entities to notify a telecommunications provider of any excavation project in the ROW and require cities to expedite permits for all telecommunications projects; and HB 2654, which would allow electric utilities to expand existing easements for the provision of broadband service. It is unclear if HB 2654 would have unintended consequences on easements that cities sometimes grant to utilities in the ROW. The LOC is opposed to HB 2613 and is seeking an amendment on HB 2654.

*(continued on page 40)*



## Water Investments

Governor Brown's recommended budget for the 2021-23 biennium includes important investments in public infrastructure funds that cities can use for water-related infrastructure needs. This funding includes: \$50 million for the Special Public Works Fund, which is administered by Business Oregon; \$40 million for projects selected through Oregon's Regional Solutions program; and \$20.9 million in loan and grant funds for water supply projects (funding administered through the Oregon Water Resources Department). While the LOC appreciates this level of investment and will work to ensure that these funds are approved by the Legislature, these investments merely scratch the surface of the need for municipal drinking water, sewer projects and other important water infrastructure investments. Oregon continues to fall further behind in the backlog of water infrastructure needs, and its critical systems continue to age. In addition, communities are facing emerging challenges including resiliency needs, effects of climate change (which highlights the need for building additional winter water storage), and addressing new and emerging water quality challenges including harmful algal blooms.

## Transportation

The LOC's overall goal for transportation this session is to see that HB 2017, which was passed during the 2017 session, continues to fulfill its implementation schedule for expanded revenue, because the bill's total investment of \$5.3 billion will not be achieved without the full seven-year implementation, which would end in 2024. There are some legislative concepts that could derail this effort by resetting the distribution formula or adding designated revenue to expand one transportation sector.

Transportation revenues are clearly a priority for infrastructure in cities and across Oregon. The LOC already expects a decrease in the State Highway Fund, which will mean a \$34 million impact on the distribution to cities by the end of FY 2021. Add the growing operations and maintenance gap for ODOT's operations, and we will see some serious challenges facing revenue distribution in the future unless adjustments are made.

There is also a public safety bill associated with the expansion of photo radar beyond the city of Portland. HB 2530 extends authorization to operate fixed photo radar to urban high-crash corridors in cities with a population greater than 50,000. Portland has had this authority since 2017, and has shown improvement in safety along high-crash corridors. The LOC will be supporting this legislative effort to expand the authority to cities across Oregon.

## PROPERTY TAX REFORM

There are numerous bills that would seek to expand or create new exemptions that would negatively affect city revenues. Although many of these are well intentioned, and seek to assist businesses or deserving individuals, the LOC will advocate against state-wide mandates and encourage local options and direct assistance through state general fund revenues. Examples include expansion of the veteran's exemption (SB 545, SB 348 and HB 3003), a property tax freeze for seniors (SJR 11), an exemption through 2025 for wildfire reconstruction (SB 459), and a hydrogen power exemption (HB 2535).

Other property tax concepts the LOC will oppose would: give 3% of a city's revenues to the county for assessment (HB 2799); divert tax foreclosure proceeds (HB 2666 and SB 403); and create a new standard for property tax appeals (SB 167). The League will support concepts to prorate taxes more fairly after a property is destroyed (HB 2341), extend sunsets on local option affordable housing exemptions (numerous), and strengthen the senior deferral program (SB 140 and SB 709 as examples).

## HOUSING AND LAND USE

In addition to the LOC's priority of housing and services investment, the League has been engaged in a number of policy discussions to share expertise on housing and land use concepts and ensure that any new policies can be implemented effectively on the ground. This includes providing technical expertise on affordable housing land use concepts and supporting bills to strengthen local housing tools as a member of the Oregon Housing Alliance.

The LOC participated in a homelessness and public space workgroup with other local governments and the Oregon Law Center to negotiate a bill based on the recent federal court decisions in *Martin v. Boise* and *Blake v. Grants Pass*. HB 3115 recognizes that penalizing homeless individuals for their unavoidable circumstance is not in the public interest. The bill requires local ordinances that limit camping related acts be objectively reasonable.

This session will also see the return of an expedited shelter siting bill, HB 2006, which includes updated language at the request of LOC that will improve city implementation.

Finally, the LOC is also advocating for additional resources in the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development's budget, contained in HB 5010, to support housing planning programs and fund critical technical assistance grants for local government.

## WATER & SEWER RATE ASSISTANCE

In response to economic impacts associated with the spread of COVID-19, many of Oregon's drinking water and wastewater utility providers have offered additional assistance to customers who are experiencing economic hardship. Unfortunately, many cities and other public water and sewer utilities are reporting challenges associated with decreased revenue resulting from delinquent accounts or decreased water consumption from businesses that have either closed or limited operations. This has resulted in concerning revenue and budgetary impacts for many Oregon water and sewer utility providers. Both HB 2739 and HB 3089 aim to establish a new drinking water and sewer rate assistance program in Oregon. These bills are intended to complement existing local water utility rate assistance programs, whether those programs are managed internally by the utility, or through a third-party contract with a service provider. The bills will also seek to provide funding to water and sewer utility providers that do not currently have, but would like to establish, a low-income assistance program. The LOC will also engage in efforts this session to ensure that recently approved federal funding (approximately \$7 million) for water/sewer assistance can be deployed efficiently to utilities across the state. The state



is awaiting federal guidance on how those federal funds can be utilized.

## WILDLAND FIRE RESPONSE

This will be a very complicated set of legislative proposals for 2021. There are proposals to reduce a local government's role in permitting or collecting inspection-permit fees for rebuilding of structures on one end, and other legislation focused on the land use, home hardening codes, defensible space and re-zoning on the other end. The LOC's role will be to find solutions that make sense for cities and find pathways to get homeowners back in their properties as quickly as possible. The LOC supports HB 2722, a community-based wildland fire action plan. The bill creates a Land Use and Wildfire Policy Advisory Committee to help guide decisions for implementation at the community level for reducing the risk of wildland fire impacts across land uses.

The LOC will also be advocating for additional state support for communities facing significant funding challenges posed by the loss of home values and the ability to generate property tax funds to cover basic core services.

## PUBLIC CONTRACTING

Public contracting-related legislation that was opposed by the LOC in 2019 has been re-introduced for the 2021 session. While the LOC is generally supportive of the existence of prevailing wage laws for publicly-owned, public works projects, several of these bills present significant changes for determining prevailing wage rates and have resulted in sudden wage spikes for certain contracted-for work in other states, including the state of Washington.

## Collective Bargaining Agreements for Wage Determinations

HB 2419/SB 493 would change how prevailing wage rates are determined by requiring the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries to use collective bargaining agreements in lieu of the current wage survey. Under HB 2419, if more than one collective bargaining agreement exists for a trade occupation within a region, the highest rate would apply. SB 493 would use an average in instances where more than one collective bargaining agreement exists for a given trade within a region. The state of Washington passed legislation similar to HB 2319 in 2018 and it has resulted in some significant spikes in certain wage rates, including a nearly 400% increase in one instance. The LOC is committed to engage in discussions that aim to improve the current process for wage rate determination, but is strongly concerned. These bills would mean that one collective bargaining agreement (even if that agreement reflected specialized work or project needs) would establish a minimum rate for all projects and work covered under a certain occupation/trade.

