

Community Pages

Sutherlin Apartments

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We're behind the eight ball on this." He stated that in some places in this state, companies are funding housing projects to provide affordable housing for its workers.

"That's a big step up and that's a big idea to involve the companies and employers, because they're hurting," he went on to say, "They can't hire people."

Lynch also said that while these new apartments are likely to be higher end units for the local market, it may open up some less expensive units. "I do not believe this will add to the 'affordable' or 'workforce' housing inventory that is in such limited supply in Sutherlin. But there is a sense that any addition to available housing here is helpful."

It is certain that this is only a drop in the bucket as far as easing the housing crisis, continued development and planning must continue to chip away at this evolving dilemma.

Drain Chamber Seeks Beautification Ideas

Story by Rusty Savage

The Drain Chamber of Commerce is looking for ideas to make Drain visitor friendly as well as beautification ideas for curb appeal and shopping. Although there are currently some efforts on the part of citizens and city officials, the Chamber is committed to continue with efforts to make a difference for the betterment of the city.

Bonnie Pyles, a long time Drain business owner and activist, has spent

many hours working towards these efforts. She cites the long time heritage of the community and area. From the pioneer history to the legacy of logging and industry in the area, there is a rich precedent of a dedicated and resilient cultures that have thrived here over the years.

A couple of ideas that would rely on tourist attractions, proposing a logging

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Business Oregon Awards \$1.8 Million to Support Rural Communities and Entrepreneurs

Story by Milo Banks

After a competitive application process, Business Oregon is pleased to announce a Notice of Intent to Award a total of \$1.825 million in funding from the Rural Opportunity Initiative (ROI) program to 19 Oregon communities. ROI is Business Oregon's strategic effort to empower rural communities to support entrepreneurs and small business growth through financial support, innovative partnerships, network expansion, capacity support, and access to business development resources. ROI strengthens entrepreneurial ecosystems within and across Oregon's rural communities with a particular emphasis on diverse populations and low-income households.

ROI funding continues to be highly sought after and especially competitive. Each application was thoroughly reviewed, scored, and discussed by a multi-member evaluation committee prior to a final award decision.

Small businesses and entrepreneurs drive rural economies and are a major source of opportunity as well as resiliency. ROI's "whole community" approach helps entrepreneurs thrive in the good times and recover faster and more fully following disruptions. In lieu of a "one size fits all" approach, ROI reflects community priorities and acknowledges that the best people to determine the right approach for a community are the residents themselves.

ROI is an investment in the vision and aptitude of rural communities and aligns with Business Oregon's strategic plan to innovate, grow local businesses, cultivate rural economic stability, and champion opportunity for underrepresented people.

Listed below are a few of the recipients of 2023-25 ROI funding with a brief description of each community's project.

A Greater Applegate (\$110,000) – AGA is seeking to strengthen the local food and farm system by improving coordination, distribution, and marketing among farmers, ranchers, markets, restaurants, and local consumers. By supporting local businesses and the markets that showcase their products, this effort is intended to increase network participation, enhance coordination between local markets, and stimulate the consumption of regional products.

Bohemia Food Hub (\$120,000) – BFH and project partners will continue to cultivate and refine the entrepreneurial ecosystem for food-based businesses in Cottage Grove, with a particular focus on supporting low-income and immigrant entrepreneurs and scaling its capacity to support more emerging businesses.

CCD Business Development (\$100,000) – CCD plans to strengthen the region's (Coos, Curry, and Douglas Counties) entrepreneurial ecosystem by tackling the three gaps identified

in their Economic Recovery Initiative project: access to communication networks, financial resource identification, and business technical support.

Center for Rural Livelihoods (\$110,000) CRL will support entrepreneurs in the restoration forestry sector by helping incubate new businesses, supporting alliances among existing businesses, and encouraging market development for specialized forest products while centering the voices of Indigenous leaders and land stewards. ecosystem development.

Friends of Family Farmers (\$110,000) – FFFF and project partners will enhance the agricultural entrepreneurial ecosystem by supporting farm succession planning that helps beginning farmers and ranchers establish successful and sustainable farm enterprises.

