

Wu Helps Secures Funds for Columbia County Projects

By April Bamburg

Columbia County will receive \$950,000 from a bill that combines several appropriations bills with projects in Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, Commerce Justice and Science, Labor, Health and Human Services and Education.

On December 10, the House of Representatives passed a final version of this legislation, which includes \$150,000 for equipment for the Vernonia Schools, and \$800,000 for Columbia County's Transit system. According to a press release issued by Congressman David Wu's office, "the Senate is expected to pass the same final version and send the bill to President Barack Obama to sign into law shortly."

Columbia County Rider

An allocation of \$800,000 to Columbia County's public transit system, Columbia County Rider, will be

used to construct a multi-modal public transit facility, including an administration office, vehicle maintenance and storage facility and park and ride/pool facility, in St. Helens, Oregon.

The county held a ground-breaking ceremony for the future public transit facility in October, after purchasing the property in June, 2009.

At the moment, the Columbia County Rider is not using the site, as remodeling is needed, according to Transit Coordinator Janet Wright.

The county is in the process of land use reviews for the site and is currently hiring an architect and engineer for this project, Wright said. "It will be a phased project, and the architect and engineer will establish the phasing."

Although Wright anticipates receiving this funding, she said that she's not sure what it will be used for, whether it will be lighting, street improvements or other construction-related projects.

That answer will come after the architect and engineer determine the phasing and design of the project.

Wright applied for this allocation "some time ago," she said, and, since the original application, the project has evolved.

The funding involved in the new transit facility comes from the federal government, and from the Oregon Department of Transportation, Wright said. "We secured a Connect II grant, and through ODOT, received stimulus money to match the Connect II grant," she continued. "I think we've done a good job of not dipping into the county's coffers for this project."

The new facility will be located at 1155 Deer Island Road, in St. Helens, the site of the former Stimson Lumber mill.

Vernonia's Schools

\$150,000 was also allocated to the Vernonia school district, to purchase

equipment for the new school facility. A call to Superintendent Kenneth Cox regarding this allocation was not returned.

"The projects I secured funding for will benefit people across the first district, from community college students who want to train for new green jobs to the many commuters who use our roads and rails every day," said Congressman Wu, on December 10. "We must continue to invest in our communities during this economic downturn in order to provide new jobs and the foundation for sustained economic growth. In addition to helping strengthen our economy, these funds will be used to educate our future workforce, protect our environment, and care for those in need."

For more on Columbia County Rider, see the organization's web site at www.columbiacountyrider.com.

Computer, Monitors and TV's Landfill Ban

As of January 1, 2010, Oregonians can no longer dispose of computers, monitors and TV's in the landfill. Unwanted, non-working or damaged computers, monitors and TV's must be recycled instead.

Electronic waste is the fastest growing waste stream in the United States. Recycling electronics is important because electronics contain valuable precious metals like copper, gold and aluminum that can be recycled and used in new products. In addition, these electronics contain hazardous and toxic heavy metals such as lead, mercury and cadmium. Even

small amounts of these metals can be dangerous if released into the air, soil and/or water. In 2007 alone, Americans generated about 232 million used computers, monitors and TV's for disposal or recycling. An estimated 235 million additional TV, computers and monitors are stored in our basements, closets and garages.

Through the new Oregon E-Cycles Program, anyone can take seven or fewer computers, monitors and TV's at one time to one of more than 200 Oregon E-Cycles collections sites in Oregon for free recycling.

Households, small businesses and small non-profits with 10 or fewer employees may recycle more than seven items at a time. Locally, the Columbia County Transfer Station accepts these items for recycling free of charge.

Anyone needing additional information on the landfill ban or recycling locations can visit the DEQ's website www.oregonrecycles.org or contact Roy Weedman, Columbia County Solid Waste Coordinator at 503-397-7263 or roy.weedman@co.columbia.or.us.

Columbia County Offers Legal Aid Services

Two area clinics have created new options for the coming calendar year for the poverty population of Columbia County. These are critical areas of need that supplement our work within the county.

The Bankruptcy Clinic will operate out of the Hillsboro Legal Aid Services of Oregon Office. Potential clients can call 888-245-4091 or contact the Columbia County Legal Aid office for further information. The clinics are held monthly, and intended for individuals thinking about filing a Chapter 7 Bankruptcy or who would like more information about bankruptcy. There is no charge for these clinics, but often the waiting lists are long.

The Lewis and Clark Northwestern School of Law will be hosting a year round Tax Clinic. This clinic is not for the purpose of filing returns or answering question about returns, but for dealing with problems

such as examination of returns, liens filed by the IRS against one, notice of deficiency, and past due taxes. For scheduling, potential clients need to call 503-768-6500. This is not a toll free number for many in our area. However, the Columbia County Legal Aid office has unlimited long distance for purposes such as this, and will happily accommodate those needed to make this type of call from their service area.

Columbia County Legal Aid Continues to offer once weekly brief advices for certain family law cases, tenant issues, public benefits, elder law, expungement and other poverty issues.

For more information contact either Holly Pennock Barbourme or Janelle JahaAdams at Columbia County Legal Aid at 503-397-1628.



Columbia County Safe Kids Car Seat Program

Child safety seats are available to low income families in Columbia County at a reduced cost.

To participate in this Car Seat Distribution Program you must attend one of the following events between 4:00pm and 6:00pm:

January 14 th	Scappoose	Scappoose Fire Station 52751 Columbia River Hwy.
February 11 th	St. Helens	St. Helens Police Department 150 S. 13 th Street
March 11 th	St. Helens	Legacy Medical Group - Safety Fair 500 N. Columbia River Hwy
April 8 th	Clatskanie	Clatskanie Transit Center 280 E. Columbia River Hwy
May 13 th	Vernonia	Vernonia Fire Station 555 E. Bridge St
June 10 th	Rainier	CC Rider Rainier Transit Center 207 W. "B" St.

- Children must be present, unless the child is unborn.
- Families must bring their vehicle and the seats currently being used for the child.
- Please allow for 30 minutes per seat.
- Limit one convertible, combination or booster seat per child.

Convertible seats protect children weighing between 5 and 40 pounds. Combination seats protect children over 1 year of age and weighing over 22 pounds. Booster seats protect children weighing over 40 pounds to age 8 or 4'9" in height.

Convertible and combination seats are \$30.00. High back booster seats are \$15.00. No back booster seats are \$5.00. Please bring cash or money order made out to Columbia County Safe Kids. Supplies are limited so seats are available on a first come, first served basis.

CHILD RESTRAINT LAW: Child passengers must be restrained in approved child safety seats until they weigh forty pounds.

Infants must ride rear-facing until they reach both one year of age AND twenty pounds.

BOOSTER SEAT LAW: Children over forty pounds must use a booster seat until they are age 8 OR 4'9" in height.

SAFETY BELT LAW: A child taller than 4'9" OR age 8 or older must be properly secured with the vehicle's safety belt. The child is properly secured if the lap belt is positioned low across the thighs and the shoulder belt is positioned over the collarbone and away from the neck.

BEST PRACTICE: Remember that children under age 13 should ride in the back seat where they are 37% safer. And never transport more children in your car than you have child safety seats and safety belt systems.

Questions: Call ACTS Oregon Child Safety Seat Resource Center 1-800-772-1315.

Seats are provided through a grant from ACTS Oregon Child Safety Seat Resource Center and ODOT Transportation Safety Division.



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