[View more public contracting bills to watch on the LOC website.](#)

## ALCOHOL TAXES

Taxation of alcohol will be discussed extensively at the Legislature this session. There are at least three concepts that would reduce city revenues: HB 2740 would increase agent

## TOP 7 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

as voted by the LOC membership

- 1. Mental Health Service Delivery** – continued support for adequate resources to protect and enhance the services available to persons suffering from mental health conditions.
- 2. COVID-19 Economic Recovery Investments** – advocate for resources for small businesses and affected workers, and for flexibility in existing and proposed programs to allow cities to get help where it is needed most.
- 3. Comprehensive Infrastructure Package** – increase in the state's investment in key infrastructure funding sources, including seeking investment and set aside through the SPWF for seismic resilience planning and related infrastructure improvements that will help make Oregon water and wastewater systems more resilient.
- 4. Property Tax Reform** – support incremental or systemic reforms that enhance local choice, equity, fairness, and adequacy.
- 5. Housing and Services Investment** – seek increased investments for affordable housing, homeless assistance, and related services including funding for: shelter, homeless services, case management, rent assistance, the development and preservation of affordable housing, and permanent supportive housing.
- 6. Water Utility and Rate Assistance** – work to identify funding for water utility ratepayer assistance and work to establish a framework for the distribution of funds. In addition, the LOC will seek to ensure that any assistance programs are targeted to acknowledge existing inequities.
- 6. Disaster Relief and Recovery** – avoid legislation that could further degrade a city's ability to meet core service delivery and address the challenges of city budgets.

compensation to liquor store owners; SB 316 would increase compensation on sales from distillery tasting rooms, and the Oregon Liquor Control Commission will be bringing forward a concept to construct a new warehouse that will be paid for out of distributions. The LOC acknowledges the need for the new warehouse, and will likely be neutral on the distillery issue given the low cost and economic development potential. The LOC will oppose the agent compensation changes, as cities were not at the table when the new formula was developed, and we feel

*(continued on page 42)*





the changes are too generous in a time when cities are looking at significant revenue challenges while agents have seen increased compensation due to higher sales.

Oregon continues to enjoy one of the lowest beer taxes in the country, as there has not been an increase since 1978. One LOC priority is to advocate for a beer tax increase to assist with rising public safety costs and provide alcohol tax equity with wine and liquor. Another LOC priority is to increase minimum pricing on bottom shelf liquor to improve public health and better reflect the societal cost of these products. There will likely be a bill brought by the recovery community seeking broad increases to alcohol taxes, and the LOC has been working with the sponsors to make sure it reflects our legislative priorities.

## MARIJUANA TAXES

Measure 110, which decriminalized small amounts of street drugs, will take a significant amount of the city share of state marijuana taxes and reallocate those funds to addiction services. The LOC will support a special purpose appropriation in the governor's recommended budget to backfill a portion of this revenue loss for the 2021-23 biennium. Another bill the League will support is HB 2015, which would raise the local marijuana tax cap from 3% to 10%.

## EQUITABLE POLICING

Equitable policing will be an ongoing topic of conversation in this legislative session, and the LOC has objectives for reform. The LOC has long sought changes to the arbitration system that protects the public from the reinstatement of officers who have been terminated by their employers for good cause. Legislation to reform the arbitration system is anticipated at the time of this writing.

## TORT LIABILITY

Several bills have been introduced that will increase city tort and civil liability this session. HB 2207 would eliminate the local government tort cap and expose cities to the higher state limit. HB 2205 would allow for state laws to be enforced through civil action as opposed to enforcement agencies such as the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries.

At the time of this writing, these bills have not been heard in committee, but there has been an informational hearing on the tort caps in the Subcommittee on Civil Law. The LOC opposes changes to the tort law.

## BUILDING CODES

For most of the last three years, the LOC has been supporting efforts to protect the statewide third-party building inspection program. The central element of this issue comes down to delegating service delivery at the local level when it does not make sense to keep an FTE on as a building official. The LOC has constructed a proposal that is based on earlier Oregon Department of Justice opinions and recommendations. It effectively allows cities to maintain their existing third-party program with some additional administrative steps, an appeals process, and transparency. Currently, there is not a physical bill or final language, but the League is working with the Building Codes Division. The

LOC will also be supporting HB 2398, which establishes a statewide reach code for cities and counties to use as they so choose. The LOC has worked with the interest groups who have developed this legislation.

## WATER/WASTEWATER

The LOC will be working to proactively advance several legislative recommendations identified and adopted by members of the LOC Water & Wastewater Policy Committee. These recommendations include development of a drinking water and sewer rate assistance program (this recommendation was also adopted as one of the LOC's seven legislative priorities for the 2021 session), passage of legislation to address improper flushing of wipes products, and general increased investment for water infrastructure. In addition, the LOC will work to advance several bills that would make key investments in specific water supply and water quality programs, including funding to reinvigorate Oregon's septic loan program, and better position the state and local water suppliers to monitor and respond to harmful algal blooms.

### Transfers of Stored Water

HB 2144/HB 3091/HB 3103 seek to address the Oregon Water Resource Department's interpretation that the state currently lacks authority to process transfers of stored water (i.e. changing the type of use for stored water or the location of storage). The ability to transfer the type of use for stored water is important for water supply management and to ensure the eventual transfer of federally stored water in the Willamette Basin for municipal use. In addition, the state must find a viable process for requests to transfer the location of water storage. This is particularly important for dams that may need to be moved due to seismic or other deficiencies.

### Labeling Requirement for Non-Flushable Wipes

HB 2344 bill will require manufacturers of wipes products, including baby wipes, make-up wipes, cleaning wipes and other personal care wipes, to label product packaging as non-flushable. Violations of the law would be enforceable under the Unlawful Trade Practices Act. The LOC has worked to introduce this legislation in response to concerns over clogs in wastewater infrastructure that result from improper disposal of these products.

[View more water/wastewater bills to watch on the LOC website.](#)

## RECYCLING/SOLID WASTE

In 2018, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), convened a Recycling Steering Committee. Its purpose was to propose changes to Oregon's recycling system that could address significant changes to recycling markets that have occurred in past years, including China's decision to no longer accept much of Oregon's recycling material due to contamination issues. The LOC is grateful to Beaverton Senior Program Manager for Sustainability & Recycling Scott Keller for serving as the LOC representative on the steering committee. The work of the committee has resulted in proposed legislation that seeks to modernize Oregon's recycling system. In addition, several more bills have been introduced that would impact Oregon's recycling systems. The LOC will be engaging throughout these



discussions and will work to ensure that the consensus approach of the Recycling Steering Committee is reflected through proposed legislation.

## Recycling System Modernization

HB 2065 was introduced by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and is the legislation that resulted from the work of its Recycling Steering Committee. The bill proposes significant changes to Oregon's recycling system, and will require certain manufacturers of packaging, printed paper, and other covered products to participate in a producer responsibility organization (PRO) to help finance costs associated with disposal and recycling of materials. In addition, funds collected through the PRO could be used for: public education to reduce contamination in recycling; transportation costs associated with transferring products to processing facilities; and expanding recycling collection service, including for multifamily properties. HB 2065 also establishes an Oregon Recycling System Advisory Council and a process for the state to adopt a uniform statewide collection list of materials that are eligible to be recycled. Finally, the bill prohibits materials from being labeled as recyclable if the product is not accepted for recycling by a majority of recycling services in the state. A similar but more expansive bill, HB 2592, has also been introduced, but does not reflect key recommendations from the Recycling Steering Committee. The LOC encourages cities to review this legislation and provide feedback to LOC Lobbyist Tracy Rutten Rainey at [trutten@orcities.org](mailto:trutten@orcities.org).

