



Board Meeting

September 10, 2026

9:00 am – 11:00 am

Benton County Administrative Offices
[4500 SW Research Way, Corvallis, OR 97333](#)
(Kalapuya Room)

or

Join Virtually via Teams
TEAMS Meeting by clicking [HERE](#)

Meeting ID: 254 291 114 930 4

Passcode: GL2NZ34k

Mobile 1 Click Number:

[+ 1 872-242-8088](#)

Phone Conference ID: 572 135 787#

Contact: Susan Patterson (spatterson@ocwcog.org)

AGENDA

- | | | | |
|----|------|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. | 9:00 | Call to Order & Agenda Review
Welcome to Benton County! | Chair Paul Schuytema |
| 2. | 9:05 | Roll Call | Staff, Travis Overvig |
| 3. | 9:08 | Public Comment | Chair Paul Schuytema |
| 4. | 9:10 | Minutes of June 11, 2026, Meeting (Attachment A pg. 04)

ACTION: Approval of Minutes | Chair Paul Schuytema |
| 5. | 9:15 | 2026 CWEDD <i>Ignite Economic Vitality</i> Summit Update
November 3, 2026, 8:30 am to 3:00 pm
Registration link: 2026 CWEDD Ignite Economic Vitality Summit

ACTION: Discussion | Staff, Susan Patterson |
| 6. | 9:25 | CWEDD Letters of Support: Protocol Change
Due to public meeting laws, letters of support will now be approved by the chair or vice-chair. | Staff, Susan Patterson |

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|-----|-------|--|---|
| 7. | 9:30 | ACTION: Information | |
| 8. | 9:35 | 2025-2030 CEDS Priorities and Regionally Significant Projects
An ad hoc work group met to create a short list of projects that will be used for a group prioritization activity at the November 3 rd Summit, Board planning, and grant funding.

ACTION: Discussion | Chair Paul Schuytema, Greg Price, and Councilor Greg Ervin |
| 9. | 10:00 | Eugene Airport Update and Expansion
Eugene Airport Director Cathryn Stephens will provide an overview of the airport's \$450 million regional expansion, share economic impact projections and outline next steps as the feasibility study advances to the Eugene City Council in October. She will ask the CWEDD Board to name the EUG expansion among its regional priorities and lend support to securing state and federal investment for the more than \$240 million Concourse C phase. Project website:
www.LiftOffEUG.com .
(Attachment B1 pg. 16)
(Attachment B2 pg. 27)

ACTION: Decision | Cathryn Stephens
Eugene
AirPort Director |
| 10. | 10:30 | Corvallis/Benton County Economic Development Presentation
Overview of economic development projects in Benton County | Christopher Jacobs,
Corvallis Benton
County Economic
Development
Manager |
| 11. | 10:50 | Action: Information
Discussion: CEDS Working Groups (Open time for any questions) (Attachment C pg. 28) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Economy Update from EDALC • Broadband Action Team (BAT) • Cascades West Innovation Hub • Cascades West Regional Consortium (CWRC) • Early Childhood Education (on pause) • Lane Economic Committee (LEC) • Rural Economic Alliance (REAL) • Other workgroup updates | Chair Paul Schuytema/Staff |
| 12. | 10:55 | Other Business (time permitting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regionally Significant Updates – by County (Examples – a large manufacturing company announced a new site, other board meetings you attend) • CWEDD Board Meeting December 10, 2026 Topics (e.g., Summit Follow Up, Wetlands HAPO Speaker) | Chair Paul Schuytema |

12. **11:00 Adjournment**
Next Meeting: December 10, 2026 in Linn County.

