



OREGON
Cascades West
Council of Governments

Board of Directors Meeting Packet

December 4, 2025
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Attend In Person at

Albany Cascades West Center
1400 Queen Ave SE, Albany, OR 97322

Or Attend Virtually:

[Click to Join Teams Meeting](#)

OCWCOG strives to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to engage fully. To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility please contact Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments at 541-936-9006 or adminGA@ocwcog.org, forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting.



1400 Queen Ave SE • Suite 201 • Albany, OR 97322
(541) 967-8720 • FAX (541) 967-6123

OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' AGENDA

December 4, 2025

2:00 – 4:00 pm

1400 Queen Ave SE Albany, OR 97322

[Join Teams Meeting](#)

An Executive Session may be called as deemed necessary by the Chair, pursuant to ORS 192.660.

NOTE: Please contact Angelykah Light at 541.405.8420 or alight@ocwcog.org no later than noon on Wednesday, December 3, 2025, to confirm your attendance.

1. **Welcome and Introductions** (Chair Pat Malone)
(2:00 pm – 2:05 pm)

2. **Public Comment** (Chair Pat Malone)
(2:05 pm – 2:10 pm)

The floor will be open to the public for comment.

3. **Consent Calendar** (Chair Pat Malone)
(2:10 pm - 2:15 pm)

- a. Approve meeting minutes from October 23, 2025 ([Page 5](#))
- b. Financial Report YTD October 2025 ([Page 10](#))

ACTION: Motion to approve Consent Calendar items.

4. **2026 Meeting Calendar** (*Executive Director Ryan Vogt*)
(2:15 pm – 2:30 pm)

2026 Proposed Meeting Calendar ([Page 12](#))

ACTION: Motion to approve the 2026 meeting calendar.

5. **Benton County At Large Member** (*Executive Director Ryan Vogt*)
(2:30 pm – 2:35 pm)

ACTION: Information only, no action needed.

6. **New Member Appointment Loan Program Advisory Committee** (*CED Director Matt Lehman*)
(2:35 pm – 2:40 pm)

New Membership Appointment Memo ([Page 13](#))

ACTION: Motion to approve LPAC membership appointment of Sarah Buddingh.

7. **Program Highlight Cascades West Economic Development District (CWEDD)** (*CED Planner Justin Peterson*)
(2:40 pm – 3:00 pm)

ACTION: Information only, no action needed.

8. **Newport & Regional Implications** (*Mayor Jan Kaplin, Newport*)
(3:00 pm – 3:20 pm)

OCWCOG Regional Response Proposal Document ([Page 14](#))

Proposed Local Response Draft Document ([Page 15](#))

ACTION: Information only, no action needed.

9. OCWCOG Program Updates

(3:20 pm – 3:25 pm)

Senior, Disability, and Community Services Program Director Randi Moore ([Page 17](#))

Community and Economic Development Director Matthew Lehman([Page 22](#))

Chief Information Officer Jason Sele ([Page 26](#))

Human Resources Director Ryan Schulze ([Page 27](#))

ACTION: Information only, no action needed.

10. Subcommittee Reports

(3:25 pm – 3:30 pm)

Cascades West Economic Development District (CWEDD) ([Page 28](#))

Transportation Brokerage Advisory Committee (TBAC) ([Page 30](#))

Disability Services Advisory Council (DSAC) & Senior Services Advisory Council (SSAC) no update

ACTION: Information only, no action needed.

11. Agency Director Update (*Agency Director Paul Egbert*)

(3:30 pm – 3:45 pm)

ACTION: Information only, no action needed.

12. Executive Director Update (*Executive Director Ryan Vogt*)

(3:45 pm – 3:55 pm)

ACTION: Information only, no action needed.

13. Other Business

(3:55 pm – 4:00 pm)

14. Adjournment

(4:00 pm)



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To promote a thriving region through service, connectivity, and innovation.

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OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES

October 23, 2025

9:30 – 11:30 pm

An Executive Session may be called as deemed necessary by the Chair, pursuant to ORS 192.660.

Attendees: **Chair** Commissioner Pat Malone, Benton County; **Treasurer** Commissioner Sherrie Sprenger, Linn County; Mayor Alex Johnson II, Albany; Mayor Jan Kaplin, Newport; Mayor Rod Cross, Toledo; Mayor Christopher McMorrان, Philomath; Councilor Debbie Poland, Depoe Bay; Councilor Mike Caughey, Harrisburg; and Councilor Rick Booth, Waldport.

Absent: **Vice Chair** Commissioner Claire Hall, Lincoln County; Mayor Charles Maughn, Corvallis; Mayor Scott Cowan, Millersburg; Mayor Loel Trulove, Tangent; Councilor Kevin Hohnbaum, Lincoln City; Councilor Ken Bronson, Sweet Home; Councilor Jeanni Cuthbertson, Monroe; Councilor Joseph Parsons, Sodaville; Commissioner Gil Sylvia, Port of Newport; and Member Robert Kenta, Confederated Tribe of Siletz Indians.