## ENERGY/ENVIRONMENT

Many bills have been introduced this session that aim to reduce emissions, expand the deployment of electric vehicle infrastructure, and incentivize investments in local green energy generation. The LOC will be engaging on bills that may directly impact its members, including cities that own and operate a municipal-electric utility. In addition, the LOC will be communicating with cities on legislation that may align with or support locally-driven climate action and sustainability plans.

## Retail Consumer Monthly Meter Charges for Transportation Electrification

HB 2165 would require electric companies (i.e. investor-owned utilities) to charge retail customers a monthly meter charge and expend the revenues collected for supporting and integrating transportation electrification and related infrastructure. The total amounts collected must be equal to 0.25% of the total revenues collected by the electric company from all retail electric companies.

## Differential Energy Burden

HB 2475/2490 would authorize the Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC) to consider differential energy burdens for low-income customers when engaging in rate setting. In addition, the bills would authorize the PUC to consider other economic, social equity or environmental justice factors that impact affordability for certain classes of utility customers. The LOC is aware of multiple cities that support these bills.

## Contact Us

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

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## 100% Renewable Portfolio Standard

HB 2995 would increase Oregon's renewable portfolio standard to require 100% of all electricity sold in Oregon to be clean by the year 2035. The bill would also require electric companies (i.e. investor-owned utilities) to retire coal-fired resources by the year 2025, five years earlier than what is required under current law. In addition, HB 2995 sets forth labor requirements, including compliance with prevailing wage rate and apprenticeship utilization standards, for construction work that is relied upon by an electric utility to meet the bill's requirements. ■



# Virtual City Day Highlights State and Local Partnerships

“City Day at the Capitol,” co-sponsored by the LOC and the Oregon Mayors Association (OMA), convened virtually on January 28. This biennial event brought together nearly 200 city officials from 93 cities to meet with legislators, hear from the governor and legislative leaders, and receive issue briefings from LOC staff.

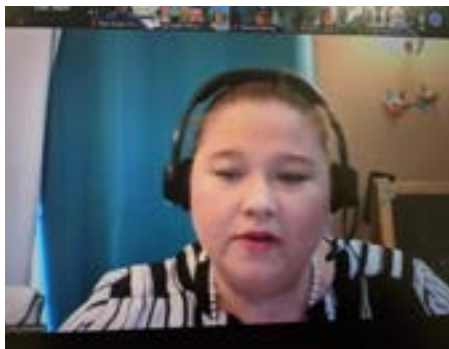
Sherwood Mayor and LOC President Keith Mays and Dayton Mayor and OMA President Beth Wytoski emceed the event. Guest speakers included Oregon Governor Kate Brown, Senate President Peter Courtney (D-Salem), House Speaker Tina Kotek (D-Portland), Assistant Senate Republican Leader Lynn Findley (R-Vale) and House Republican Leader Christine Drazan (R-Canby).

Sen. Courtney applauded the city leaders for their involvement in the “nearest and dearest form of government, local government.” All of the speakers shared how they would help partner with cities to address the LOC’s 2021 legislative priorities:

- Mental health investment;
- COVID-19 economic recovery investment;
- Comprehensive infrastructure investment;
- Property tax reform;
- Housing and services investment;
- Water utility and rate assistance; and
- Disaster relief and recovery.

Though our priorities were a main focus of the day, a few other hot topics came up with our invited guests, including equity, the COVID vaccine rollout and getting children back to school.

While we all missed meeting in person at the Salem Convention Center and enjoying an adult beverage to end the day, the event still concluded with a reception featuring regional breakout rooms. LOC members and approximately 30 legislators mingled about regional issues at the reception, a fitting close to a very successful day. If you missed City Day at the Capitol, a recording is available on the LOC’s [YouTube channel](#). ■



Clockwise from top left: Senate President Peter Courtney discusses wild-fire recovery; House Speaker Tina Kotek provides tips on how to advocate this session; OMA President and Dayton Mayor Beth Wytoski welcomes City Day participants; and Representative Raquel Moore-Green heard from city officials in her district during the legislative reception.

## City Day Recordings Available Online

Miss all or part of City Day at the Capitol, or want to share it with your council?

Recordings of the presentations can be viewed on the [LOC website](#). Also available are links to important documents shared during City Day, including LOC priorities, bills to watch, how to testify at the Legislature, and legislative contact information.





## Keep Up with Bills During Session

Check the status of Oregon legislation, access legislative committees, and see the legislative calendar by using the LOC's bill tracker, CM3, or the state's system, OLIS.

[View instructions to use CM3 and OLIS \(pdf\)](#)

### CM3 Bill Tracker

CM3 is the LOC's bill tracker that pulls most of its data from the Oregon Legislature website. It narrows down the bills to those that the LOC is actively tracking and provides additional information about the bills including: priority level, the LOC's position, and LOC staff handling the bill.

**To login to CM3, use [loc@orcities.org](mailto:loc@orcities.org) as the username and password.**

[View a video tutorial on how to use CM3](#)

### Oregon's Legislative Information System (OLIS)

OLIS is the state of Oregon's Legislative Information System. OLIS tracks all the bills in session in addition to legislative meeting materials, committee video recordings, amendments to bills, versions of bill and resources to previous sessions dating back to 2007.

[View a video tutorial on how to use OLIS](#)

## Legislative Poster Available



The popular reference poster, created in partnership with the Association of Oregon Counties, Oregon School Boards Association, and Special Districts Association of Oregon, is now available to download from the [LOC website](#).

The posters are in the process of being printed, and will be mailed out to cities in the coming weeks. To request a poster, please email Kevin Toon, LOC Communications Director, at [ktoon@orcities.org](mailto:ktoon@orcities.org).

# Mobilizing your community



Connected communities are strong communities. By advancing our technologies and services, we're helping to create the opportunities that make Oregon a better place to live and work.

When everything works together, your community moves forward.





## CIS Partners with SAIF

Over the last five years, CIS' workers' compensation program lost 20% of its members. All withdrew to take advantage of lower premiums at SAIF, Oregon's not-for-profit workers' compensation insurance company. Those that left maintained that CIS provided excellent customer service and missed CIS as a one-stop-shop that coordinated risk management for all their insurance coverages.

After a thorough evaluation, a CIS servicing group for members who choose to purchase their workers' compensation insurance from SAIF was presented to CIS' member advisory committee for feedback. Feedback was mainly very positive, and frank discussions with SAIF followed up on issues noted. SAIF's CEO addressed member feedback at the recent CIS Board of Trustees Annual Retreat, and the board voted to adopt the agreement in concept with SAIF.

"As a good steward of public funds, we value SAIF's financial strength and pricing advantages," said CIS Executive Director Patrick Priest. "SAIF values the expertise, quality, and skills of our risk management, public safety, and return to work staff."

