

2025 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



CleanWater  Services

Adopted by the Board of County Commissioners and Clean Water Services – November 19, 2024

Land Acknowledgement

We recognize and honor the continuous contributions of all indigenous inhabitants to the county, and to the Kalapuya people who have stewarded this land since time immemorial.

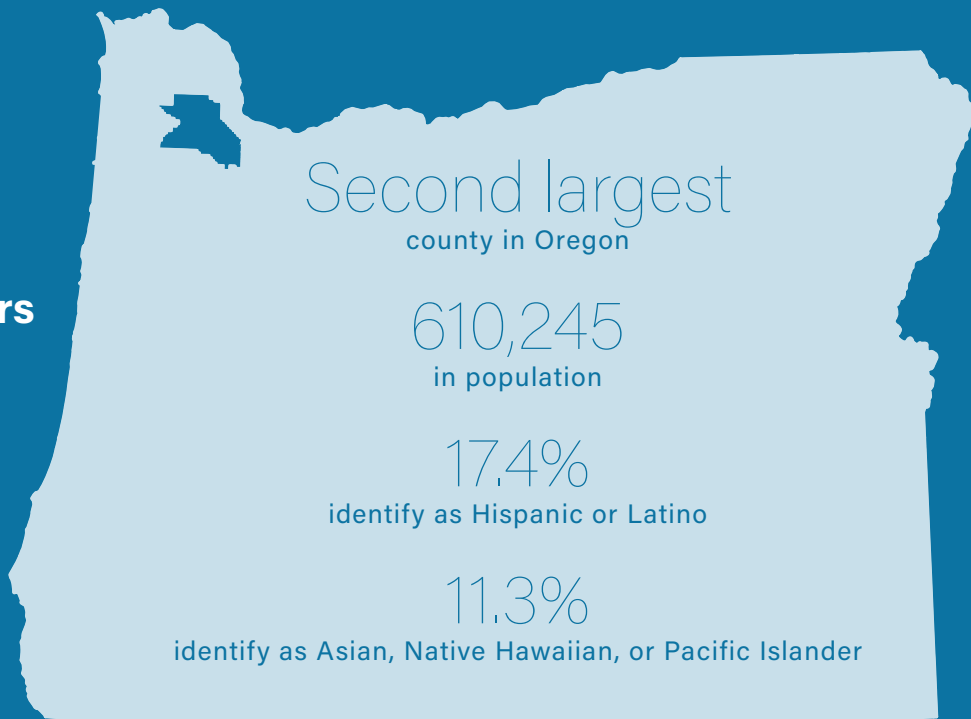
Introduction

Spanning from the vibrant urban neighborhoods on the western side of Oregon’s largest metropolitan area to the picturesque eastern slopes of the Coast Range, Washington County is home to over 600,000 residents, nearly 400,000 jobs, and thousands of businesses. Our economic landscape includes a growing technology and small businesses sector that is essential to our communities. However, because of the long-term impacts of statewide restrictions on local government revenue sources and decreased investments by the state and federal governments, it is increasingly challenging to secure the resources needed to do the work to support our communities and businesses.

Washington County is proud to be one of Oregon’s most diverse counties. Nearly 40% of our population identifies as Black, Latino, Asian, Indigenous, or other People of Color. Over 360,000 people reside in the county’s 15 cities, and beyond our urban centers, over 200,000 people live in urban unincorporated communities like Aloha, Bethany, Bull Mountain, and Garden Home. The remaining 5%, or about 30,000 individuals, live in the rural areas of Western Washington County.

In the last four decades, Washington County’s population has doubled. To support our thriving communities, the county provides a range of critical services—including some services that are mandated by the state. This includes necessary infrastructure like affordable housing, roads and sidewalks, public buildings, but also other vital services such as behavioral and public health, public safety, and emergency management.

