

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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## OUR VIEW

### State legislators left Salem with unfinished business

The Legislature closed its 2017 session a few days ahead of schedule, and there will be plenty of political posturing about the successes, missed opportunities and issues that need to be revisited.

Many veteran lawmakers say the session was one of the toughest they've participated in and they closed it with a feeling of unfinished business. As state Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, said in a statement afterward, "We had some satisfying wins. At best, our successes are tempered by disappointment."

On the plus side, lawmakers were able to balance a \$21 billion operating budget that began with a \$1.4 billion shortfall even though the state experienced record revenue leading up to the session. Along the way, they managed to approve:

- A long-term, \$5.3 billion transportation improvement package.
- A \$600 million tax on insurers and providers that preserves health care for about 350,000 Oregonians who gained Medicaid coverage under the expanded federal Affordable Care Act.
- Record-funding for K-12 public schools, up 11 percent from the current biennium. For most of the state's 200 or so school districts, lawmakers say it's enough money to keep current services going.
- A controversial \$10 million reproductive health bill expanding funding for no-cost abortions, family planning services and post-partum care. Oregon's bill is unique to other states in that patients would have access to the procedure for virtually any reason, at any time, including sex-selective and late-term abortions.
- A plan to reduce state spending over the next two years by \$200 million.

Lawmakers also approved the state becoming REAL ID compliant, which will allow residents to upgrade their driver's licenses or identification cards to federal standards in the future.

Oregon will now also be joining a handful of other states that give judges the power to take guns away from suicidal or dangerous people.

The state also became the third in the nation to raise the tobacco sales age to 21, although tobacco possession isn't affected.

With successes, though, there were certainly failures. Lawmakers couldn't agree on revenue reforms that included a corporate income taxing structure that would stabilize and provide long-term school funding, and they declined to tackle the elephant of the session, the spiraling costs of the Public Employees Retirement System and instead kicked that \$22 billion problem down the road.

Gov. Kate Brown has vowed to get all parties to the table to work out solutions to both of the major issues, but her lack of leadership was evident throughout the session, so the jury is out on whether she can follow through.

It also remains to be seen what the session's impact will have in our region. Lawmakers drastically cut funding from Measure 98, which voters had approved, that would have provided money to help schools raise graduation rates and provide more vocational and technical education, something that would be very helpful in rural areas like Clatsop County. Community colleges also didn't get as much funding that they need, which can hurt Clatsop Community College.

It's also uncertain what the taxing impacts will be on our region, especially combined with local city, county and school taxes, and what benefits the transportation package will provide the North Coast.

What is certain, though, is that there is unfinished business. Democrats and Republicans alike should start thinking about how to address those issues, and about who among them is up to providing bipartisan leadership that all Oregonians can look up to.

## LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The Daily Astorian.

Letters should be fewer than 350 words and must include the writer's name, address and phone numbers. You will be contacted to confirm authorship.

All letters are subject to editing for space, grammar and, on occasion, factual accuracy. Only two letters per writer are printed each month.

Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand and, rather than

mentioning the writer by name, should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner.

Submissions may be sent in any of these ways:

E-mail to [editor@dailyastorian.com](mailto:editor@dailyastorian.com); online at [www.dailyastorian.com](http://www.dailyastorian.com); delivered to the Astorian offices at 949 Exchange St. and 1555 N. Roosevelt in Seaside or by mail to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103.



## SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

### How 58 residents could launch recycling program

By R.J. MARX  
The Daily Astorian

"If we wanted to start yard debris pickup would that be city or Recology?" Seaside City Councilor Randy Frank asked at a June City Council meeting.

That was the question I wanted to ask. Among the first things we did in our new Seaside home was to get to work maintaining our beautiful yard. I quickly found out that creeping ivy was an invasive species squeezing out ferns and plantings and spreading the length of our fence. It wasn't hard to pull out — unlike the ubiquitous poison ivy I dealt with in the East. In fact, with my first forays into ivy-pulling I was almost certain those tenebrous strands were at some point going to scream, "Gotcha!"

But there was no telltale rash and the ivy came up pretty easily. I picked up steam, tearing at the strings like a cat unraveling a ball of yarn. Pretty soon I had a wheelbarrow full. Then I put the ivy into a plastic trash bag and filled up two of those. By the time I finished, the fence was looking great.

But what to do with the wheelbarrows full of debris? Seaside doesn't have a lawn refuse recycling facility. And Recology does not offer lawn refuse pickup — even for a price.