Staff: Executive Director Ryan Vogt, Agency Director Paul Egbert; Finance Director Marit Nelson; Chief Information Officer (CIO) Jason Sele; Human Resources (HR) Director Ryan Schulze; Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Director Randi Moore, Planning and Transportation Program Manager Matt Lehman; Ride Line Program Manager Jesus Jara, Operations Supervisor Emma Chaves-Sosa, Loan Officer Didi Aho; Organizational Development and Training Specialist Vanessa Rusch; Communications Officer Karla Brouhard, SEIU 503 Union Representative Mandi Craig, Executive Assistant Celina Franklin and Executive Assistant Angelykah Light.

Public: None

Welcome and Introductions

The Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) Board of Directors Meeting was called to order by Chair Malone on October 23, 2025, at 9:36 am Via

Teams Video and Audio Conferencing, and in-person attendees. Introductions were completed by the attendees.

Public Comment

No Comments from the Public.

Consent Calendar

Mayor Cross moved to approve the Consent Calendar including the Board of Directors July 17, 2025, meeting minutes, and the Board of Directors September 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes. Treasurer Sprenger seconded the motion. Chair Malone, Treasurer Sprenger, Mayor Johnson, Mayor Kaplin, Mayor Cross, Mayor McMorrان, Councilor Poland, Councilor Caughey, and Councilor Booth all voted in favor. With no opposition, the motion was approved.

Bylaws Updates to Reflect CWACT Changes

Executive Director Vogt states the CWACT was historically a body of work overseen by OCWCOG. CWACT work will now be overseen by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff due to changes in funding.

Mayor Cross moved to approve the proposed changes to the Bylaws as reflected in the draft document. Treasurer Sprenger seconded the motion.

Chair Malone allowed for discussion.

Mayor McMorrان asked if ODOT overseeing the CWACT is a permanent change.

Chair Malone stated he has not heard any indication of the change being permanent or temporary.

Mayor Cross stated he is on the Continuous Improvement Advisory Committee and described a variety of changes that he has experienced with ODOT.

Executive Director Vogt stated the purpose of the motion request is to remove CWACT from the OCWCOG Bylaws as a subcommittee of the OCWCOG Board of Directors expressed in the Bylaws.

Chair Malone asked for all in favor of the motion stated by Mayor cross. Chair Malone, Treasurer Sprenger, Mayor Johnson, Mayor Kaplin, Mayor Cross, Mayor McMorrان, Councilor Poland, Councilor Caughey, and Councilor Booth all voted in favor. With no opposition, the motion was approved.

Cascades West Business Lending (CWBL) Resolution

Loan Officer Aho presented the resolution for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding presented in 2021. This loan requires annual or semiannual reporting. In the past, OCWCOG has provided Loan Program Advisory Committee (LPAC) meeting notes as the annual reporting documents. Going forward, EDA Resolutions will be provided to the OCWCOG Board of Directors annually.

Mayor Cross moved to approve the CWBL Resolution. Treasurer Sprenger seconded the motion. Chair Malone, Treasurer Sprenger, Mayor Johnson, Mayor Kaplin, Mayor Cross, Mayor McMorrان, Councilor Poland, Councilor Caughey, and Councilor Booth all voted in favor. With no opposition, the motion was approved.

Approval of the Collective Bargaining Agreement

HR Director Schulze provided summary of the changes in the new bargaining agreement. Changes include updates to layoffs or furlough language and procedure. HR Director Schulze stated there are updates to the procedure in the event of a catastrophic event resulting in OCWCOG office closures for an extended amount of time. Changes have been made to the rate of vacation accruals, vacation cash outs, Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA), a one-time payment of \$550 Friday prior to the Thanksgiving Holiday, and the Bargaining Agreement will now cover three years instead of the historic cadence of two years.

Mayor Cross moved to approve the changes and implement the new collective bargaining agreement. Treasurer Sprenger seconded the motion. Chair Malone, Treasurer Sprenger, Mayor Johnson, Mayor Kaplin, Mayor Cross, Mayor McMorrان, Councilor Poland, Councilor Caughey, and Councilor Booth all voted in favor. With no opposition, the motion was approved.

Sub local Officer 937, Mandi Craig thanked Paul Egbert, Ryan Schulze, Marit Nelson, Alicia Lucke, and Ashley Bogue Brown on behalf of the other Union Representatives for their collaborative efforts while bargaining.

Management Compensation Package

Executive Director Vogt requested the management compensation package reflect the newly approved bargaining agreement for represented staff.

Mayor Cross moved to approve the changes and implement the management compensation package. Treasurer Sprenger seconded the motion. Chair Malone, Treasurer Sprenger, Mayor Johnson, Mayor Kaplin, Mayor Cross, Mayor McMorrان, Councilor Poland, Councilor Caughey, and Councilor Booth all voted in favor. With no opposition, the motion was approved.

New Logo

Communications Officer Brouhard presented the new logo proposed for OCWCOG. The proposal is to request review and move to approve the new logo for use going forward.

Treasurer Sprenger asked what the cost implications will be for updating materials with the new image.

Finance Director Nelson stated current materials will be used first and replaced with the new logo as needed.

Treasurer Sprenger asked for clarification on the roll out timeline and the cost of items such as signs, and tablecloths.