Oregon Frontier Chamber (\$90,000) –The OFC identified business community priorities and is now poised to address them, including reinforcing support for its Rural Ambassador

program, tailoring direct assistance and training to meet individual business needs, expanding support for youth entrepreneurship, and solidifying the Rural Regional Main Street program with participating communities and Oregon Main Street.

RAIN Catalysts (\$100,000) – RAIN and project partners will be active in 29 rural communities and four counties (Linn, Lane, Benton, and Grant Counties) across the state, providing programming, events, and youth entrepreneurship bootcamps that harness existing momentum and contribute to sustainable ecosystems that prioritize entrepreneurs.

Umpqua CDC (\$75,000) – Umpqua CDC and project partners will address the lack of available childcare in the region through training, instruction, and support for culturally specific providers as they build sustainable businesses and the ecosystem that supports them. and

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Human Trafficking Awareness & Prevention Douglas County Task Force Advocates

Story by Scooter Brown

Roseburg OR — The Douglas County Human Trafficking Task Force and the The Mercy Foundation are working to help bring more awareness and prevention to the community. The Task Force plans to identify and respond to victims of human trafficking while working with law enforcement, social service providers and medical professionals throughout the county.

In Douglas county it is primarily in bars and establishments along I-5 and surrounding rest areas where some of the most active places for trafficking are taking place. According to, Violence Prevention Program Manager, Marion Pearson the more the message gets out to the community, the better the chances for awareness so that prevention can succeed.

"The more people that people are aware," explains Pearson, "the less places traffickers will have to hide and that's what we want in our community. We want to be able to identify who our victims and survivors are, get them the assistance that they need, and get these traffickers locked up."

The Task Force has a number of projects at work, including a Sip Safe project, which is designed to help bars and pubs learn what to look out for. This project began last year with nine locations agreeing to go through the training. This year, they hope to bring six more establishments into the training program.

Working with these establishments is important for the training being provided and the awareness needed. Additionally, stickers and drink testers are also made available to help visitors and staff if and when they don't feel safe. Pearson hopes that this will lead to better knowledge on what to do and better prepare staff on how to act.

"If they believe that their drink has been spiked or their friend's drink has been spiked or something just weird is happening

within the bar, they have an opportunity to let somebody in the bar know and that somebody in the bar will respond appropriately to whatever it is that they need."

The task force, made up of over 15 partners, is dedicated to educating our county on how trafficking occurs, the red flags and indicators, risk factors and resources for human trafficking. The task force and all activities are generously funded through a federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant. Through this VOCA funding, the Task Force has hired an advocate to address the complex needs of local survivors.

Some of the projects that are advocated are:

- Agency specific education, training and resources throughout the social service and medical fields
- Trainings for UCC nursing, paramedic and truck driving students
- Trainings and resources to all Douglas County EMT's
- Law enforcement, security staff trainings
- Education and materials for local hotels and motels
- Community events & Outreach
- Consultation to change policy and protocol to screen for and identify victims and survivors of human trafficking
- In – school prevention education
- Partnerships throughout Oregon and with the Dept. of Justice
- Advocacy, counseling, shelter and/or relocation services for survivor

The Douglas County Human Trafficking Task Force can be contacted at 2700 NW Stewart Pkwy, Roseburg, Oregon 97471, phone 541-677-4818.

Important phone numbers:
National Human Trafficking Hotline – 888-373-7888
To report child abuse – 800-305-2903
Battered Person's Advocacy Crisis Line – 800-464-6543

Lane County Assessment and Taxation Property Tax Break from Ice Storm

Story by Milo Banks

Lane County - For property owners in Lane county, if your property was damaged during the ice storm at the start of January, you may be eligible for a reduction of your 2023-24 property taxes. For damaged property, the percentage of assessed value lost is multiplied by the total tax on the account for the month the property was damaged and for each remaining month of the tax year.

For example, if:

the property was damaged in January 2024 80% of the assessed value is lost (the damage is to the improvements only) the total 2023-24 tax bill is \$2,400

Then: \$2,400 / 12 = \$200 * 6 (months) = \$1,200 * 80% = \$960.

Most, if not all, properties will need to be physically inspected for damage. The refund process can start as soon as the appraiser verifies the damage and the amount of loss.