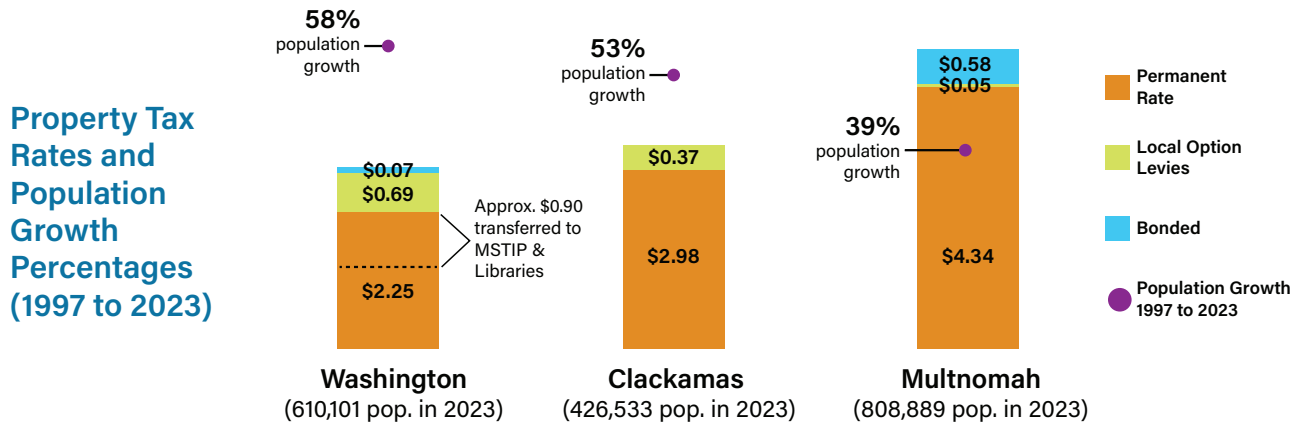
By the Numbers



Source: Population Research Center, Portland State University and U.S. Census Bureau

Washington County has worked with the state government and cities to bring sizeable investments to the region that have strengthened and diversified our economy, housed a rapidly expanding population, and created opportunities for residents to thrive and to make their dreams a reality.

Despite our expansion, Washington County faces significant financial challenges due to our rapid growth and the statewide cap on property taxes. The passage of Measure 5 and Measure 50 in the 1990s locked property tax rates in Washington County at now outdated levels, creating a dire reality in which our revenue is insufficient to meet the increasing modern-day demands of our residents.



As Oregon's fastest-growing region with the lowest property tax rate in the tri-county area, Washington County is under significant budget pressure. State and federal investments have declined, leaving us with a shortfall in funding for essential services like community corrections, behavioral health, and trial courts. This funding gap forces us to make tough decisions, including cutting services or using general funds to cover state mandates, which impacts our ability to invest in programs to address systemic inequities.

Washington County's vibrant economy benefits the Portland Metro Area and the entire state, with a diverse range of businesses from large corporations to small enterprises. While we are bolstered by our economic activity, we face growing challenges in providing adequate housing and basic services for our workforce and their families, and for our booming communities. We cannot balance paying for the services that invest in our community and meet the mandates for services from other governments without additional resources.

In partnership with federal, state, regional, and local government entities, Washington County is committed to addressing these challenges and enhancing our ability to bring additional investments to the region.

Therefore, our agenda focuses on how we can fulfill our mission and serve our shared constituencies through policy changes, investment and collaboration. Working in partnership with federal and state government, Washington County is committed to overcoming our present challenges to create an increasingly safe, equitable and inclusive place to live, work and thrive.

WASHINGTON COUNTY GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Guiding principles are driven by the overall goals and mission of the Board to provide robust and equitable service delivery to the community.

Maintain the County's ability to design and implement programs that support, serve, and respond to community needs by defending local control of policies, processes, and outcomes.

Enhance local efforts to serve the diverse population of Washington County in an equitable and inclusive manner.

Oppose efforts to preempt, restrict, reduce, or eliminate existing revenue sources.

Oppose unfunded mandates.

Approach policy solutions through the promotion of recognized best practices and collaborative problem solving.

Maintain and enhance state funding of programs and services provided by the County in partnership with the state.

Support policies that enhance economic growth while advancing a healthy and sustainable environment.