Executive Director Vogt stated items such as lanyards and tee shirts will be distributed to staff and events like the All Staff. Additional items such as the sign for the building will be aligned with the flexible budget. The Board of Directors will not be requested to approve special funding. If additional funds are needed, they will be outlined in the next budget cycle.

Communications Officer Brouhard explained the variety of uses the new logo will have and how each might be used.

Chair Malone stated the logo is attractive and expressed agreement with the update.

Communications Officer Brouhard stated the change will assist with leaning into the identifier of the agency as Cascades West. There has also been development of a new brand guideline that will be available internally and externally.

Treasurer Sprenger moved to approve the adoption of the new logo. Mayor Cross seconded the motion. Chair Malone, Treasurer Sprenger, Mayor Johnson, Mayor Kaplin, Mayor Cross, Mayor McMorrin, Councilor Poland, Councilor Caughey, and Councilor Booth all voted in favor. With no opposition, the motion was approved.

Executive Director Update

Executive Director Vogt states the Fiscal position in the agency remains stable and is not of immediate concern in the face of the Federal Shutdown. OCWCOG is preparing internally for the full stoppage for the delay of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Preparations include cataloging alternative food resources, staff driven food collection and increased access to educational materials. OCWCOG is also preparing for an increase in consumers that may become emotionally elevated with additional manager level support for reception staff.

Mayor Cross asked if Meals on Wheels accepts donations and where the money needs to be directed too.

SDS Director Moore stated donations can come in a variety of ways including a link on the OCWCOG website, or in person at any of the OCWCOG offices. Donations can even be made to specific meal sites.

Executive Director Vogt stated he had attended a variety of conferences held by the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC). The meeting assists in allowing Executives to speak on a variety of agency successes and learning opportunities.

Agency Director Egbert stated he was also able to attend the conference and was given inspiration for internal and external priorities. Agency Director will be increasing partnership conversations and increasing community exposure. Interviews for the Community and Economic Development (CED) Director position have been completed, more updates to come. OCWCOG Senior Leadership will soon be spending time in Benton County to refresh the Strategic Priorities.

Executive Director Vogt stated there have been some additional intentional efforts to celebrate staff including a recent luncheon event for staff who have met specific milestones. Executive Director Vogt states he wishes to continue finding ways to celebrate and thank the staff for the work they do and their impact on the region.

Other Business

Chair Malone took some time to express the importance of quorum. The next meeting will be held on December 4th at 2 pm in the Albany OCWCOG conference room.

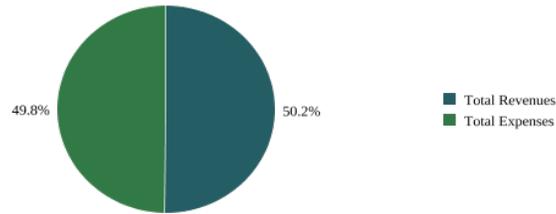
Adjournment

Chair Malone adjourned the meeting at 10:59 am.

Meeting minutes taken by Angelykah Light.



Year to Date Total Actuals



Year to Date Actuals to Total Budget



2026 OCWCOG MEETING SCHEDULE

	BUDGET COMMITTEE	FINANCE COMMITTEE	FULL BOARD OF DIRECTORS	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	LPAC COMMITTEE	LOCATION
	1:00P - 1:30P	1:30P-2:00P	2:00P-4:00P	9:30A-11:30A	9:00A-9:30A	
	Thursday	Thursday	Thursday	Thursday	Thursday	
January	**15	15	15			Albany
February				26	26	Albany
March	*19	19	19			Toledo
April	*16			23	23	Albany
May	21	21	21			Albany
June				25	25	Toledo
July		16	16			Albany
August				27	27	Albany
September		17	17			Toledo
October				22	22	Albany
November	-	-	-	-	-	-
December	**3	3	3			Albany

Budget Committee meeting is Thursday's before the Finance Committee meeting.

Finance Committee meeting is Thursday's before the Full Board of Directors meeting.

Board of Director meeting is 3rd Thursday of the month.

Executive Committee meeting is the 4th Thursday of the month.

Loan Program Advisory Committee (LPAC) meeting is Thursday's directly before the Executive Committee meeting.

* Budget Committee work group meetings.

**Budget Committee may call an additional session to cover a Supplemental Budget.



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December 04, 2025

TO: Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) Board of Directors

FROM: Loan Program Advisory Committee Members, and staff

RE: Loan Program Advisory Committee Member Appointments

ACTION: Appointment of a Community Economic Development Member

BACKGROUND:

The Loan Program Advisory Committee was established by the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments to advise the Cascades West COG staff and COG Board on matters relating to the development and operations of the Small Business Lending Program (Cascades West Business Lending – CWBL).

The Loan Program Advisory Committee is requesting the appointment of Sarah Buddingh, as the community and economic development member seat on the committee. This seat was left vacant after the departure of the Kelly Hart, from Lebanon. Sarah Buddingh will serve in the community and economic development seat and bring a strong knowledge of economic development and community impact as an economic development practitioner serving in our Cascades West Region. Sarah comes to us as an Economic Development Practitioner in Lincoln County but works with our Cascades West COG region. She currently serves as the project manager for the Economic Development Alliance of Lincoln County (EDALC).