Partnering with SAIF will ensure that CIS' workers' compensation members will receive the best coverage and service — at the best price. In addition, it will give former members of CIS' workers' compensation program the opportunity to again receive holistic risk management services from the CIS team that they know and trust.

Key elements to the agreement SAIF and CIS are working to include the following:

- This will be effective for policies beginning July 1, 2021.
- Any member of the LOC — including those currently with SAIF or CIS — can participate.
- CIS will provide expert risk management, loss control, return-to-work services, and online training tailored to the needs of Oregon's cities and counties.
- SAIF will be the workers' compensation carrier and provide financial strength, coverage and claims management services.
- All current CIS members will be offered SAIF coverage.
- CIS and current SAIF members will be eligible to obtain risk management service from CIS.

Still to come, SAIF is applying for an OGSERP (Oregon Group Supplemental Experience Rating Plan) discount, which will only be available to those who chose to participate in the CIS Servicing Group and meet SAIF's underwriting criteria. The discount will depend on the loss experience of cities and counties that consent to include their information in the filing. A [consent form](#) is required to help create this opportunity for all CIS members but does **not** commit an entity to participate in the program nor to insure with SAIF.

**Partnering with SAIF will ensure that CIS' workers' compensation members will receive the best coverage and service — at the best price.**

The decision to participate comes later, after pricing for the July 1, 2021 policies are finalized and all questions and concerns have been addressed. Each member has a choice.

As CIS Property/Casualty Trust Director Scott Moss explains, "We continue to address each of our members' questions and concerns and are working closely with SAIF to advocate for the unique needs of Oregon's cities and counties."

Cities with workers' compensation questions or that would like to learn more about the new agreement with SAIF, are urged to please email [Scott Moss](#) or [Patrick Priest](#). ■



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# Aging Water Infrastructure Impacts Utilities and Homeowners

By Dennis Lyon

**O**ur country's infrastructure is aging and there is no one guiding agency or overall plan to address myriad issues from crumbling water pipes to inflow and infiltration overloading storm and wastewater sewers.

Even as headlines warn of public health crises, federal funding of water infrastructure has [dropped from 30%](#) forty years ago to single digits today, shifting much of the financial burden onto states and utilities. Although federal transportation infrastructure funding has been fairly level, most water and wastewater infrastructure funding has been shifted to subsidized borrowing programs, and that is unlikely to change anytime soon. The American Water Works Association estimated nearly [\\$2 trillion](#) must be invested in the systems that [90%](#) of Americans depend on for their water.

While drinking water infrastructure is funded primarily through a rate-based system, the investment has been inadequate for decades and will continue to be underfunded without significant changes as the revenue generated will fall short as needs grow. The American Society of Civil Engineers has given the country's water systems a [D grade](#), warning more than two trillion gallons of treated water is lost to water main breaks every year and emerging contamination issues threaten the quality of drinking water.

## Population Growth and Aging Infrastructure

Oregon's overall infrastructure has been [given a C- by the ASCE](#), and drinking water infrastructure in the state faces twin problems—much of the infrastructure is at the end of its useable lifespan and the population is growing faster than the systems can handle, earning Oregon's drinking water infrastructure a C- as well. Utilities across the state also will need to look into making their system more resilient, with an eye toward hardening them against earthquake damage. All these repairs, installations and upgrades are expected to cost \$6.25 billion over 20 years. Wastewater systems earned a D- again, the growing population and aging assets are working against the state's utilities. Also, here, utilities will need to think about resiliency and natural disasters, and the ASCE estimates that \$5 billion over a 20-year span will be needed to address wastewater infrastructure issues.

While water consumption is down, there are still an estimated 240,000 water main breaks per year in the United States. Most Americans receive their water through pipes that are coming to



the end of their usable lifespan of 75 to 100 years, according to the [ASCE drinking water report card](#). Those failing systems lose six billion gallons of treated water every day, or nearly 20 percent.

The report on [drinking water](#) notes drinking water is delivered via one million miles of pipes across the country, and, although the quality of drinking water in the United States remains high, legacy and emerging contaminants continue to require close attention.

A [Utah State University study](#) found that water line breaks increased almost 30 percent from 2012 to 2018. In addition, cast iron and asbestos cement pipes—which make up more than 40 percent of installed water mains—had increased breakages of more than 40 percent over the same period, and more than 80 percent of cast iron pipes are more than 50 years old.

## Maintenance Cost Increasing and Funding Decreasing

Repairing those pipes will [cost more than it did to install](#) them originally, because of inflation and increasingly strict environmental regulations. It is estimated that utilities will spend [three to three and a half times](#) the cost of repairs on replacing pipes by 2030, and utilities may need to look to public-private partnerships to improve revenue and expand services in pursuit of alternative revenue streams.

*(continued on page 48)*



The problem with upkeep is the expense, and utilities can't count on the federal government to shoulder more than a small portion, while little money is available at the state level. States provide approximately \$5.8 billion per year, usually discounted loans through Clean Water State Revolving Fund programs. At that rate, it will take nearly 40 years to make the repairs and upgrades needed by 2032.

COVID-19 has exacerbated that problem, with many utilities disproportionately impacted by customers' inability to pay, paired with a moratorium on disconnections. Further compounding the problem is the fact that very little stimulus money has been directed to water utilities. Some utilities are reporting delinquency rates of 30 to 50%, forcing a portion to the verge of bankruptcy.

## Lead Service Lines a Lingering Problem

An estimated 6.1 million water service lines are lead and on the private side of infrastructure. It would cost \$30 billion to replace all lead service lines—many for which there are no records. It's estimated that approximately 0.5 percent of these lead service lines are replaced each year, and it will take two centuries to replace them at that rate.

Since service lines are the responsibility of the homeowner and many homeowners are unaware of that, they receive little to no maintenance. In addition, many homeowners call their local utilities when a line fails, resulting in frustration when residents learn they are responsible—and they have a large water bill because their meter kept spinning while water gushed out of their service line. Their first call when they get that bill is going to be to their water utility, and it will be your employees' job to let them know that not only must they pay at least a portion of that overage, but they also must pay to have their service line repaired.

Many of your customers are not prepared for a large, unexpected expense, also known as a financial shock. The HomeServe Biannual State of the Home Survey has found that more than one-third of Americans have \$500 or less set aside for emergencies, and roughly one-in-five who have an income of \$50,000 have nothing set aside. It's an especially troubling prospect for those who are on fixed incomes, including older adults. Meanwhile, in the State of the Home Survey, 62 percent of homeowners reported having had an emergency home repair in the prior 12 months.

The cost of replacing a water service line ranges between \$1,500 and \$5,000, depending on the extent of the work, layout of the home and region. Replacing a sewer service line could cost between \$3,000 and \$12,000. A combination of expensive repairs and not being aware that they're responsible can be stressful for your customers.

You can avoid the angry call—with the National League of Cities Service Line Warranty Program, you can provide educational materials that you approve to your residents, at no cost to your utility or municipality. In addition, the program provides optional, affordable warranties for water and sewer lines, including access to a U.S.-based call center, available 24/7/365, and a network of fully vetted, licensed and insured contractors.