Secure flexibility in funding services and advocate for policies that recognize the critical partnership between state, counties, and cities that is necessary for our economy and community to thrive.



WASHINGTON COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Legislative priorities reflect the needs and goals of the Board for the year’s legislative session.

- Secure stabilized and sustainable funding for services that the state requires the county to provide.
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- Develop policies to enable the county to recruit and retain the talent necessary for our communities to thrive.
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- Secure funding for residents living in properties facing expiring affordability restrictions.
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- Advance legislation to create a modernized process for 100% consent-based special district annexations, increasing responsiveness and reducing approval timelines for property owners and developers.
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- Ensure that any county revenue collected pursuant to ORS 530.110 that is lost through implementation of the Habitat Conservation Plan (HC) is restored by the state on an ongoing basis.

PRIORITIES



Secure stabilized and sustainable funding for services that the state requires the county to provide.

- Fully fund county community corrections agencies to ensure required service levels are provided, supporting targeted investments to reduce recidivism and improve public safety, including enhanced funding for Justice Reinvestment Grants.
- Strengthen funding for county assessment and taxation operations to robustly support the fair collection of local revenues for all jurisdictions that rely on property taxes.
- Increase funding for the county law library to ensure access to legal materials for community members that need support navigating the legal system and seeking justice.
- Procure funding to support individuals with substance use disorder by sustaining or expanding access to equitable treatment across the continuum of care.
 - Fix funding formulas to utilize accurate and transparent data to better account for the needs of the treatment and recovery resources in Washington County, such as the Behavioral Health Resource Network.
 - Create a new funding formula for future recommended or required programs, such as the county deflection program, to support the county and community service providers' capacity needs and programmatic costs of the county and its service providers to assist with prevention efforts and help those seeking treatment to overcoming addiction.
 - Fully fund the additional requirements and tools created in HB 4002 (2024) for those with substance use disorders that become justice involved, including specialty courts, community corrections, District Attorney's Office, expungement programs, and Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) in carceral settings.



Develop policies to enable the county to recruit and retain the talent necessary for our communities to thrive.

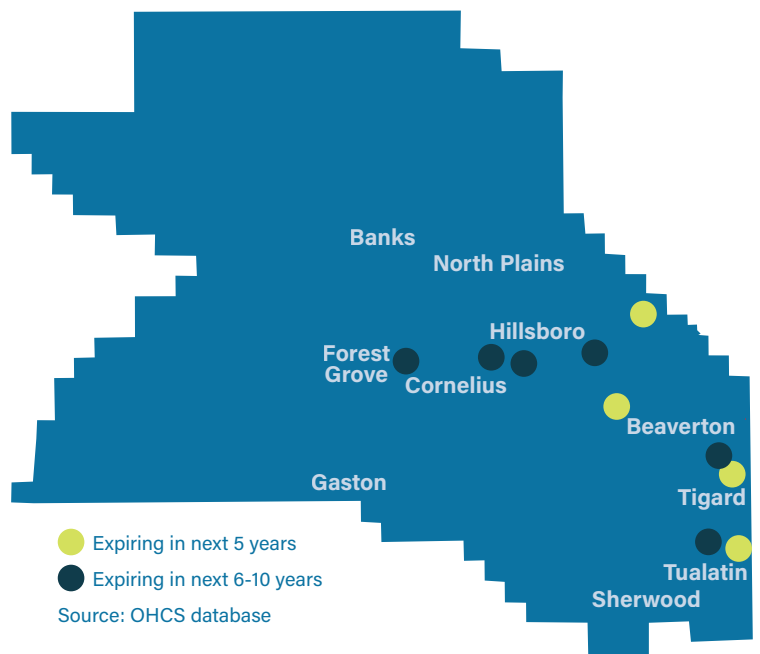
- Obtain investment for the development of our workforce to meet county staffing and community needs across all departments.
- Obtain tools to help Oregon gain a competitive advantage in hiring nationally across all workforce sectors.



Secure funding for residents living in properties facing expiring affordability restrictions.

- Develop a dedicated legislative funding source to support residents whose buildings will shift to market rate dues to expired affordability contracts.
- Create a state fund to assist with the purchase of buildings that have expiring affordability restrictions so that affordable housing providers may purchase and maintain affordability.