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To: OCWCOG Board of Directors
From: Jan Kaplan, Mayor of Newport
Subject: Proposal for Regional response to ICE actions
Date: 12/2/25

The City of Newport is charged with the responsibility of protecting and ensuring the best interests for the City, its residents, businesses, and visitors. Currently, three issues are hanging in the balance that can have immeasurable impacts on Newport and the region:

- the potential of an ICE facility at Newport Municipal Airport,
- the permanent return of the US Coast Guard rescue helicopter to Newport,
- Confirmed reports that ICE is attempting to rent/lease 200 hotel rooms for up to a year for operations that could begin on Dec. 15, 2025

To assist us with these complex issues, the City has hired outside legal counsel.

All of our City's elected officials, including myself, Mayor Jan Kaplan, recognize that the potential placement of ICE facilities and agents in Newport could have substantial adverse regional impacts, both along the coast and into the valley. We are also aware of attempts to rent hotel rooms in other cities along the coast.

1. I am requesting the Cascades West Council of Governments to act as a regional partner and convener on this issue, if participating agencies agree. To that end I am proposing that we develop an MOU or other formal agreements for local governments to sign on to.
2. The legal costs of this issue could be substantial. As such, I am also requesting the COG to consider serving as a fiscal sponsor to be able to procure donations to help cities and counties legally defend themselves against this issue.

DRAFT

Subject: Local Response to Federal Immigration Enforcement & Potential ICE Facilities on the Oregon Coast

Why This Matters Now

Federal immigration agencies (including ICE) have increased enforcement activity in Oregon and are exploring possible facilities and staging areas along the coast.

For our community, this has **three main implications**:

1. **Community safety & trust** – Immigrant and mixed-status families may be afraid to access services or report crimes.
2. **Local workforce** – Fishing, processing, hospitality, and tourism businesses rely heavily on immigrant workers.
3. **Tourism & visitor confidence** – Visible raids, detention facilities, and negative media coverage can make visitors feel the Oregon coast is unsafe or unwelcoming, hurting small businesses and local tax revenues.

Our local response aims to protect **both people and place**.

Sample Local Approach

1. Non-participation in civil immigration detention

- The city/county will *not* enter contracts or leases that turn our jails, airports, ports, or public lands into **civil immigration detention or long-term holding facilities**, except where clearly required by law and only after public notice and a vote.
- We will avoid “back-door” arrangements that effectively make local facilities de facto detention or mass staging sites.

2. Transparency and early warning

- Any federal or contractor inquiry about using local public property for detention or enforcement staging must be:
 - Reported promptly to the city/county manager/administrator and attorney.
 - Logged and summarized on a public webpage, to the extent allowed by law.
- Neighboring coastal jurisdictions, port districts, **tribal governments**, and tourism partners (chambers, DMOs, lodging associations) will be notified of proposals with regional or visitor impacts.

3. Support for residents, visitors, and peaceful protest

- Maintain a **public information page** with:
 - “Know your rights” resources.
 - Basic information on Oregon’s sanctuary laws and our local policies.
 - Updates on significant enforcement/facility developments.
 - Clear reassurance that the Oregon coast is **safe, welcoming, and open for visitors**.
- Affirm the right to **peaceful protest** and direct departments to support safe assembly and de-escalation, without local participation in federal immigration enforcement.

4. Rapid response plan

- Create a **Rapid Response Team (RRT)** led by the manager/administrator, including law enforcement, legal, communications, emergency management, port/airport (if applicable), **tourism/economic development**, and community engagement.
- The plan activates when there is:
 - A verified raid or major enforcement action;
 - A facility/contractor proposal;
 - A legal demand implicating sanctuary laws; or
 - Clear signs of **tourism impacts** (media narratives, cancellations, visitor concern).
- Within the first 24 hours the RRT will:
 - Verify facts;
 - Ensure local agencies are not exceeding what the law requires;
 - Issue a short, factual public statement with resident and visitor information;
 - Brief council/board, tribal, business, and regional partners.

5. Ongoing reporting and coordination

- Departments update policies to align with Oregon law and this framework.
- Regular public reports summarize contacts with federal agencies, facility proposals, and any observed impacts on community trust and the visitor economy.
- Continued collaboration with **tribal governments, business and tourism partners, and community organizations** to share information and coordinate non-enforcement support for affected residents and workers.



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Senior, Disability, and Community Services Programs Board of Director Updates

December 4, 2025

Employer Resource Connection Good News Stories

The Employer Resource Connection (ERC) Program provides training, support, and resources to help Medicaid consumer-employers develop successful working relationships with their homecare workers (HCWs). ERC consultants support in-home consumers by providing guidance, tips, and coaching to manage their employer-related responsibilities.

OCWCOG's ERC consultants, Jennifer and Sharon, shared these stories about the work they do and the impact this program can have on the lives of the people we serve.

