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From left: Creswell council president Alonzo Costilla, D 12 Rep. Darin Harbick, mayor Nick Smith, and councilor Mark Kremmer. PHOTO PROVIDED

CITY & GOVERNMENT

A Capitol experience for Springfield, Creswell, & Cottage Grove leadership

by **Lauren Englet** — on February 5, 2025



SALEM – On Jan. 28, hundreds of community leaders, including leaders from Springfield,

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promote advocacy and progress through informative briefings and individual conversations among policymakers and event participants.

This year’s City Day also included a reception celebrating 100 years of LOC, an organization that provides advocacy, training, and info to city leaders statewide.

Among the list of priorities, Springfield city officials advocated for continued infrastructure investments to support ongoing transportation and housing developments.

Kori Rodley, Ward 3 city councilor, said that Springfield will continue to provide housing options for all price points and mitigate roadblocks with the help of partners at the state level.

“As chair of our city legislative committee, I am focused on building and strengthening relationships with our Lane County delegation and advocating for the needs and priorities in Springfield,” Rodley said. “I have strong relationships with our state representatives, as well as great connections with other city elected officials throughout the state, and this was a great opportunity to represent Springfield and raise awareness about our growing city.”



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concerns of cities throughout Oregon.

“It was also a good opportunity for my colleagues new to advocacy at the state level to start building relationships and learn more about the processes,” Rodley said.

Rodley said she appreciated the opportunity to deliver priorities at the state level and hopes that Springfield residents will take note of the team’s commitment to the “statewide conversation when it comes to resources and impact.”

“We can’t work in a bubble if we are to be truly effective,” Rodley said.

Cottage Grove advocacy

Cottage Grove has historically struggled with its roads, a high-priority topic in state transportation packages at the Capitol.

“Sadly, where a lot of our communities really need the backing is just maintenance of our roads, and that does not always translate to our legislators when they’re passing these packages,” said Candace Solesbee, Cottage Grove mayor. “I definitely wanted to get that across to our senators and our representatives. Don’t just look at the new projects. Help us repair where it really counts: the roads that our citizens drive over every single day.”

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Other advocacy topics included increased behavioral health resources, additional infrastructure investments to benefit housing initiatives, and further explanation surrounding House Bill 3115, which, according to the Oregon State Legislature website, "Provides that local law regulating sitting, lying, sleeping or keeping warm and dry outdoors on public property that is open to the public must be objectively reasonable as to time, place and manner about persons experiencing homelessness."

Solesbee said hearing Sen. Daniel Bonham speak was the most memorable part of the proceedings.

"I'm hoping (Cottage Grove residents) will be proud of what this council is trying to do for each and every one of them," Solesbee said. "We're going into a goal-setting session on the 8th, and what I am feeling from Council is an eagerness to work together on behalf of our constituents."

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Creswell advocacy

The City of Creswell's key initiatives included advocating for state assistance when navigating wastewater issues, seeking the clearance to build single-family homes to help combat Oregon's housing crisis, and meeting street funding needs.

Mayor Nick Smith said he enjoyed meeting Rep. Harbick and hearing from Rep. Fahey.

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Smith said, "Rep. Fahey understands the small-town struggles intimately and will be a huge bipartisan partner going forward."

Mark Kremer, newly-elected city councilor, found the event's atmosphere "energetic."

"So many cities have a lot of the same issues. People want to better their cities," Kremer said.

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Smith said the LOC provided information and training on effectively lobbying for his community.

"A strong partnership between the City and State is necessary to best provide the best outcomes for our citizens," Smith said.



Lauren Englet

Lauren Englet was a writer for The Chronicle.

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