

State delegates meet to discuss Oregon's economic growth plans

By B.J. Thomsen
Of the Emerald

In Salem today, delegates from six regional economic development summits held last November and December will meet to consolidate proposals for projects and programs to promote more vigorous economic growth in Oregon.

The proposals will be presented to the governor and legislative leaders later this month.

The "One State, One Voice" economic development summit is the second step of a grassroots attempt to give the governor feedback from all areas of the state on what the economic needs of Oregon are.

Some of the issues the group found most pressing in the Southern Willamette Valley included improvement of the Mahlon-Sweet Airport, improved availability of funds for business growth and the establishment of a statewide economic development planning process.

The Willamette Valley Regional Summit held in Eugene in November, which included the area between Corvallis-Albany and Cottage Grove as well as Eugene, Springfield and Junction City, was attended by more than 200 delegates representing business, industry, education and government.

The six regional economic summit meetings were sponsored by the Portland District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Council for Economic Development.

The meetings came about after Gov.-elect Neil Goldschmidt called for a list of programs and projects to be compiled by regions around the state that would help guide the state Legislature in the coming year.

The projects and proposals developed by

each region will be "woven into main state issues" at the summit, said Bill Sloat of the Eugene Business Assistance Team.

Sloat said he and about 40 other representatives from the Eugene-Corvallis area, will be attending the economic development summit. Sloat estimates that between 200 and 300 representatives from around the state will attend.

Some members of Gov.-elect Goldschmidt's transition team will attend the summit as guests, and all state legislators have been invited.

Issues on the agenda for the summit include business development, education, government regulation of business, taxation, tourism, improvement of transportation facilities, including highways, ports and airports, and several specific regional issues that cannot easily be incorporated into the six statewide issues.

"The conference will bring together key (economic) issues and set priorities," Sloat said.

Two forums held in the morning, each tackling three of the issues, will seek to arrange the various recommendations according to importance. They will then focus, expand and shape them into polished proposals before they are presented to the governor and legislative leaders later this month.

Later in the day, all representatives will meet to discuss and arrange the proposals in a final order of importance.

Both the Small Business Administration and the Council for Economic Development hope to continue holding the summit every two years concurrent with state legislative sessions, said Debbie McCabe, director of the Council for Economic Development.

Students may be eligible for refunds

While the cost of tuition and books may be causing some students to call in the damage control experts this week, students who live off campus or in some fraternities and sororities may be able to look forward to some relief.

The Homeowner and Renter Relief Program provides partial refunds of property taxes. Students whose rent includes property taxes may file Form 70R, which is included in the 1986 Oregon tax booklets.

Applicants must make less than \$17,500 and pay rent on an Oregon property that is subject to property taxes. University housing residents are not eligible for refunds because University property is exempt from property taxes.

Refunds can range from \$18 to \$375, according to Gary Humphrey, an auditor at the Oregon Department of Revenue. The amount depends on the level of income and the rental rate, he said.

Students do not have to be

legal Oregon residents or have independent status to receive the refund. Roommates should list all their names on a single form to receive individual checks, Humphrey said.

Forms should be returned by April 15, Humphrey said, but applicants actually have three years to file for a refund. If renters haven't done so already, they can still file for refunds of property taxes paid in 1983, 1984 and 1985 by requesting separate forms from Oregon Forms, Oregon Department of Revenue, Revenue Building,

Salem, Oregon, 97310, or by calling 371-2244.

Some students who are eligible fail to file, Humphrey said. "They might overlook filing if they don't have the income to file a tax return," he said.

Most fraternities and sororities are exempt from paying property taxes, according to Barbara Hunter, spokeswoman for the Revenue Department. However, "they should ask the person who owns the house whether or not they're paying full property taxes" to determine if they are eligible.

UO STUDENTS

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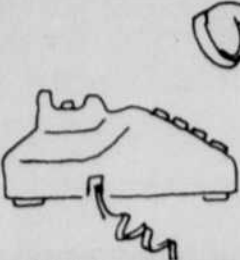
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