

Meal sites

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meals in Oregon actually participate in the summer program.

Last year, Oregon's 135 summer food sponsors served almost 1.6 million meals and snacks at 818 locations.

Bridging the summer learning gap

The summer meals program is a way to challenge the summer gap that puts students — disproportionately students in low-income families and students of color — further behind academically and socially.

Outreach Coordinator Jessica Visinsky said these meals can, instead, help turn the summer into a boost for students.

"Access to healthy meals and enrichment programs in the summer supports a child's educational and physical growth," she said in a statement. "When children miss out on chances for meals and enrichment during the summer, it causes a gap that they must try to make up when school reconvenes."

The education department's Child Nutrition Program is particularly interested in serving more summer meals in the following 15 counties:

- Clackamas
- Marion
- Union
- Deschutes
- Morrow
- Wallowa
- Grant
- Multnomah
- Wasco
- Jackson
- Sherman
- Wheeler
- Lincoln
- Tillamook
- Yamhill

How the program works

Organizations enter into agreements with the Oregon Department of Education to run the programs, officials said.

Schools, non-profit community organizations, local government agencies, camps and faith-based organizations that have the ability to manage a food service program may be program sponsors.

Sponsors are reimbursed for serving healthy meals and snacks to children and may manage multiple sites. Sites, which work directly with local sponsors, should be places in the community where children can receive meals in a

safe and supervised environment.

They can be a variety of settings, officials said, including schools, parks, community centers, health clinics, hospitals, libraries, migrant centers, faith-based locations and apartment complexes.

The education department also has state grant funds available up to \$20,000 per applicant to start up or expand summer meal programs, including building community partnerships to increase programs in the area.

Salem-Keizer sites, more information

Salem-Keizer Public Schools hosts and sponsors about a dozen summer meal sites from mid June to late August, with school starting again in early September.

With about 60 percent of Salem-Keizer's 42,200 students qualifying for free and reduced-priced lunches, the program has significant potential in the area.

Lillian Govus, director of communications for Salem-Keizer, said the district served 21,856 breakfasts and 52,343 lunches last summer.

While they haven't finalized the sites for this summer, the Salem and Keizer locations are likely to be similar to last year, which included:

- Auburn Elementary
- Chávez Elementary
- Eyre Elementary
- FACES Family Daycare Literacy & Resource Center
- Hallman Elementary
- Highland Elementary
- Houck Middle
- Kennedy Elementary
- KROC Center
- Leslie Middle
- Richmond Elementary
- Washington Elementary

For more information on the Summer Food Service Program, contact Jessica Visinsky by calling 503-947-5897 or emailing orjessica.visinsky@state.or.us.

Applications are available at <https://www.oregon.gov/ode> and are due by April 19.

To find a meal site near you, text "FOOD" or "COMIDA" to 877-877, then enter your address, zip code or city to get a list of sites. You can also call 2-1-1 or visit www.summerfoodoregon.org.

Contact reporter Natalie Pate at npate@StatesmanJournal.com, 503-399-6745 or follow her on Twitter @Nataliempate or Facebook at www.facebook.com/nataliepatejournalist.

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Address: P.O. Box 13009, Salem, OR 97309
Phone: 503-399-6773
Fax: 503-399-6706
Email: sanews@salem.gannett.com
Web site: www.SilvertonAppeal.com

Staff

News Director
 Don Currie
 503-399-6655
dcurrie@statesmanjournal.com

Advertising
 Westsmb@gannett.com

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Gateway

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through 2024 when it reaches its \$12.7 million cap.

But the businesses added will be eligible for some of the funds property owners already in the urban renewal district have paid in.

"Those people who are now in the new district, they can come in and request funds," Sears said. "Now they have an opportunity, and those properties haven't paid in."

What is an urban renewal district?

Urban renewal districts divert tax money that would otherwise go to other entities like fire districts into a separate fund, and that money is designated to encourage investment in existing infrastructure and buildings to increase the value of the properties in the area and create new jobs.

Since Silverton's urban renewal district was started in 2004, \$3.8 million has been spent, including \$1.8 million on private projects.

The expanded urban renewal district includes Jefferson Street and Mill Town Pub & Historic Restaurant on Mill Street.

Businesses on North 1st, including Harley's Coffee, Silverton Import Auto, Abiqua Landscape Products, Silver Lining Auto Restoration, Pro's Custom Cabinets, Silver Creek Auto Body and Withers Lumber are included in the expanded urban renewal district.