Chair Paul Schuytema

13. **11:30 Offsite Optional and No Host Lunch, Location TBA**

Chair Paul Schuytema

**CWEDD Board of Directors Meeting
June 11, 2026**

OCWCOG Members	Title	Jurisdiction	Attendance
Christopher McMorran	Mayor	City of Philomath	
Jan Kaplan	Mayor	City of Newport	
Alex Johnson II	Mayor	City of Albany	
Heather DeSart	Executive Director	NW Oregon Works	
Greg Price	Director	Oregon Coast Community College, SBDC	
Christie Dudenhoefer	Executive Director of Semiconductor ED	Oregon State University	
Paul Schuytema	Executive Director	EDALC	
Chris Workman	City Manager	City of Philomath	
Ron Whitlatch	City Manager	City of Lebanon	
John Pascone	President	LEDG	
Pam Barlow-Lind	Planning Director	CTSI	
Christopher Jacobs	Economic Dev Director	Benton County	
Lane Members	Title	Jurisdiction	Attendance
Chris Wig	Board Member	Willamalane Parks and Rec District	
Patti Chappel	Board Member	Eugene People's Utility District	
Randy Groves	City Councilor	City of Eugene	
Robbie McCoy	Mayor	City of Veneta	
Steve Racca	Board Member	Fern Ridge Library District	
Pete Knox	Board Member	Lane Transit District	
Greg Ervin	Council Member	City of Cottage Grove	
Matt Michel	City Manager	City of Veneta	

Quorum Requirement: CWEDD business may be conducted, provided a quorum of members attends. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the membership of the District Board. The CWEDD members may participate by telephone or other means of electronic communication, provided the meeting is called to order at a meeting place where the public can attend, hear, understand and/or read the comments of the members participating by telephone or electronic means and the members so participating can fully hear, understand, and/or read the comments of the other members participating in the meeting.

CWEDD BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**Thursday, June 11, 2026****9:00 am – 11:00 am****Hybrid Meeting: IN PERSON at Pacific Maritime Heritage Center (Bayfront)****333 SE Bay Blvd., Newport, OR 97365****or Virtual Via Microsoft Teams Technologies**

OCWCOG Members	Title	Jurisdiction	Attendance
Christopher McMorran	Mayor	Philomath	No
Jan Kaplan	Mayor	Newport	Yes
Alex Johnson II	Mayor	Albany	(Alternate) Sophie Adams
Bryan Cutchen	Mayor	Oakridge	Yes
Heather DeSart	Commissioner	Benton County	Yes
Greg Price	Director	Oregon Coast CC, SBDC	Yes
Christie Dudenhoefer	Executive Director of Semiconductor ED	OSU	Yes
Paul Schuytema	Executive Director	EDALC	Yes
Chris Workman	City Manager	Philomath	Yes
Ron Whitlatch	City Manager	Lebanon	No
John Pascone	President	LEDG	Yes
Pam Barlow-Lind	Planning Dev Director	CTSI	No
Christopher Jacobs	Economic Dev Director	Benton County	Yes
Lane Members	Title	Jurisdiction	Attendance
Chris Wig	Board Member	Willamalane Parks and Rec District	No
Patti Chappel	Board Member	Eugene People's Utility District	No

Randy Groves	City Councilor	City of Eugene	Yes
Robbie McCoy	Mayor	Veneta	No
Steve Recca	Board Member	Fern Ridge Library District	No
Pete Knox	Board Member	Lane Transit District	Yes
Greg Ervin	City Councilor	City of Cottage Grove	Yes
Matt Michael	City Manager	City of Veneta	No

Staff: CED Director Matt Lehman, EDA Supervisor Susan Patterson, LCOG Loan Manager Sandra Easdale, Brenda Moore LCOG Executive Director, Executive Assistant Ashlyn Muzechenko, and Administrative Assistant Travis Overvig

Guests: Courtney Flathers, Lynlei Brown, Andrea Formo, Seth Lenaerts, Mary Phillips, Jason Harris