"I recently worked with a consumer looking for a homecare worker. When we initially met, the consumer shared that he was unable to read or write, so he was hesitant to reach out to potential workers. We discussed having me screen workers for him and set up interviews for us to complete together to find a good match. This consumer lives in Albany and has had a bit of a difficult time lately. Almost every day, he likes to go to CHANCE for breakfast, visit friends and staff and attend a weekly literacy class through them. We scheduled two interviews with potential homecare workers; the consumer really liked the first worker, but they could not start until after the first of the year. The second worker couldn't have been a better good match for this consumer. She told the consumer that she has been sober for two and a half years, spent a lot of her time at CHANCE during recovery and was familiar with all that they offer for our community. Not only did they have a great deal in common, but they also seemed to genuinely hit it off and like each other. The homecare worker will be start working with the consumer next week".

"I recently worked with a daughter whose mother was in a nursing facility, but they wanted to bring her home on hospice to be with family. The consumer had 60 hours of in-home care a week and the family was completely lost and overwhelmed but they knew they really wanted to bring her home. I had an initial ERC visit with the family and from there placed an ad and assisted with setting up and being present for interviews. The consumer's daughter stated she felt so much more comfortable with ERC assistance in helping her to set up care for her mom to come home for her end-of-life stage".

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Meals on Wheels

The program continues to stay deeply engaged with the community and focused on long-term sustainability. Recently, we received a generous \$290,000 bequest from the estate of a local community member who intentionally included our program in her end-of-life planning. This rare and meaningful gift reflects extraordinary dedication and has a profound impact on our ability to serve the region.

MOW has also revitalized the Meals on Wheels Advisory Committee (MOWAC) as a subgroup of the existing SSAC and DSAC. We look forward to engaging ambassadors across the region who will help advance the Meals on Wheels mission and strengthen community support for the program.

Lastly, we recently launched our fall campaign letter, inviting one-time or recurring monthly contributions to help rebuild a strong foundation of committed donors. Within just five days of mailing the letters, we reached our return-on-investment threshold and continue to see generous contributions come in. We are deeply grateful for a community that recognizes the vital importance of nourishing older adults and people with disabilities, and that expresses this understanding through abundant financial support.

Our recent outreach for volunteers for meal delivery has also yielded unexpected generosity. While tabling outside local grocery stores to recruit volunteers, we received nearly \$500 in donations at each location within only a few hours. Though fundraising was not the primary goal, the community's spontaneous support continues to inspire our team and reinforces the shared commitment to caring for one another.

Emergency Preparedness Training

Senior and Disability Services provided a free Emergency Preparedness Training at the Linn County Expo Center on November 17. The event featured expert presentations, hands-on tabletop exercises, practical tools, and participant giveaways; all designed to help strengthen our ability to protect and support those who rely on our services.

(If available, adding the number of registered attendees and participants would enhance this section.)

Adult Protective Services Supports Mandatory Reporter Training

Adult Protective Services (APS) partnered with agency leadership to reinforce expectations related to Mandatory Reporter obligations. APS supported both efforts to establish an ongoing cadence for annual compliance training and offered series all staff and leadership trainings to bring everyone current with Mandatory Reporter training.

Following this focused training effort, APS Screeners recorded 543 potential abuse complaints in October, representing over a 25% increase from the previous month and marking the highest monthly total received.

Delayed SNAP Benefit Issuance

Due to the recent federal shutdown, Oregonians experienced delays in their regularly scheduled Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. In Oregon, 1 in 6 residents rely on SNAP to help meet their nutritional needs.

Eligible Oregonians received their delayed benefits on November 7, during a short window between court rulings. SNAP issuance fully returned to normal operations on November 13,

following the end of the federal shutdown. December benefits will be issued on their regular schedule.

Honoring Steve Uerlings' Service to Oregon Cascades West Senior Services Foundation (OCWSSF) Board

OCWCOG staff and OCWSSF's board acknowledged Chair Steve Uerlings and his 10 years of dedicated board service during the November 2025 meeting. The OCWSSF, a sister foundation to OCWCOG, supplements public funding for services to older adults in Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties and is a key resource development partner for critical programs like Meals on Wheels or SHIBA. Steve's plaque read: *"Your leadership, commitment, and passion have made a lasting impact on our local seniors and community. With heartfelt appreciation, we honor your decade of extraordinary contribution."* With Steve's retirement comes a vacancy for a new Chair. Are you interested in serving on the board, or know of someone who is passionate about advocating for seniors? Contact Vickie Staffelbach at vstaffelbach@ocwco.org to learn more.



Program Highlights

Money Management Program (MMP)

The MMP service can support consumers who don't have the capacity to manage their own federal benefits such as Social Security and Veterans benefits by becoming the payee for the consumer's federal benefits and staff are appointed by Social Security to manage day-to-day financial tasks. The much needed program has had several hiccups over the last few years, but due to a newly developed strong working relationship with the local Social Security office, the Money Management Program has been able create a more streamlined application process for new Rep Payee clients. As a result, we have been able to successfully be appointed as representative payee for 13 new consumers since September 2025.

Aging and Disability Resource Connection

During the month of October, our ADRC completed 1,094 calls with the community and started 388 of intake referrals for services.