To find out how you can provide your customers with peace of mind, visit [NLC.org/serviceline](http://NLC.org/serviceline). ■

*Dennis Lyon currently serves as Regional Account Director at HomeServe, which administers the NLC Service Line Warranty Program. He is responsible for working with municipalities/utilities to educate and develop the best program options for their residents.*

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# Oregon Rolls Out Public Alerting for Earthquakes in March 2021

ShakeAlert, the West Coast Earthquake Early Warning System, will be delivered publicly starting March 11, 2021

*By Lucy Walsh, Oregon's ShakeAlert Coordinator*

**W**e've all heard of the Pacific Ring of Fire—a 25,000 mile-long region that outlines the northern and southern hemispheres of the Pacific Ocean and also the Pacific Plate. Eighty percent of the world's earthquakes occur along tectonic plate boundaries, where plates come together and build up stress as they attempt to get by, under, or over one another. When the strain is too much, the plates suddenly slip past each other, releasing the energy in the form of an earthquake.

This sudden release of energy creates seismic waves, which travel through the Earth's crust and make the ground shake. Earthquakes don't occur instantaneously; instead, faults underground rupture like a zipper opening over seconds or tens of seconds.

## Earthquakes in Oregon

Just off the Oregon Coast lies the Cascadia Subduction Zone, a major tectonic plate boundary. When these "locked" plates finally release, the result will be a powerful earthquake capable of causing extensive damage to homes, buildings, and infrastructure across the state, with additional devastation caused by a tsunami that will inundate our coastal communities.

Tectonics in Oregon also produce deep earthquakes, like the 2001 Nisqually, Wa. earthquake, which shook our region for tens of seconds, as well as shallow, crustal earthquakes such as the 1993 "Spring Break Quake" which caused concentrated local damage in and around the city of Scotts Mills, Ore.

## Oregon's Seismic Network

Thanks to continued investment by state government, a network of seismic sensors deployed across Oregon are constantly measuring and communicating ground motion. When an earthquake occurs, fast working algorithms at U.S. Geological Survey data processing centers determine that an earthquake has happened and rapidly begin to estimate the location of the rupturing fault, the magnitude—or strength—of the earthquake, and the estimated shaking intensities across the affected area.

Seismic waves move fast, but not faster than the speed of sound when moving through rock (10,000 mph). Meanwhile, information recorded by seismometers is sent to processing centers at virtually the speed of light (670,616,629 mph). Algorithms take just a few seconds to calculate the intensity and area of shaking, and just a few more seconds to send out a ShakeAlert® earthquake early warning message before shaking arrives.



Visiting ShakeAlert seismic station YACH in Yachats, OR. From L-R: Oregon ShakeAlert Coordinator Lucy Walsh; Oregon Hazards Lab Program Manager Leland O'Driscoll; Yachats Mayor John Moore; U.S. Rep. Kurt Schrader; Central Lincoln Director of Engineering and Operations Ty Hillebrand; UO Professor and Oregon Hazards Lab Director Doug Toomey; Central Lincoln Engineering Supervisor (PE) Shamus Gamache; and Yachats City Manager Shannon Beaucaire.

## The ShakeAlert® Earthquake Early Warning System

ShakeAlert® is the U.S. West Coast's early earthquake warning system. Immediately after an earthquake begins, ShakeAlert detects the earthquake quickly enough to alert people and automated systems seconds before shaking arrives. By providing advanced warning for the arrival of strong shaking at any location, ShakeAlert can save lives and reduce injuries. (\*ShakeAlert is not earthquake prediction)

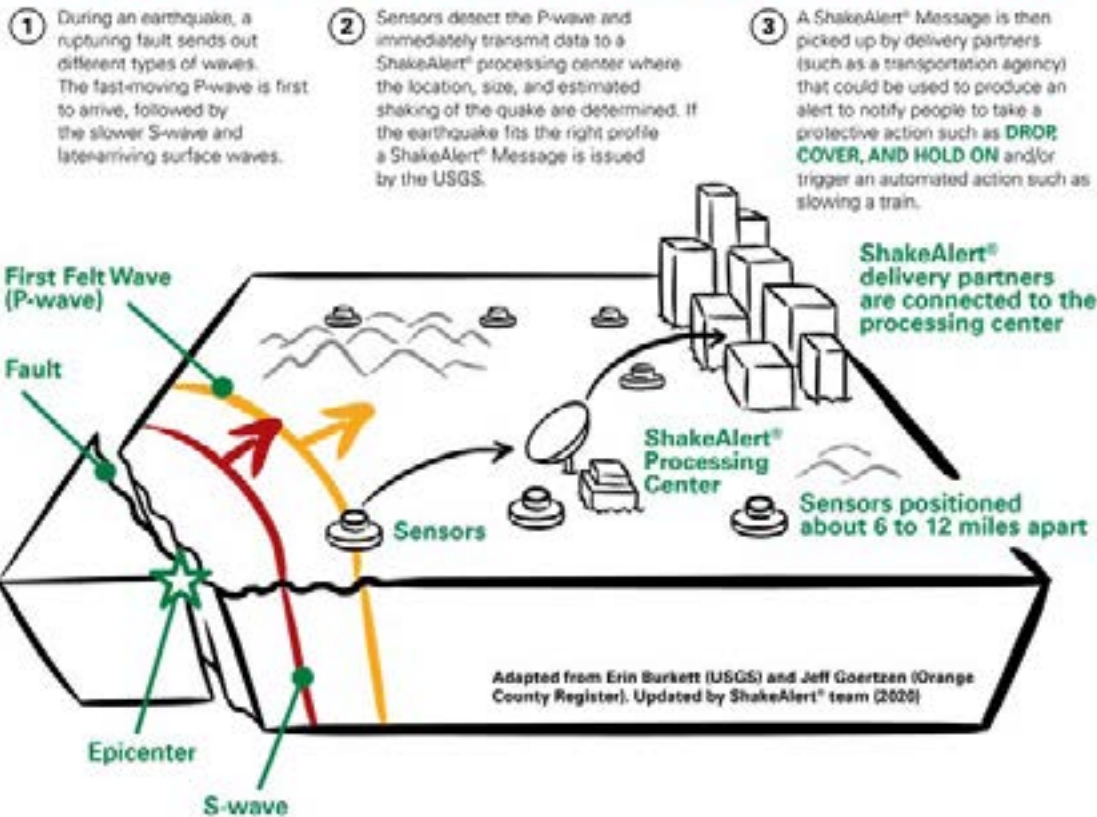
## How Will Alerts Reach the Public?

On March 11, 2021 ShakeAlert® will be publicly available in Oregon. There will be multiple ways to receive public earthquake early warnings, including mobile apps and emergency alerts on cell phones. Starting March 11, anyone within the state boundary of Oregon could receive an earthquake early warning alert from the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) system,

*(continued on page 50)*



## ShakeAlert® EARTHQUAKE EARLY WARNING BASICS



native OS Android alerts, and/or USGS-approved cell phone apps for download.

Before an alert is sent out to the public, the earthquake must meet the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) minimum thresholds that correspond to a potentially damaging magnitude and a location-specific shaking intensity. If an earthquake is small and not expected to cause damage, even if it is expected to produce shaking, a ShakeAlert will not be generated. The USGS made this decision to reduce the potential personal anxiety from "over-alerting."