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	DECISION / CONCLUSION
1. Call to Order & Agenda Review	The Chair, Economic Development Alliance of Lincoln County Director, Pual Schuytema, called the June 11, 2026, CWEDD Board meeting to order at 9:05 am. Chair Schuytema welcomed all in attendance to Lane County. There were no changes to the agenda.	The Meeting was called to order at 9:05 am by the Chair, EDALC Director Paul Schuytema.
2. Welcome and Roll Call	Administrative Assistant Travis Overvig conducted a rollcall of the CWEDD Board members and introductions were provided by those in attendance.	Roll call was conducted by Travis Overvig
3. Public Comment	There were no public comments made to the CWEDD Board of Directors.	There were no public comments.
4. Minutes of March 19, 2026, Meeting (Attachment A) Action: Approval of Minutes	Councilor Greg Ervin moved to approve the minutes for the March 19, 2026, CWEDD Board Meeting. Pete Knox seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Mayor Kaplan of Newport voted in favor. Sophie Adams of Albany voted in favor. Heather DeSart of Benton County voted in favor.	Councilor Greg Ervin moved to approve the minutes for the March 19, 2026, CWEDD Board Meeting.

	Greg Price of OCCC voted in favor. Christie Dudenhoefer of OSU voted in favor. The Chair, Paul Schuytema, of EDALC voted in favor. Chris Workman of Philomath voted in favor. John Pascone of LEDG voted in favor. Christopher Jacobs of Corvallis voted in favor. Pete Knox of LTD voted in favor. Vice-Chair Greg Ervin of Cottage Grove voted in favor. Matt Michael of Veneta voted in favor. There were no votes against.	Christopher Jacobs seconded. The motion carried unanimously.
5. CWEDD Executive Committee Appointments ACTION: <i>Appoint CWEDD Exec Board members (Benton County and at large)</i>	Nominees to be appointed to the CWEDD Executive Committee: Christopher Jacobs and Christopher McMorran. Workman moved to approve the appointment of both nominees. Mayor Kaplan seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Mayor Kaplan of Newport voted in favor. Sophie Adams of Albany voted in favor. Heather DeSart of Benton County voted in favor. Greg Price of OCCC voted in favor. Christie Dudenhoefer of OSU voted in favor. The Chair, Paul Schuytema, of EDALC voted in favor. Chris Workman of Philomath voted in favor. John Pascone of LEDG voted in favor. Christopher Jacobs of Corvallis voted in favor. Pete Knox of LTD voted in favor. Vice-Chair Greg Ervin of Cottage Grove voted in favor. Matt Michael of Veneta voted in favor. There were no votes against.	CWEDD Board approved the appointments of both Christopher Jacobs and Christopher McMorran to the CWEDD Executive Committee.
6. Fall Regional Meeting ACTION: <i>Discussion</i>	Staff Patterson shared that CWEDD is coordinating early plans for the Fall Convening to be held between late-October and mid-November. Expectation is this will be well attended (50+ attendees) with high-	CWEDD Board discussed plans and logistics for the Fall Meeting