Among those who have expressed support for the expansion are Bob Knodel, owner of Silver Creek Auto Body.

Most of the buildings in the area were built between 1946 and 1997.

Over the past 10 years, there has been \$145,825 in recorded improvements to buildings in that area, less than 3 percent of the assessed value.

Were someone to develop one of the vacant properties in the boundary, it would add to the tax base.

"If anybody develops on those, there's huge ... potential for income into the urban renewal fund," councilor Dana Smith said, "because you're freezing tax base on bare property and then you build on it, everything above that bare property tax base goes into the urban renewal fund. I see adding the bare properties as nothing but a good thing."

The urban renewal district has limited funds remaining with \$444,330 on rehabilitation and \$28,353 in new construction.

But the businesses will be eligible to ap-

ply for existing urban renewal district funds.

"They're not going to put a lot more money into the district," Sears said of the businesses just added to the area. "The district doesn't end up getting more money (in the) long run. They're going to get it anyway because the district's already formed, they're getting a \$12.7 million cap."

Some of the Silverton businesses that have previously benefited from urban renewal funds include Silverton Falls Ale House, Lewis Street Crossfit Gym, Gather Restaurant, Main Street Bistro, Willamette Valley Pie Company and Gear-Up Coffee.

The urban renewal funds also have been used for park improvements, kiosks, directional signage, trash cans and light fixtures downtown.

The sidewalks end at the edge of the previous urban renewal district, and there are businesses that have benefited from funds from the district.

Seven Brides Brewing, which is located just south of the expanded urban renewal district on 1st Street, received a grant of \$50,000 from the fund to upgrade its building and \$9,119 to construct an outdoor patio.

Seven Brides closed its taproom and restaurant in October 2018, though it continues to operate as a brewery.

Other areas that need help

Sears has long been an advocate of expanding Silverton's urban renewal district.

But instead of expanding it in north, he sought to expand it into the Northside Addition — also referred to as "mill town" — a residential area of Silverton which similarly lacks sidewalks and has many buildings in need of improvement.

"To me, that's blight," Sears said. "I advocated that we include that area so those folks could get some relief."

"And the reason it hasn't got support is that the agency has pretty much earmarked the funds for commercial. There hasn't been any dollars spent for residential."

The city council has added the Northside Addition for a future focus area and has set a goal of providing funding options to use the area as a model for other areas of the city.

Sears also advocated adding the Pettit Property — 80 acres adjacent to the Oregon Garden the city owns about which development has long been discussed — into the district.

But neither was added into the current urban renewal district.

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Water

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City councilors approved Keller Associates as the project's engineer. With offices in Salem and Portland, the firm has a long history of working with Silverton, Schuetz said.

Recently, its engineers helped review and select a new \$286,000 machine for Silverton's wastewater treatment system. They also helped create the city's 2012 stormwater master plan and have engineered projects at other locations including Amity, Ashland and the North Santiam River.

Silver Creek's water intake pipe starts just south of the pedestrian bridge and runs underground along Lane, Rock and Reserve streets up to Ames Street. A collection of 12-to-18-inch sections will be replaced with 16-inch pipe.

Environmental permitting could take up to a year, with construction starting once permits are in-hand and ending no later than spring 2021, according to city documents. Now Silverton's brand-new staff engineer, Mike White, will begin working with Keller on the design.

Also at the regular council meeting on March 4:

- Councilors learned Marion County will

close Silverton Road at the Little Pudding River for an extended period in 2020 instead of 2019, in part to avoid cutting off traffic during the winter holidays. The county will reroute traffic while workers replace the bridge, at a total expected cost of \$6.4 million. Silverton Road will be open to local traffic all the way to the bridge, near 64th Place NE, but other east-west traffic will be detoured onto Hazelgreen and Sunnview roads. A temporary traffic light at Silverton and Howell Prairie roads will help that intersection from being clogged, said Marion County Public Works Director Brian Nicholas, adding, "Local folks will pick their favorite route, but we'll have two very well-signed detours so folks who aren't familiar with the area can find their way through."

- Councilors directed City Manager Christy Wurster to negotiate a new agreement with Republic Services, Silverton's current garbage and recycling collection provider. Republic's franchise agreement with the city expires in November.

- Schuetz reported that the creek bank upon which the city pool sits is basically sound, and its structural integrity is good. Energy Trust of Oregon will soon recommend energy-saving projects, some of which may be eligible for grant funding. Voters passed a pool levy in November 2017, aimed to pay for operations and upgrades.