In the next 5 years, 569 affordable homes in Washington County will have their affordability restrictions expire and tenants could see dramatic rent increases. And in 10 years, 1334 homes representing approximately 15% of all regulated affordable housing units will have restrictions expire.



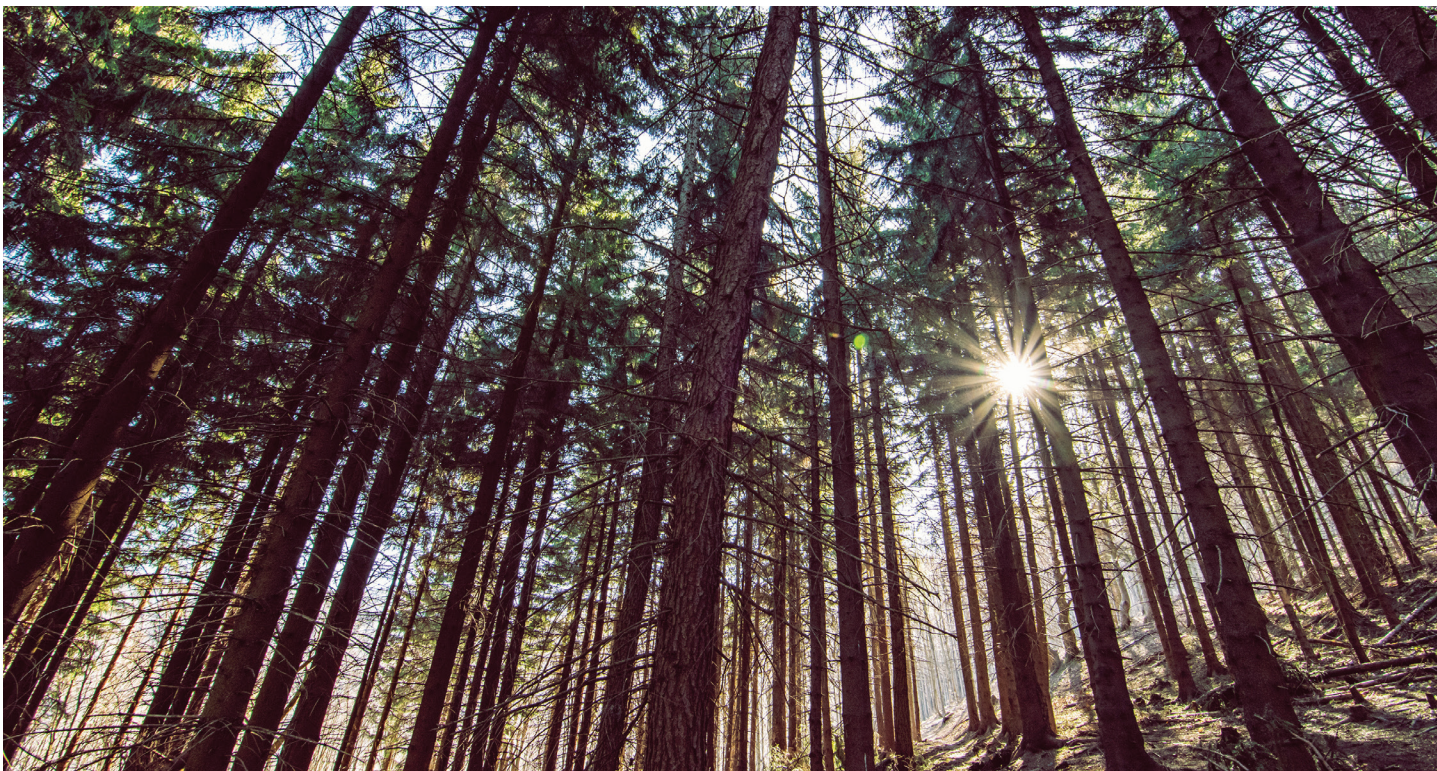


Advance legislation to create a modernized process for 100% consent-based special district annexations, increasing responsiveness, and reducing approval timelines for property owners and developers.