	level updates for the region around working committees, state policy and group activities. Suggestion for location is for Linn County with the last one being in Benton County. Patterson has reached out to former State Senator Tim Knopp, who is Oregon's Chief Prosperity Officer to serve as the keynote speaker. • Chair Schuytema explained that the purpose of the fall meeting is to focus on 1-2 priority areas and have breakout sessions or facilitated work so that everyone can come away with some sense of regional actions they can take together. Last meeting had different stations corresponding to priority areas of the proposed comprehensive economic development strategy, though next steps were lacking that limited progress. • Councilor Ervin shared that having a focus on land-use policy would be beneficial and how other jurisdictions are handling brownfields and otherwise encumbered properties. Further, during economic analysis in the City of Cottage Grove a consultant explained that expanding urban growth boundary is necessary because they do not have enough land to have the type of industrial lot sizes that are needed to drive industry. The consultant recommended not even trying because it will get tied up in court. Coburg tried it and spent hundreds of thousands, and it was a non-starter. Councilor Ervin asked to share and gather other ideas to assist in this challenge in our region. • Dudenhoefer shared that they could seek an update on the Southern Willamette Valley Innovation Corridor work that's going on. Another is we should know if the region is going to win the National Science Foundation Regional Innovation Engine Award that is pending. It is semiconductor focused and strives to generate economic development that can spread prosperity in the region. If we win the award that is worth upwards of \$160 million over a decade. Further, OBC is also leading a Life Science Competitiveness Task Force who are gearing up to make recommendations to the governor and legislature in the fall.	
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	Workman and Chair Schuytema agreed with Dudenhoefer's suggestions and expanding engagement with industry partners. • Jacobs shared desire to have the Industrial Land Readiness resources and policies to assist companies growing out of the OSU ecosystem. Adding that the Governor's 4084 Bill that created fast-track permitting is worth monitoring, to address things like wetland permitting specifically and industrial site-readiness funding. • Chair Schuytema shared that the last legislative session has made significant changes to the enterprise zone program and that having Business Oregon talk about these changes. Chair Schuytema talked about a desire to create a small planning committee of 2-3 Board Members working with CWEDD staff on logistics. Goal is to have fall meeting be 9am – 3pm and with October being conference season looking towards mid-November would work best.	
7. CEDS Priorities Area 2 and Proposed Projects ACTION: Discussion	Patterson discussed the CEDS Priorities Area 2 and Proposed Projects with the CWEDD Board. • Patterson explained that CEDS has a lot of work to do in the four-county region and that focusing on a few projects will be important for finding funding to support economic and disaster resiliency and in helping the Eugene Airport with expansion plans. Patterson recommended creating a priority task force that would create a 1-page with 5-6 detailed priority areas or projects in our region so that she can look for grant writing opportunities to support them. • Chair Schuytema asked which CWEDD members would be interested in helping create this task force. Greg Price and Councilor Ervin both wish to join. Price shared that he has a tremendous amount of resources, tools, and programming content around economic resiliency and disaster planning recovery as it pertains to small businesses which may assist the task force. • Patterson shared that the expectation is that there will be funding that will be supporting disaster resiliency coming out of this	The CWEDD Board Discussed CEDS Priorities and Proposed Projects

	legislature and how we can leverage resources and collaborate across the four-counties.	
8. Lincoln County Economic Report ACTION: Information	Chair Schuytema shared that during the pandemic his organization wrote a grant to use some ARPA funds to do a 10-year update to the economic report for Lincoln County • Chair Schuytema shared that Lincoln Counties' economy is \$3 billion annually and that only 45% of net earnings is from people's jobs. The other 55% is transfer payments and investment income. Additionally, over 30% of the population, and growing, is over the age of 65, these are retired people, mostly in second homes, some in retirement homes. • The local economy has transformed with Tourism and Marine Science dominating and Timber declining. Oregon's Blue Economy Hub, which is economic activity related to the ocean, shoreline, and estuaries, make up roughly 27% of all county jobs. Senate Bill 1525 is creating a blue economy task force statewide that will focus on this industry sector. • Challenges include this aging, retiree-driven population, which is a growing trend across Oregon. As well as a serious wage-gap with lower-wage tourism jobs lowering the average wage in Lincoln County. With a large portion of the population owning second homes, this is artificially driving home costs upwards, squeezing out the workforce. Further, there is a wide disparity across Lincoln County with certain areas having significantly higher average wages than others. • Councilor Ervin asked how resilient the marine science growth is for the local economy. Chair Schuytema explained it looks to be quite resilient with facilities that house five distinct federal and state research agencies. Also, the NOAA Pacific Fleet uses Newport and with their lease expiring soon they issued a release of information for ports from Northern Washington to San Francisco that can accommodate their needs, such as ease of air travel. The hope is	Chair Schuytema shared information with the CWEDD Board on Lincoln County Economic Report

that NOAA stays in Newport, and Newport is working on responding to NOAA.