A person receiving an earthquake early warning alert or feeling an earthquake should immediately "Drop, Cover and Hold On." They should get low to the ground, cover their head and neck, and if there is a table or desk nearby, take cover under it, holding onto the leg so that you move with it.

### Automated Actions Activated by ShakeAlert®

Since 2016, ShakeAlert has been available operationally for automatic action systems in Oregon. Automated actions triggered by a ShakeAlert message are extremely important—these resilient actions lessen the immediate and secondary impacts from a large earthquake and promote a quicker return to normal operations... and also daily life. USGS-approved partners are working to develop more uses of automated actions upon receiving a ShakeAlert message. In this way, many will benefit from ShakeAlert without their immediate knowledge. For example,

slowing trains to prevent derailment, throttling water utility valves to prevent loss of drinking water from ruptured pipelines, and opening firehouse doors so they are not stuck shut preventing first response.

### Get Involved

Geologists tell us there is a 7-12% chance over the next 50 years that the Cascadia Subduction Zone will generate a magnitude 9-plus earthquake that will impact Oregon statewide, as well as northern California, Washington and British Columbia. Within that same timeframe, there is a nearly 40% chance of the Cascadia Subduction Zone generating a magnitude 8 to 9 earthquake near Southern Oregon and Northern California. With publicly available earthquake early warning alerts, it's time to start thinking about what to do next. How can city leaders communicate ShakeAlert to their community? Can a city invest in automated alerts? How will leaders use the time before shaking starts to take effective action? Most entities already have the infrastructure in place to receive earthquake early warning alerts. They just need a connection to the ShakeAlert System.

To learn more about the ShakeAlert Earthquake Early Warning System, the Oregon Public Rollout, or how to become a USGS-Approved ShakeAlert Partner, visit [ORShakeAlert.us](https://ORShakeAlert.us). ■

*Lucy works at the University of Oregon, within the Oregon Hazards Lab. She can be reached at [lwalsb@uoregon.edu](mailto:lwalsb@uoregon.edu).*





# *Around the State*

*Stories from across Oregon*

As we tried to “stay safe and stay healthy” in 2020, we lost our connection to our neighboring communities and the rest of the state. It’s become harder than ever for city officials on the coast to know what’s going on east of the Cascades, and vice versa. On top of that, good news has been in short supply over the past 12 months.

So here’s a look some of the good things our cities have been doing all across this great state.



# North Plains

## Grand Opening for Veterans Park

After more than a decade of planning, North Plains officials and residents recently celebrated the grand opening of a park that honors veterans and POWs for their service and sacrifice.

The 11,000-square-foot park features a 100-foot flagpole with a 50x30-foot flag as the centerpiece, commemorative plaques honoring veterans and POWs, benches, and an American Legion flag disposal box. It also features the town's first charging stations for electric vehicles and a bike rack and repair station. Memorial bricks are part of the park design and are for sale to honor those who have served, are serving, and living and deceased veterans.

City Manager Andy Varner said the city purchased the park property in 2018 and began searching for grant funding. The city reached out to military organizations for letters of support for the grants, and that led to Members of the Portland Post and the Society of American Military Engineers donating design services. Local companies contributed time and materials to the construction, and nearly 100 percent of pre-construction services were donated.

"The property is located near the highway for easy access and people can see the flag from quite a distance," Varner said. "We bought the property from a family whose dad was a veteran, so it worked out really well to become a city-owned park and property."

Varner credited Public Works Director Blake Boyles and his department for the park's success in celebrating the nation's heroes as well as offering a place to relax and



reflect. "This was a labor of love and Blake and his crew did a lot of work in a short amount of time," he said.

The grand opening ceremony featured an F-15 Eagle fly-over from the 142nd Wing, home to Oregon Air National Guard's Redhawks; Martin J. Ryan VFW Post 2666 Color Guard and gun salute; and the North Plains Boy Scout Troop 275 Color Guard.

Static displays included the Oregon Army National Guard 2-218 Field Artillery, based in Forest Grove; 671st Engineer Company (Multi Role Bridge), based in Clackamas; and the Military Vehicles Collectors Club of Oregon.





## Project of the Year

The Oregon Chapter of the American Public Works Association honored the city of Salem with the 2020 Project of the Year Award for the [Pringle Creek Demolition and Stream Restoration Project](#). The prestigious award was presented in the “Environment” category for projects that cost less than \$5 million.

“This venture was a complex and rewarding project to be a part of,” said Salem Environmental and Regulatory Affairs Manager Nitini Joshi. “Each step of the project required delicate planning and coordination from the city, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, contractors, and engineers. We are honored to receive this accolade, and equally pleased to offer our community a restored water-front and park-like landscape for all to enjoy.”

The Pringle Creek Demolition and Stream Restoration Project opened a section of Pringle Creek near its confluence with the Willamette River adjoining Salem’s beloved Riverfront Park. This work coincides with more than 30 years of riverfront reclamation efforts, changing the scenery from expired industrial zones to public open spaces and economic development. A major focus of this project involved removing a 100-year-old paper mill site that was constructed on top of Pringle Creek, impeding habitat and natural resources.

“It is an honor to receive recognition from the APWA,” said Salem Public Works Director Peter Fernandez. “Despite many uncommon construction conditions,



this project stayed on schedule and under budget. We are grateful for the innovative solutions and coordination from city staff and project guidance from Otak and Suulutaaq.”

Highlights about the award-winning Pringle Creek Demolition and Stream Restoration Project will be featured on the [APWA Oregon Chapter webpage](#) with other esteemed projects from across the state. Details about the entire Pringle Creek Demo and Stream Restoration Project including funding, project goals, and background can be found on the [City’s website](#).

*Source – City of Salem*





# Redmond

## City Council Updates Transportation Plan

Redmond's City Council has approved an ambitious transportation plan that includes the construction of two U.S. Highway 97 overcrossings at the city's southern and northern edges, new multiuse paths, road extensions and other upgrades, *The Redmond Spokesman* recently reported.

The plan addresses the rapid population growth that has taken place in Redmond over the last decade and updates a transportation plan that was implemented 12 years ago. The city has gained more than 6,000 new residents over the last decade, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates. City staff expect Redmond's population of about 32,000 to surpass 40,000 by 2040.

In addition to the transportation plan, the city council approved a new urban renewal district for the southern corridor of Highway 97. The district will fund upgrades to the corridor, such as building new connector streets and canal crossings, constructing a median barrier in the center lane and adding more stoplights.

The city also plans to spend \$29 million to improve Helmholtz Way, which runs along Redmond's west border. The improvements include eight miles of multi-use path, a lane for pedestrians and bikes separated from the street, alongside the road. Ultimately, the city hopes to build 35.5 miles of multiuse paths in the next 20 years at an estimated cost of \$104.7 million, according to *The Redmond Spokesman*.

City Engineer Mike Caccavano said multiuse paths are often more comfortable for bikers and pedestrians



than traditional bike lanes or sidewalks, which are closer to vehicle traffic. "Separating (the path) from traffic, you get a lot more people interested in using alternate lanes of transportation," he said.

Caccavano noted that the Highway 97 upgrades are the only proposed projects that have confirmed funding sources. There isn't a defined timeline for other projects in the transportation plan and some potential funding options include outside sources such as grants, using development fees or asking voters to pass a bond.