Currently, when the owner of a parcel of land wants to annex that land to a special district, and all landowners and 50% of electors have agreed, a County Board is required to hold a public hearing on the already agreed-upon annexation.

Legislation to streamline this process would:

- Address redundancy with a simple technical solution by removing the requirement for a public hearing when impacted parties have already agreed to the annexation.
- Modernize the process by allowing for more than one property to be annexed using a single petition, further expediting the process for interested parties.



Ensure that any county revenue collected pursuant to ORS 530.110 that is lost through implementation of the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is restored by the state on an ongoing basis.

- Establish a dedicated state funding source for replacing county timber revenue.
- Establish a collaborative process for estimating the revenue lost through implementation of the HCP.

COUNTY SERVICE SPECIFIC GUIDING PRINCIPLES



PUBLIC SAFETY

- Obtain sustainable funding for judicial and public safety resources for vital services that make Washington County a safe place to live, work and thrive.
- Support the development and use of a range of services, including treatment, for justice-involved Individuals.
- Support legislation that promotes equity, justice and community safety in the criminal justice system.
- Support legislation that expands youth access and entry points to supportive services.

ASSESSMENT, TAXATION, AND ELECTIONS

- Maintain a secure, accessible, and fair election system by utilizing tools to enhance community trust of elections.
- Ensure the right of the voter to access ballot drop sites and other election resources in an environment free of harassment or intimidation that protects voters and election workers.
- Support legislation which enhances the County's ability to provide assessment and taxation services.
- Reduce barriers to maintaining accurate and uniform property assessment in compliance with Oregon laws.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Support Oregon's existing toolbox of economic development incentives available to local government and state agencies.
- Enhance and modernize Oregon's Strategic Investment Program (SIP) & Gain Share agreements as important economic development tools for attracting new investments and encouraging additional investments from Oregon's existing, business community.
- Increase long-term, state investment in infrastructure, incentives, and workforce development that supports and bolsters local efforts for economic development.
- Increase opportunities and programs that invest in workforce training for living wage jobs and career Advancement.

HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

- Ensure housing solutions for aging adults, people with disabilities, and communities of color.
- Stabilize low-income residents through tenant protection policies and rent assistance with sustained resources to meet ongoing needs.
- Fund the development of new affordable apartment homes for low-income communities.
- Preserve affordability through asset management, reinvestment, and acquisitions of existing housing communities.
- Increase opportunities for homeownership for low-income families, especially communities of color.
- Advance systems alignment that leverages local structure and expertise across funders and jurisdictions, especially in housing, homeless services and behavioral health.
- Expand and sustain effective and diverse transitional strategies for those experiencing homelessness with a focus on supporting long-term housing stability.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

- Support legislation to maintain transparency and access to government while sustaining resources to deliver vital services to the community.
- Ensure public records transparency that does not interfere with performing essential county functions in compliance with state-mandated deadlines.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Maintain and increase funding for all Health and Human Services programs by:

- Codifying and updating funding formulas for substance use treatment and related programs to properly account for county needs.
- Monitoring and preserving local authority and accountability for all Health and Human Services programs.
- Expanding resources for governmental public health modernization foundational capabilities and programs outlined in Oregon Revised Statutes.
- Improving health and wellbeing across the lifespan continuum – including children, families and older adults.
- Protecting human health through assurance of healthy environments.
- Utilizing a data-driven approach to Health and Human Services that supports aligned data collection and modernized data infrastructure between the state and local governments.
- Supporting the development of innovative policies and procedures to meet healthcare crises.
- Supporting legislation that improves access to care by expanding integrated health, mental health and substance use disorder entry points available through housing and public safety.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Develop policies to enable the county to recruit and retain the talent necessary for our communities to thrive.
 - Obtain investment(s) for the development of our workforce to meet county staffing and community needs.
 - Provide tools to help Oregon gain a competitive advantage in hiring nationally across all workforce sectors.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

- Strengthen information security by further restricting disclosures on security audits.

LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION

- Maximize safety and equity, increase efficiency, and stabilize investment in Oregon's multimodal transportation system and State Highway Fund.
- Preserve and increase the flexibility of existing funds and creation of new funds to support local government to successfully prepare for climate adaptation and meet mandates for carbon reduction.
- Integrate planning and investments for state and local roads, highways and bridges to create a functional, interjurisdictional transportation system.
- Maintain local options for transportation funding.
- Maintain local ability to sustainably manage land use processes and decisions.
- Support local planning and increase state investment that fosters transit-oriented development efforts to support community housing and transportation goals.
- Support land use processes that increase administrative efficiency and certainty for local governments and the community.



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FUNDING ASKS



Courthouse Replacement Planning Project

Washington County is the second most populous county in Oregon and the current courthouse is seismically unsafe and too small to meet the needs of our growing, diverse community.

According to an analysis from the Oregon Judicial Department, Washington County needs three additional judicial officers, but lacks the space for courtrooms and staff. Limited space leads to delayed justice, shorter hearings and less consideration of case details.

The Courthouse is also seismically vulnerable. The structure of the courthouse is physically connected to our Justice Services Building, and neither meet seismic resiliency standards. The buildings are overcrowded, increasing risk during a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake.

In addition, accessibility continues to be limited. The lack of nearby parking creates barriers for people with disabilities. Inside the building there are other accessibility barriers; for example, the aisle to the dais in some courtrooms is too narrow for some wheelchairs. Insufficient space forces attorneys to meet clients in hallways and this means that victims and defendants often share crowded waiting areas, this can be especially challenging for victims of sexual assault that are retraumatized by being in such close proximity to the people who assaulted them.

The goal of the Washington County Courthouse Replacement Planning Project is to plan for a new, safe and trauma-informed facility with enough courtrooms, judges and staff to serve our population.

Ask: \$1.25 million in matching state funds for planning the replacement of our 100-year-old Courthouse.

Walnut Street Center Seismic Retrofit

In the event of an earthquake, Washington County's emergency management headquarters could be destroyed, significantly impacting ability to provide critical services to residents and those in need.

The Walnut Street Center houses three departments critical for regional emergency response efforts, including the County's Emergency Management, Land Use and Transportation, and Fleet. In the event that staff are injured or displaced due to building damage, coordination of disaster response efforts could be severely disrupted.

Additionally, a significant part of the County's emergency response and public safety fleet is housed at the Walnut Street Center; if our vehicles are damaged, we would face additional challenges in delivering services in the aftermath of a seismic event.

The Walnut Street Center also houses a system for controlling traffic signals throughout the county, which could create significant safety issues if damaged.

Ask: \$20.2 million in state funds for crucial seismic and HVAC upgrades to the Walnut Street Center.

Scoggins Creek Visitor's Center

Washington County Parks manages the 2500-acre Scoggins Valley Park on behalf of the United States Bureau of Reclamation. The park is a popular recreation destination with the 1100-acre reservoir, commonly known as Hagg Lake, at its center. The park welcomes approximately a million visitors per year and draws people from across the county and the Portland metro region.

The current Visitor's Center at Scoggins Creek is a manufactured home in dire need of replacement and cannot meet the growing demands of park visitors and recreationalists.

The development of a new Visitors Center, partially funded by a federal grant, would provide community gathering spaces and house administrative functions. Given persistent safety concerns at the park, this center will also offer a crucial space to provide education and resources that improve safety for visitors.

Ask: \$1.7 million in state funds to match a \$1.7 million grant from the Bureau of Reclamation.

Fair Complex Update

The Washington County Fair Complex is a public treasure evolving to meet modern times. Once a gathering place to celebrate agriculture and rural life, the current fairgrounds is surrounded by diverse neighborhoods, thriving businesses and industry, and a busy regional airport. The annual county fair remains a valued event, and Washington County is committed to meeting the needs of residents by evolving the Fair Complex into a year-round, modern, multi-use venue.