	 The infographic, titled "Newport: Oregon's Blue Economy Hub", presents data on the blue economy cluster. It is divided into six sections: BLUE ECONOMY EMPLOYMENT: 27% of all county jobs in 2019, compared to an Oregon average of 2.2%. TOURISM & RECREATION: 85% of blue economy jobs, the dominant sector by far. MARINE BUSINESSES: ~18% of all county establishments; Newport is the only deepwater port. SB 867 PASSED - MARITIME TASK FORCE: A timeline showing 2017 (Ocean Resources & Blue Economy Report), 2023 (Oregon Ocean Innovation Hub), and 2025 (Oregon Ocean Cluster). OREGON BLUE ECONOMY GDP: \$3.1B in 2019, representing 1% of Oregon's total GDP. Oregon ranks 22nd of 30 coastal states. SIX NOAA ENDOW SECTORS: Tourism, Living Resources, Marine Transport, Ship Building, Marine Construction, and Offshore Minerals.	
9. Georgia Pacific Toledo – Local and Regional ACTION: <i>Discussion</i>	Guest Andrea Formo, Public Affairs Manager from Georgia-Pacific Toledo shared her presentation on the plant and how they contribute to the local economy • GP Toledo is the only GP plant that was built in 1957 from the ground-up. All other plants were acquisitions. GP Toledo produces big brown rolls of paper and those get turned into various products. • GP Toledo employs over 460 direct-employees and supports over 1,500 full and part-time jobs in the local economy. GP Toledo has a lot of investment coming into the facility. GP Toledo is the single largest recycler of old corrugated containers. Paper production is a complex process, and GP Toledo has three paper machines on the paper floor, and they produce 2500 tons a day (900,000 tons per year) with goals of reaching 1 million tons per year. • Formo explained the pulp and paper production process, how the paper roll is built on the winder, cut and sent to shipping. The water in the facility can be run through the cycle 7 times before they send it out to the ponds for retreatment. • GP Toledo has partnered with local high school and colleges (OCCC in particular) in growing their workforce and students in the trades. Community support is very strong, and GP Toledo has a	Guest Andrea Formo shared information on GP Toledo’s economic impact in Lincoln County and explained the pulp and paper production process.

	very engaged workforce in the city of Toledo and Lincoln County.	
10. Lincoln City EPA Community-Wide Assessment ACTION: <i>Discussion</i>	Guest Seth Lenaerts from Lincoln City shared information on the EPA Community-Wide Assessment Grant: • The benefit of these grants is that no match is required. Phase I is a high-level review, if they identify contamination then it goes to Phase II which is an environmental assessment. This grant can be used for both public and private properties, but if used for private properties you must show how it benefits the public. • The journey for this grant started in 2019-2020 where they started focusing on brownfields. Lincoln City was aware of several brownfields and looking at potential redevelopment sites and where there's high potential for that. At this point Lincoln City applied for a Business Organization Redevelopment Fund which is upwards of \$60,000. • That \$60,000 was used for an underutilized property survey through a consulting firm that identified these underutilized sites and what's causing the site to not be developing. • When putting together the application Lincoln City expected to do 8 Phase I assessments and they ended up completing 22. And then expected to do 6 Phase II assessments and ended up completing 11. They also completed 1 Area-Wide Planning and 3 Site-Specific Planning assessments. • Lenaerts detailed the example of the Siletz Bay Trading Post and how that site was developed with the use of this grant.	Lenaerts shared information on the EPA Community-Wide Assessment Grant and how it has assisted Lincoln City with development