Community Outreach Presentations

Staff from our Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) delivered two community presentations during the month of November. The first presentation was provided to several nursing staff members that work for the Corvallis Clinic system. Attendees reported that the information was very helpful and indicated they plan to share ADRC materials with the individuals they support. The second presentation was delivered to a group of Volunteer Long-Term Care Ombudsmen who meet monthly at The Grace Center. The group requested a deeper understanding of the ADRC and the processes that occur once a referral is made to the ADRC. Participants shared that they found the information highly informative and that the session significantly enhanced their understanding.

Tabling Events

During the months of October and November, our ADRC and Older American Act Case Management unit staffed several resource events in the community

- Mennonite Village Wellness Fair in Albany
- Chinook Winds Senior Fair in Lincoln City
- Medicare Rodeo & More Resource Fair in Turner, which was marketed to and attended by individuals who reside in rural areas of Linn County, including Stayton, Scio, Lyons, Mill City, Gates, and Detroit areas
- End-of-Life Resource Fair in Corvallis
- North End Senior Solutions Family Caregiver Event in Gleneden

New Grant for Community Service Programs

OCWCOG's Community Services Programs Department was awarded a \$15,000 New Partner grant October 1, 2025 from IHN-CCO to support its Stand By Me-OR Program (\$BM). OCWCOG offers this free financial coaching program to low to moderate income families. \$BM meets clients where they are in their financial journey, providing coaching around spending plans, credit, savings, and debt. The Program specializes in clients 18-35, women, and Latinx. The IHN-CCO project creates a NEW curriculum focused on older adults ages 65+ and "just in time decision making"; that is, downsizing a home, drawing social security early, adjusting to the loss of a spouse; or, how to re-enter the job market/obtain work credits. This grant supports operational costs for writing and printing the curriculum, as well as a translation to Spanish.

A few notes of interest:

- This project idea stemmed from noticing a lack of health equity around financial wellness coaching, particularly for older homebound seniors living in Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties.
- As an Area Agency on Aging, Cascades West often receives calls from seniors, many times widowed females, who don't meet eligibility requirements for the OR Money Management Program Rep Payee program, are over-income for Legal Aid supports, or too young for Senior Companions bill pay support and friendship. These clients aren't looking for typical \$BM coaching requests (e.g. introduction to credit card use/how to buy your first car, online impulse buys and subscription tracking, compound interest do's and don'ts/student debt/etc.). Instead, these clients are typically looking for advice on "Just in Time Decision Making":
<https://www.aging.senate.gov/hearings/postponed-financial-literacy-addressing-the-unique-just-in-time-decisions-older-americans-and-people-with-disabilities-face>.

- Senior clients also typically prefer to meet in person, and not online, which is our typical Stand By Me coaching appointment.
- In response to reducing these equity barriers, and in the spirit of addressing the digital divide, this pilot project seeks to create a new iteration of our Coaching Program and create a NEW curriculum centered around older adults 1) coming into our Cascade West offices or 2) having a home visit.
- Next steps include grant-writing for a full-time seniors-focused coach for the Stand By Me OR Program. Do you know of a funder that would like to support this endeavor? Reach out to Alicia Lucke at alucke@ocwcoq.org or call 541-924-8440.

Benton County Veterans Services



OCWCOG's Lead Veteran Service Officer, Mark Lapinkas, reads the Veteran's Day Proclamation at Benton County's 2025 Veterans Breakfast Reception and Board of Commissioners Meeting.



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Community and Economic Development OCWCOG Board Updates

December 04, 2025

Introduction to the Community and Economic Development (CED) Department:

CED is a diverse department with a wide range of programs, projects, and goals. Currently the CED department has 34 regular staff and 2 interim staff. Recently our department has seen a few different transitions. Jesus Jara has accepted the position of Ride Line Manager. The Ride Line program welcomed Cassandra Atlas back as well as promoted Andres Ojeda. Both will serve as supervisors for Ride Line. Other new appointments in the CED Department include Brittany Sosa as the Mileage Reimbursement Specialist, and Katyna Pliler as a Transportation Brokerage Specialist. CED Planning also onboarded Justin Epiaka, an associate planner. CED's primary focus areas cover: Cascades West Business Lending, Cascades West Ride Line, Transportation Planning, GIS Services, Community/ Economic Development Planning, and Grant Writing.

Cascades West Business Lending:

- The SBA 504 loan to the veterinarian in Corvallis was lost due to the government shutdown. The borrower was nervous about how long it would be until reopen and the banker determined they could provide the entire loan if the borrower paid a 20% down payment rather than 10% with SBA 504. Two other 504 loan in process and well as two "local loan" prospects in early stages.

Cascades West Ride Line:

- Quarter 3 Highlights
 - Ride Line was subcontracted with 23 Transportation Provider Companies
 - 131 Active Vehicles
 - 190 Certified Drivers

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- Total number of Calls Received 26,832
- Total Trips Requested 72,338
 - 12,334 were Mileage Reimbursement
 - 9,365 were Wheelchair Transport
- Total Trips Completed in 52,761
 - 10,0911 were Mileage Reimbursement
 - 6,899 were Wheelchair Transports

Transportation Planning:

- The CED department kicked off the Innovative Mobility Hub grant. The work will start with an inventory of regional projects including placemaking, traffic calming, and other smaller scale quick build projects. We want to create a regional tool kit to show what is possible for communities to implement.
- The Metropolitan Planning Areas (AAMPO and CAMPO) kicked off the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). This work will take the majority of 2026 and include several public meetings and outreach events.