Washington County began this work in 2018 with the construction of a state-of-the-art event and conference center, Wingspan Conference Center. The next phase of development is directly anchored in community priorities, thanks to the approximately 3,800 county residents who took part in surveys to help shape the direction of the fairgrounds and prioritized projects that would support the 4-H Horse and Livestock Programs, and the greater agricultural community—including during times of emergency evacuation.

These projects include:

- Construction of a new barn and multi-purpose building to house the horse and livestock show programs for 4-H.
- Construction of an outdoor horse riding and livestock show arena.
- Associated site work and removal of old barns.

Ask: \$15 million in state funds to complete Phase 1-B of the Washington County Fair Complex update.



ABOUT CLEAN WATER SERVICES

The work we do at Clean Water Services is critical to safeguarding the Tualatin River’s health and vitality, ensuring economic success for our region, and protecting public health for more than 600,000 residents and the businesses across Washington County.

Clean Water Services (CWS) is a local government (special district) authorized under ORS 451 and located in Washington County. Our infrastructure includes over 1,400 miles of pipes, 44 pump stations, and four water resource recovery facilities that clean wastewater to near drinking water standards. We provide sanitary sewer and stormwater services (including collection, conveyance, and treatment).

In 2004, CWS worked with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to create the nation’s first watershed-based National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit, allowing CWS to coordinate efforts across its facilities and collaborate with Washington County and 12 partner cities with the entire watershed in mind.

CWS deploys innovative strategies through a combination of science and nature to clean water and return it to the slow and sensitive Tualatin River. In addition, we release stored water to augment flows in the Tualatin River for water quality purposes. We also recover resources including nutrients, reuse water, and renewable energy.

Clean Water Services’ Board of Directors has adopted the following legislative guiding principle and priorities which will help direct our organization as we review and potentially take positions on legislation introduced throughout the 2025 Oregon legislative session.

CLEAN WATER SERVICES' LEGISLATIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Clean Water Services will support efforts that maintain and improve the infrastructure, innovation and efficiency of water resources to ensure quality of life and economic vitality throughout the Tualatin River Watershed.

2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Water Infrastructure Priorities

Water-related infrastructure investments are critical to ensuring public and environmental health. Ensuring the state legislature continues to make investments in water-related infrastructure that are protective of water quality, the environment and public health is critically important. These investments support local communities in their efforts to accelerate housing production, support economic development opportunities, and address basic maintenance needs.

Specifically, Clean Water Services will:

- Advocate for statewide and project-specific investments in water-related infrastructure, including investments to promote the protection of water quality and public health; support maintenance and improvements to existing systems; and build capacity to support community growth, including housing production.
- Support opportunities for additional state investments for water infrastructure readiness for industrial and commercial expansion opportunities.
- Preserve local infrastructure financing tools for water infrastructure.

Water Quality Protection & Innovation

Everything we do at Clean Water Services, including our infrastructure investments and innovative approaches to address water quality challenges, is driven by our National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit. This permit is required under the federal Clean Water Act but is managed and administered through the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). As part of the permitting process, DEQ is responsible for setting water quality standards, which can have significant

impacts on local governments in terms of the cost and complexity associated with meeting those standards. State investments in DEQ's Water Quality Division are necessary to ensure they have the staff and resources to support local governments, including innovative permit solutions; consideration of and strategies to mitigate potential impacts on ratepayer and housing affordability; and novel strategies to more efficiently and effectively address complex water quality challenges.

Specifically, Clean Water Services will:

- Work to ensure sufficient funding and service levels for the Department of Environmental Quality's Water Quality Division for the purpose of promoting efficient and effective water quality permits, as well as tools and strategies to achieve water quality standards and innovative approaches.
- Work with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and key stakeholders to update and implement Oregon's regulatory framework for water reuse and advocate for incentives, resources, policies and tools to advance reuse projects.
- Support policies and investments to promote resource recovery, including renewable energy production, nutrient recovery and water resources.
- Advocate for investments in additional research of emerging contaminants and support policies that promote source identification and reduction, pollution prevention and outreach.
- Support efforts to enhance water utility responsiveness, efficiency and resiliency.
- Support funding opportunities and efficiencies in policies that promote housing production while ensuring protection of water quality and public health.

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