This isn't a new issue. In 2008, Seaside resident Marilyn Loew wrote a letter to the Seaside Signal, "Spiffing up the town."

"Many people would be happy to trim their hedges, clean up their lawns, and dispose of unused large articles in their yards if there were a way to get rid of the stuff," Loew wrote.

Large cans for yard and garden waste, picked up curbside, would provide incentive for people to clean their yards, trim the hedges, or prune the trees, Loew pointed out. "There really is no practical way to dispose of garden waste now."

She's right, and the same holds true nine years later.

#### Whither the ivy?

As a homeowner with overgrown laurels and unwanted English ivy, I was flummoxed. My compost bin was already overflowing.

Residents in Gearhart, Warrenton, Cannon Beach and Seaside have options for yard refuse and glass pickup. Astoria responded to similar calls, with curbside pickups of yard waste and glass recycling for both residents and businesses.

Recology advises Seaside residents go to Trails End Recovery or the Astoria Transfer Station for yard refuse or glass removal. Glass bottles and jars can be brought to the Seaside Depot, located at Avenue S and Alder Mill Road.

Residents can ask the city for such pickup, but they cannot contact Recology directly for home pickup, Fred Stemmler, general manager of Recology Western Oregon, said following Seaside's City Council meeting. Recology Western Oregon "cannot provide new services or charge for them without the specific permission of the city," Stemmler said.



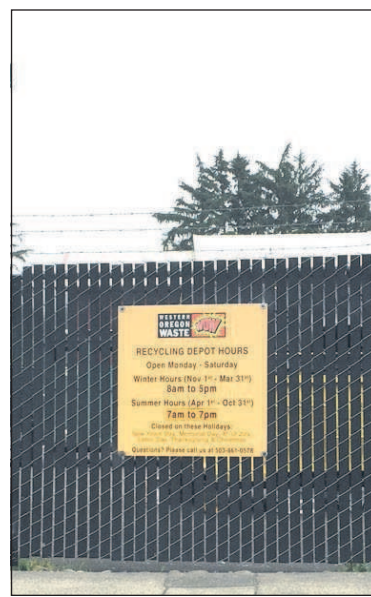
R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

You've done the yard work. Now what?

D.	Easements. Easements necessary to the orderly extension of public utilities or uses may be required as a condition of approval.
E.	Recycling. A recycling center or program shall be established for the project area consistent with available recycling services in the community.
F.	Maintenance of Outdoor Living Area. In the event that outdoor living area shall be public, maintenance shall be the responsibility of the City of Seaside or other entity as approved by the Planning Commission. The City of Seaside or other

R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

Seaside's zoning code includes a provision for recycling.



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

Seaside's recycling center.

For Seaside residents who want home pickup, it doesn't have to be an across-the-board rate increase for all customers. Those customers who want home yard waste or glass pickup have the option to sign up for a subscription-based service — about \$10 each a month for glass and refuse. At least 2 percent of the public must be involved in order for Recology to justify sending the truck, Stemmler said, and the city would need about 58 customers.

That number is an estimate. "We won't know for certain until we take a closer look at the data," Stemmler said.

If the number of subscribers is significantly lower than the target, Recology could eliminate the program or increase the rates. Results are typically reviewed after one year, Stemmler said.

#### A proposal

Seaside has requested that Recology Western Oregon submit a proposal, he said, and this could be ready within the next two months.

The proposal will be reviewed by city staff, revised if necessary, then brought before the council for a vote. If approved, the program would be promoted to customers, interested residents would sign up, and collection would begin as soon as Recology's operations staff works out the logistics, builds the route and get carts delivered, Stemmler said.

After pickup, yard debris and glass would be kept separate, out of the waste stream.

If enough residents sign up, Recology could put a process in place for pickup within 90 days of the city's approval date, Stemmler said.

In the past, councilors and the mayor have not shown an interest in signing up, City Manager Mark Winstanley said.

That could change this year. So if you're interested in becoming one of Seaside's 2 percent, contact Mayor Jay Barber or Councilors Frank, Tom Horning, Tita Montero, Seth Morrissey, Dana Phillips or Steve Wright via email or phone. Contact information can be found at the city's webpage, [cityofseaside.us](http://cityofseaside.us).

You can also call Recology directly — staff tracks requests for services not currently provided, Stemmler said.

R.J. Marx is The Daily Astorian's South County reporter and editor of the Seaside Signal and Cannon Beach Gazette.