Community and Economic Development Planning:

- The Cascades West Economic Development District (CWEDD) Board of Directors adopted the 2025-2030 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The plan is available [HERE](#).
- Staff continued discussions about amending the membership structure to better represent the economic interests of the region.
- Staff continued working on a regional marketing video to highlight the CEDS and 4-County EDD region.
- Staff continue to staff the Cascades West Regional Consortium (CWRC). The group was not awarded a DLCD grant for Phase II of the Business Plan for a regional wetland bank. The group will be discussing another DLCD wetland TA grant that could support projects related to housing development.
- Staff are supporting the City of Lebanon with land use planning services.

- Staff will be working with City of Philomath to update their development code to reflect current legislation-required updates. This work will be funded through a DLCD Technical Assistance grant that planning staff pursued for this purpose.
- Staff recently initiated the process of working with City of Toledo to update their Parks Master Plan. The primary effort behind this project is being led by our recently hired Associate Planner, Justin Epiaka.

Grants Services and Support

Circumstances surrounding the Federal funding programs pause, employee furloughs, and its shutdown, as well as State agency grant cycles have shortened grant application timelines and subsequently impacted projects, eligibility, and awards. These grant programs will continue to be oversubscribed and highly competitive with smaller awards and be geographically awarded across the State.

We are also waiting for an executed contract from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program to begin developing a regional safety action plan for member jurisdictions: cities of Albany, Lebanon, Millersburg, Sweet Home, and Tangent, and Linn County. The purpose of the Safety Action plan is to reduce road fatalities and injuries. The City of Tangent is the fiscal agent and the OCWCOG CED will manage the project. We resubmitted an SS4A proposal for Lincoln County jurisdictions: Depoe Bay, Lincoln City, Newport, the Siletz Tribe, Toledo, Waldport, and Yachats.

The OCWCOG CED grant service successfully secured two Oregon Parks grants for the City of Tangent. The First grant will fund the design and construction of a new covered pavilion at Bass Estate Community Park. The other grant will be used to update the City's Master Park Plan. In both cases, the OCWCOG CED department will provide project management and planning services.

In August, we submitted a proposal on behalf of the Cascades Regional Consortium (CWRC) to develop wetland mitigation bank strategic and business plan. That proposal aimed to reduce wetland barriers and build upon a 2023 Wetland Mitigation Feasibility Study for Linn and Benton County jurisdictions. Unfortunately, that proposal was not funded. We continue to look for other funding to move the regional mitigation bank to next level.

2025 Year to Date Grant Activity

OCWCOG CED grant staff provided some degree of project scoping, scaling, writing, and support for the following applications.

Type	Applicant	Grant Request	Match (Cash and/or In-Kind)	Total Project Cost	Status
Business Development					
CWIHub/SBA Growth Accelerator Prize	OCWCOG	\$ 75,000	\$ -	\$ 75,000	Not Funded
CWBL Marketing Outreach and Rebrand/EDA FY25 Disaster Supplemental	OCWCOG	\$ 216,290	\$ 75,576	\$ 291,866	Not Funded
TA for Underrepresented Businesses/Biz OR	OCWCOG for CWEDD	\$ 195,368	\$ 49,429	\$ 244,797	Not Funded
Subtotal		\$ 486,658	\$ 125,005	\$ 611,663	
Housing and Land Use					
Villages at Cascades Head Connector Road/USDOT Rural and Tribal Asst	Lincoln City	\$ 250,000	\$ -	\$ 250,000	Pending
Champion Mill Redevelopment/HISF	Lebanon	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ 100,000	Funded
Development Codes Update/DLCD	Philomath	\$ 60,000	\$ -	\$ 60,000	Funded
Toledo - DLCD SDC update	Toledo	\$ 60,000	\$ -	\$ 60,000	Not Funded
Linn-Benton Wetlands Mitigation Bank Strategic and Business Plan/DLCD	OCWCOG for CWRC	\$ 160,000	\$ -	\$ 160,000	Not Funded
Updated and Unified Master Parks and Trails Plan/DLCD Gen. TA	Lebanon	\$ 60,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 95,000	Pending
Subtotal		\$ 690,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 725,000	
Infrastructure					
Toledo - ODF Property Infrastructure Analysis/HISF	Toledo	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ 50,000	Pending
Update Water Master Plan/OHA SIPP	Sodaville	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ 50,000	Funded
Subtotal		\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ 100,000	
Parks and Recreation					
Schooner Creek Discovery Park Phase III/CIP Rep Val Hoyle	Lincoln City	\$ 500,000	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 5,500,000	Not Funded
Bass Estate Community Park Pavilion/Oregon Parks Small Grant	Tangent	\$ 100,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 140,000	Funded
Master Parks Plan Update/Oregon Parks Planning Grant	Tangent	\$ 32,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 40,000	Funded
Subtotal		\$ 632,000	\$ 5,048,000	\$ 5,680,000	
Transportation					
Lincoln County Multijurisdictional Safety Action Plan/FHWA, SS4A	OCWCOG	\$ 387,383	\$ 99,360	\$ 496,743	Pending
Innovative Mobility Program/ ODOT	OCWCOG	\$ 90,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 100,000	Funded
Subtotal		\$ 387,383	\$ 99,360	\$ 496,743	



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Technology Services Board Updates

December 4, 2025

COG Intranet Site

The COG Intranet site has been launched. This is a great resource for staff to access and share internal information across the agency.