# Gold Beach

## City to Receive ODOT Funds for Sidewalk Project

Gold Beach will receive funds from the Oregon Department of Transportation's Keep Oregon Moving Small City Allotments for its Leith Road Walkway Project.

The \$75,000 project will involve the construction of about 500 feet of sidewalk near the intersection of Leith Road, Coldiron Hill Road and Sixth Street. The walkway will be located on the south side of Leith Road, adjacent to the elementary school's northern property line. ADA ramps will be installed on both the east and west ends of the walkway, the *Curry Coastal Pilot* reported.

The Small City Allotments program helps communities across the state improve their transportation systems. More than \$5.2 million for this award cycle will fund 54



projects in this Keep Oregon Moving program, part of the historic HB 2017 funding package.

ODOT Director Kris Strickler said cost savings from the previous awards resulted in \$243,378 in additional funds being available for this round.

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# Ontario

## City to Install Overpass Bridge for Pedestrians, Cyclists



*Ontario will install a pedestrian crossing over Interstate 84, such as the one pictured here. Photo courtesy of the city of Ontario.*

The city of Ontario will use extra funds it received from the Oregon Department of Transportation for its SE 5th Avenue Transportation Enhancement Project to install a pedestrian crossing over Interstate 84.

City Manager Adam Brown said in early December that work on the project would take anywhere between 18 months and two and a half years, and that over that time the city would have to budget for \$109,000, or \$54,000

per year, in order to satisfy the matching amount from ODOT, according to the *Argus Observer*.

The funds are the product of a competitive grant that had been applied for and received by previous city staff before Brown was city manager. Brown said ODOT brought the excess funds to the city's attention, and the funds require a match of 10.27 percent or about \$950,000 in additional state funds.



# Oakland

## Students Have New Multiuse Path, Crossing Light

The city of Oakland and Oakland School District recently partnered to make it safer for students to walk and bike to school.

In 2019, the school board invested \$18,000 in crossing lights at the intersection of Northeast Cypress Street and Northeast Fifth Street, and this past summer the city finished construction of a multiuse path on Northeast Cypress Street. This connects to another shared use path along Northeast Fifth Street that leads directly to the elementary and high school, *The News-Review* reported.

"The project was completed in August in time for school to start," Oakland City Recorder Terri Long said, adding the intersection where the lights were placed has high traffic volume and can be dangerous for students.

The city used part of its grant funding to pay for the cost of the lights. The Small City Allotment Funds used for the multiuse path were awarded in 2018. The state sets aside \$5 million each year for transportation projects in cities with less than 5,000 residents. A city can get a maximum of \$100,000, which Oakland did, to do a project, according to *The News-Review*.

Loree Pryce, RCE, owner of Engineering Support Services in Roseburg, provided design and construction management services for the project.



*Lily Rudenko, 7, of Oakland, presses the crossing button at a crosswalk near a recently completed shared walking and biking path after school in Oakland. Photo by Michael Sullivan/The New-Review.*

The school district's 2020 Safe Routes to School plan stated there was a "lack of dedicated space for bicyclists and pedestrians to travel east-west through the area and issues with speeding vehicles coming through town from the highway," on that stretch of road.

# Medford

## Council Approves Design for Sports Complex

The Medford City Council has approved a \$3 million contract to design a \$60 million aquatics complex and event center at Wes Howard Memorial Park.

Colorado-based Perkins and Will received the contract to design and engineer the Rogue Credit Union Community Complex. About \$1 million of the contract will go to local firms that will help with design and engineering, the *Mail Tribune* reported.

The complex will consist of a 90,000-square-foot multipurpose event center and a 42,000-square-foot aquatics facility under a single roof. The aquatics area will feature a recreation pool, two water slides and a splash pad.

The complex also will house a 13-lane competition pool to attract regional swim meets, water polo competitions and other events. Lockers and other facilities will be constructed next to the pools, and a food truck court will be installed next to the building.

An early payoff of a bond for U.S. Cellular Community Park will cover 44% of the financing toward the sports complex. A \$2.40 increase to the city's parks utility fee will pay for 31%, and a lodging tax will pay for about 21% of the bond. The remaining 4% will come from expanding car rental fees throughout the city, according to the *Mail Tribune*.

The city's 10-year agreement with Medford-based Rogue Credit Union is the second-largest municipal park



*The existing design concept for the new aquatics and sports complex in Medford. Image courtesy of the city of Medford's website.*

and recreation naming-rights deal in Oregon history, second only to Providence Park in downtown Portland, Medford's website states.

"We've been discussing and dreaming about partnership possibilities with Rogue Credit Union involving a new aquatics facility in Medford for many years," City Manager Brian Sjothun said. "This agreement is a perfect fit, and we're excited about the positive impact the Rogue Credit Union Community Complex will have on Medford for generations."

Proceeds from the naming-rights agreement will offset annual facility maintenance costs and provide a free water safety class for each fourth grader living within the Medford city limits on an annual basis.



# Eugene

## City Relocates Offices to LCC Campus

The city of Eugene has relocated most of its offices to the Lane Community College downtown campus, with the Mary Spilde Center serving as an interim city hall while the new one is developed and constructed.

The city is leasing space on three floors of the center, located at 10th and Oak. The city council chambers, city councilor offices, the mayor's office, city manager's office, city attorney's office, and the Office of Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement have moved into the building. In an interview with KLCC radio, city spokesperson Laura Hammond said the move will keep city services in the heart of downtown.

"They'll also consolidate some of our services right there at 10th and Oak," Hammond told KLCC in November. "The library's right there and the bus station's right there. And we have the Atrium Building, which houses our Planning and Development Department, our Building Permit Center."

The three-year lease is temporary, as Eugene plans to build a new city hall in the downtown Park Blocks. The new city hall will face onto the renovated Park Blocks, showing that it is both physically and metaphorically open to the people of Eugene, according to the city's website.

The new city hall will be about 30,000 square feet, is tentatively scheduled for completion in 2022 and could cost more than \$30 million, according to the *Register-Guard*.

In addition to city hall, the new Eugene Town Center will house the Lane County Farmers Market in a permanent structure that will allow the market to operate year-round. Eugene Town Center and the improved Park Blocks also will include the Eugene Saturday Market.

The project is currently in the community engagement and scoping phase, and the public engagement results will guide the specific improvements to be made. Eugene's urban renewal amendment makes the Park Blocks project eligible for up to \$5.2 million in urban renewal funds, according to the city.

In the meantime, Eugene's city council and the Lane County Board of Commissioners have formed an agreement that provides a site for a new county courthouse on the former city hall site.



**Top:** The Mary Spilde Center at Lane Community College's downtown campus is serving as an interim city hall for Eugene as the new city hall is developed.

**Bottom:** The new city hall will be part of the new downtown Eugene Town Center. Images courtesy of the city of Eugene.





# Waldport

## Always the First to Help

*In Memorium - Mark Campbell*  
*Sept. 17, 1954 - Dec. 6, 2020*

Communities across Oregon mourned the loss of Waldport City Councilor Mark Campbell, who was killed Dec. 6 while fighting an intruder at an apartment near his residence. He was 66.