The application can be picked up at Assessor's office or at Assessment & Taxation website: www.lanecountyor.gov/at. It can be returned to assessor@LaneCountyOR.gov or dropped off or mailed to: Assessment & Taxation 125 E. 8th Avenue Eugene, OR 97401

Questions about proration can be direct to: (541) 682-4321 (Monday—Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Officials with LCG say applications for must be submitted to the Assessor's

Office by June 30, 2024 either in person or by mail, applications may also be emailed online to assessor@LaneCountyOR.gov.

Fire or Act of God—Tax Proration

Oregon's tax year runs from July 1 through June 30. Taxes on property that has experienced a casualty loss due to fire or other act of God during the tax year may be eligible for reduction. The reduction is calculated as a "proration of tax."

What qualifies?
If any real or personal property is damaged or destroyed by an act of God or by fire, the property is eligible for a proration of the tax. An act of God is generally considered an act of nature without human intervention. For example, damage from a tornado or a lightning strike is an act of God. Damage isn't an act of God if it is caused by the property owner. Proration of tax is available for property that is damaged or destroyed by fire, or by an act of God, if the damage or destruction is caused by an act of God or by fire, and the damage or destruction is not caused by the property owner's negligence. The tax collector will provide you with a proration of tax if you are eligible for it. You would be eligible for a refund if, for example, your house burns down as the result of an accident or if you ask the fire department to have it checked for you.

Who may apply?
For real property, the owner or purchaser under a recorded instrument of sale may apply. For personal property, the person assessed, person in possession, or owner of the property may apply. All applications are made to the tax collector.

If the damaged or destroyed property is located within a geographical area covered by a state of emergency declared by the Governor due to fire or act of God, or subject to a configuration action taken under the authority of the Governor, the tax collector may prorate without application if they know or have reason to believe the property was destroyed or damaged. Through the tax collector you provide taxes for three properties without an application. It is still recommended that you submit an application if your property is located in one of these areas. For each remaining month of the tax year, the tax collector will refund you the amount of tax you overpaid for that year.

A refund isn't required if proration results in a tax reduction of \$100 or less, and the tax has been paid. The tax collector will use the value determination of the assessment roll as a basis for calculating your tax.

Is the value on the account reduced in the current tax year?
Yes, the value on the account for the tax year in which the damage or destruction occurred isn't reduced. The amount value is always the value of the account as of the assessment date for the tax year in which the tax is being prorate.

Is the impact of the damage or destruction ever reflected in the property's value?
Any loss in value will be considered in the account value for the assessment date following the next assessment. Normally, your property tax is based on the value of the property as of January 1 for the tax year beginning July 1 of that calendar year. If your prop-

What is the deadline for submitting an application?
The application is submitted to the county tax collector on file with the end of the tax year in which the damage or destruction occurs, or 60 days after the date the property was damaged or destroyed, whichever is later. The deadline is one year after the date the property is destroyed by strong winds on November 1, you must file an application by the following June 30. If the same property is damaged on Jan 30, the application deadline is 60 days later, August 30.

Where do I get an application and with whom do I file it?
Applications are available at www.lanecounty.gov/for or at each county tax collector's office. In order to receive an application, you must be available at the assessment roll date. File your application with the county tax collector. The tax collector consults with the assessment staff to determine whether or not the property has been damaged or destroyed and how much value was lost.

How is the refund calculated?
For property not specially assessed there must be a loss in assessed value. If the damage or destruction causes the assessed, percentage of real market value lost is multiplied by the total tax on the account for the month the property was damaged or destroyed and for each of the remaining months of the tax year. The tax collector refunds the amount of tax you overpaid for that year.

For property specially assessed under a program in ORS Chapter 516A, or 522 there must be a loss in assessed value. If the damage or destruction causes the real market value of the property to decline the taxable assessed value, then a proration of tax is calculated on the assessed value. The tax collector refunds the amount of tax you overpaid for that year.

Can I disagree can I appeal the decision?
A decision of the tax or assessment office is appealable to the Magistrate's Division of the Oregon Tax Court. Appeals must be filed within 60 days after the tax or assessment decision is actually levied to the person, but the time runs from the date you are able to act or receive notice.

Do you have questions or need help?
www.lanecounty.gov/for
541-677-4818 or 800-541-6222
openoffice@lanecounty.gov
Contact us for ADA accommodations or assistance in other languages.