City of Monroe

The City of Monroe has joined the COG to receive tech support services as a member agency. We look forward to working with the City Administrator, Thomas J. Fiorelli to support and help modernize their systems.

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**Office of Human Resources
Board of Directors Memo**

December 4, 2025

Staffing Updates:

- **Reina Avila has been promoted into the HR Manager role following Jesus Jara's departure.**
- **Nick Andrews has been formally moved into HR, in support of Organizational Development work led by Vanessa Rusch.**
- **We are in the interview process for an HR Generalist 2**

Program Outcomes:

- **Employee Engagement Survey data has been shared at the SLT level with plans for sharing data to all staff, we have seen improvements overall in response rate and key measures. Areas of focus remain the same with an emphasis on supervisors meeting with staff to discuss performance and development goals.**

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Transportation Brokerage Advisory Committee

Subcommittee Updates for the COG Board

December 04, 2025

Committee Updates:

The Transportation Brokerage Advisory Committee (TBAC) held their last meeting on Thursday, October 16, 2025. During this meeting staff introduced a new meeting structure with standing agenda items and new reports that will continue to be on TBAC agendas moving forward. Additionally, as there were new Ride Line leadership changes, introductions were made by staff and members in attendance.

Staff were able to share reports with the group regarding new client growth, TNC Contracts and Grievances Analysis. Programmatic reports were also shared covering the following:

- Utilization Report – since QRyde Implementation
- Trip Medical Reasoning – since QRyde implementation
- Quality Assurance Report – call center metrics for the last 2 quarters
- Performance Reports
- Ride Line Heat Map

The committee also entertained an agenda item brought to them by Quality Medical Transportation's Owner/Operator Tima O'Malley. Quality Medical is one of the Ride Line vendors. O'Malley's agenda topic discussed the following topics with RL Leadership and the other TBAC members present:

- Scheduling drop times
- Planning one week in advance and working together to reconcile a solution
- Reconsidering the current meeting frequency for TBAC
- Proposal to consider holding meetings every other month
- Alternative proposal for if meeting schedule stays the same, reschedule a cancelled meeting to occur sooner, rather than just cancel.

TBAC Staff also provided a presentation for new and returning members for roles and expectations for being on the committee.

TBAC staff are continuing to work on recruiting more members for the TBAC as well as filling two current vacancies to their current membership roster. If there is interest in joining the TBAC, please reach out to amuzechenko@ocwcog.org, to see what our membership requirements are.

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Upcoming Meetings:

The TBAC meets quarterly, with the next meeting being Thursday, January 15, 2026. Meetings are held every three months on the third Thursday of the month, from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm. Members of the public and interested parties are welcome to attend any TBAC meetings. Meeting information and agenda packets are available on the TBAC website at the following link: [Transportation Brokerage Advisory Committee | OCWCOG.](#)



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Cascades West Economic Development District Subcommittee Updates to the COG Board

December 04, 2025

September CWEDD Meeting Summary:

At the September CWEDD Board Meeting, held at Benton County Kalapuya Building, members discussed approval of the 2025-230 CEDS, which includes the public comment memo. Additionally, members discussed a CEDS Marketing Video Proposal and future membership updates.

Staff Justin Peterson gave a presentation on the progress of the Linn Benton EPA Brownfields Coalition Grant ([Linn Benton Brownfields Coalition | OCWCOG](#)). After the presentation the floor was opened to members and the public for discussion on this topic.

Members received updates from the CEDS working groups such as the Innovation Hubs, Broadband Action Team (BAT), The Cascades West Regional Consortium (CWRC), Early Childhood Education, Rural Economic Alliance (REAL), Lane Economic Committee (LEC), and a Blue Economy update from the Economic Development Alliance of Lincoln County (EDALC).

During the Other Business Section, the board discussed the Mass Timber Webinar and other regionally significant updates. The group also provided a few topics for the upcoming December meeting.

The next regularly scheduled CWEDD Board Meeting is set for Thursday, December 11, 2025, at 9:00am. This meeting will be hybrid, and the in-person location will be at the Albany Cascades West Council of Governments. Members of the public and interested parties are welcome and encouraged to attend any CWEDD Board meetings either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams. Meeting information and agenda packets are available on the CWEDD website here: [Cascades West Economic Development District | OCWCOG](#).

Project and Task Updates:

- The 2025 priority project for CWEDD was the 2025-2030 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS was approved during the September Board meeting!

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- A new project that is currently in the works is the CWEDD Regional Marketing video, stay tuned for more updates on this project at the December 11th CWEDD Board meeting.