In addition to serving on the Waldport City Council, Campbell co-owned Crestview Golf Course and was a golf coach at Waldport Middle and High School. The former president of the Waldport Chamber of Commerce, he was known as an organizer of and generous contributor to many causes in the community.

"He was just so very caring toward this entire community, always the first to help out or volunteer for a project, host a fundraiser or come to someone's aid, no matter who was in need," Waldport City Council member Greg Holland told the *Newport News-Times*.

"Our heart breaks with the city of Waldport as they grieve the tragic loss of Mark Campbell, who served on the Waldport City Council for 14 years," former Philomath Mayor Eric Niemann said in a tribute to Campbell.

The city of Waldport posted a salute to Campbell on its Facebook page that read, "Councilor Mark Campbell was the best of us. Most of us have stories of how he helped us, how he first gave and then fundraised for organizations in need, how he taught kids to love golf, and how he helped the town. And Mark served...whether it was the Chamber, the Council, or best of all, his BBQ to those of us lucky enough to have gone up to the course on a late summer afternoon.

"Mark would be the first to be saddened that his death would change this town," the post states. "He'd be the first to tell us that we can't let this one event define



Waldport. So, when we remember Mark, we must think of his charity and good works."

Campbell was stabbed to death about 3:35 a.m. when he went to investigate a break-in in a nearby apartment he and his wife owned and rented out. The apartment's occupant had died two weeks earlier of cancer.

An Alaska native, Campbell moved to Waldport 24 years ago and could often be seen walking his dog Rango around the Crestview clubhouse or at the beach. He enjoyed crosswords, bowling, playing pool with his Moose buddies and cheering for the Dallas Cowboys, according to his obituary.

Campbell is survived by his wife, Christine; his daughter, Erin; his mother, Jean; his siblings, Denise "Dee Dee," Renton (Bob), Matthew "Jay" Campbell (Janell), Robert "Robby" Campbell, and Lynda Rypdahl (Marc); and several nieces and nephews. He also was affectionately called "Mark Daddy" by his stepchildren Tara Bruce and Jared Bruce (Sarah).

The Campbell family requested that donations be made to the Lincoln County Victims Assistance Program in Mark Campbell's memory.



## A Small City with Big Energy

*By Patty Mulvihill, LOC General Counsel*

The city of Echo, located in northeastern Oregon, is small, even by Oregon standards. The population of the community rests around 720. And while the city may be small in population, both its council and its citizens are big with energy.

In January, at the city's request, I provided a half-day training to the Echo City Council. We discussed how the city could achieve a high functioning council, talked about the Oregon Ethics Law, and delved into the fascinating world of public records. And while I have given this type of training countless times, it was the first time I had to give the training without the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation (massive technology failure on my part). And while teaching a four-hour class without a PowerPoint presentation seems impossible, the reality was the council members had so much energy invested in the learning opportunity and in engaging with each other, no one noticed the visual presentation was missing. The training could have been a colossal failure when one considers the technical breakdown we experienced, but it was a success—and that success is the direct result of the energy the Echo City Council brought to the event.

Throughout the training, it was clear that the Echo City Council, both its newest members and its veterans, were energized to tackle the issues the city is facing. I learned the city had just recently gone through the potentially unpopular and arduous process of enacting a new water rate increase. And looking to the future, the city council is poised to deal with a complicated land use matter and creating internal processes and rules to govern how it functions. Each member of the council I talked to was keen to undertake the necessary steps to improve the city, with a seemingly boundless amount of energy.

The training ended immediately before the first council meeting of the year could begin. As a long-term



municipal attorney, one who has attended probably a few hundred council meetings in her life, I can say I was honestly blown away by the number of citizens who piled into the council chambers to attend the meeting. For a city the size of Echo, I would have expected five or six citizens to attend the meeting; but, as I was packing my bag, more and more citizens kept filing into the chamber. By the time I left, I wouldn't have been surprised if there were 30-40 people in attendance for that council meeting. When I represented a city of about 80,000, 30-40 people attending a council meeting would have been unprecedented, that's the type of attendance we saw when we were doing something truly controversial!

Each time I provide a training to one of LOC's member cities, I learn something unique about the city and its local leaders. Echo was no different. Whether an Oregon city is large or small, I have found that each one in Oregon is comprised of energetic officials looking to support and protect their community. The new Echo City Council has my sincerest hope that their energy to do good work is never ending—best wishes!





# Lakeview

## The Tallest Town in Oregon – With a Giant Heart to Match

*By Patty Mulvihill, LOC General Counsel*

Lakeview bills itself as the “Tallest Town in Oregon.” It sits at 4,802 feet above sea level, making it the tallest incorporated city in the state. I was lucky enough to spend two days in Lakeview in early January. And if I’m being honest, I didn’t notice how “tall” Lakeview is, but my experience in the city made it clear that both its council and its citizens have giant hearts. And those hearts are all focused on making sure Lakeview is a successful city, both in terms of its economy and how it cares for the people living in and visiting the community.

I was in Lakeview to work with its city council and staff on goal setting for the next few years. Both the staff and the council members I worked with are dedicated to finding practical solutions to the issues impacting the town. Issues facing Lakeview range from the simple to the complicated. Reviewing the city’s existing and longstanding contracts with service providers is a definite goal of the council, and one it believes can be achieved very quickly. But, like many communities, Lakeview needs to analyze and upgrade its water system, which is a complicated undertaking that will involve many years of hard work and dedication. Regardless of the complexity of the issue facing the city, its locally elected leaders and city staff are passionate in their commitment to buckling down and getting the job done—and not just done, but done well and done with pride.

While visiting Lakeview, I had the opportunity to interact with a few of its residents, all of whom were kind, welcoming and willing to offer a helping hand. My rental car for the visit was less than stellar, and during my journey to Lakeview I received constant warnings that



one of my tires was low on air. I’m not particularly savvy when it comes to vehicles, so when I pulled into a local gas station in Lakeview I was in desperate need of both a friendly face and someone who could help. And boy did I get help. The cashier at the local Shell station, and at least two citizens who were filling up their own vehicles, all stopped what they were doing to help me identify the problem with my tire, and then proceeded to help me get the problem fixed. Every person helping me was patient, was clearly going to stay with me until they knew for themselves my vehicle was safe, and were





kind enough to have me laughing and joking throughout the encounter.

And while I have always believed the heart of any city rests with its people, if I'm being honest, a city's scenery and environment have the ability to make that heart even fuller. My first time in Lakeview was my first time in Lake County. Wow. Both Lake County and Lakeview are breathtakingly beautiful. If you haven't found your way that far south, I would highly encourage you to do so. On my last day in Lakeview I got up early, before sunrise, so I could do a bit of exploring. Since Lakeview rests between the Warner Mountains and the high desert, everywhere you turn there's another photo-worthy view

to enjoy. I tried taking photos, but the reality is none of my photos did any justice to what I saw in person. The only way to fully appreciate Lakeview's beauty is to experience it live.

One of my favorite parts about my job with the LOC is visiting Oregon's cities and experiencing the people who make those cities vibrant. Lakeview did not disappoint—in fact, it continues to fascinate and inspire me even several weeks after my visit. It's a city full of committed leaders, kind citizens, and stellar scenery. I can't wait to return, and hopefully many of you reading this will add the city to your "must-visit" list.

## 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)

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