Grant Overview

Grant Type: EPA Community Wide Assessment Grant

Duration: 4 years, Oct 1, 2022 – Sept 30, 2026

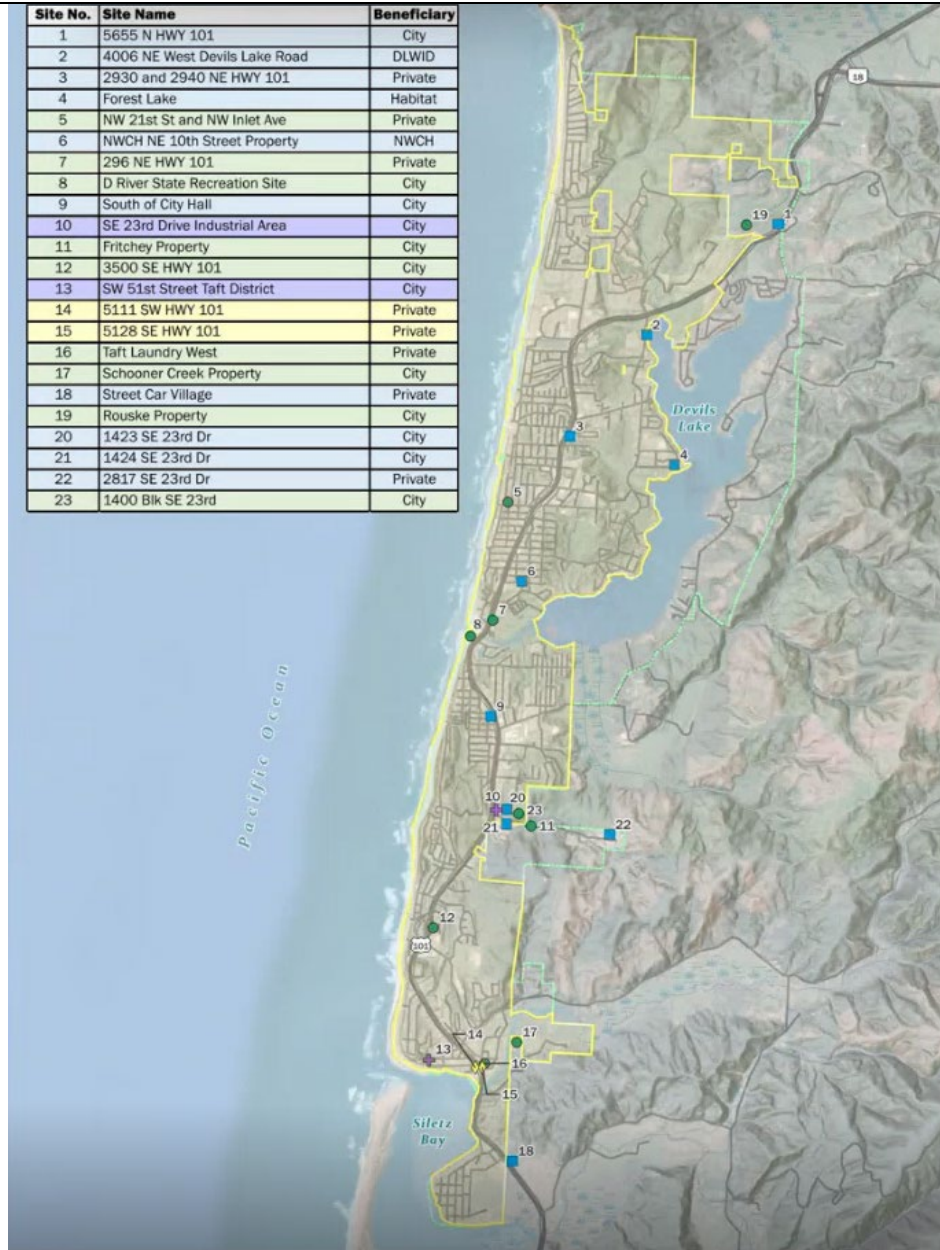
Award Amount: \$500,000

Match: No match required

Eligible costs/projects:

- *Phase I and Phase II Environmental Assessments*
- *Redevelopment planning (single site and area wide)*
- *Private and Public properties eligible, as long as there is a public benefit.*

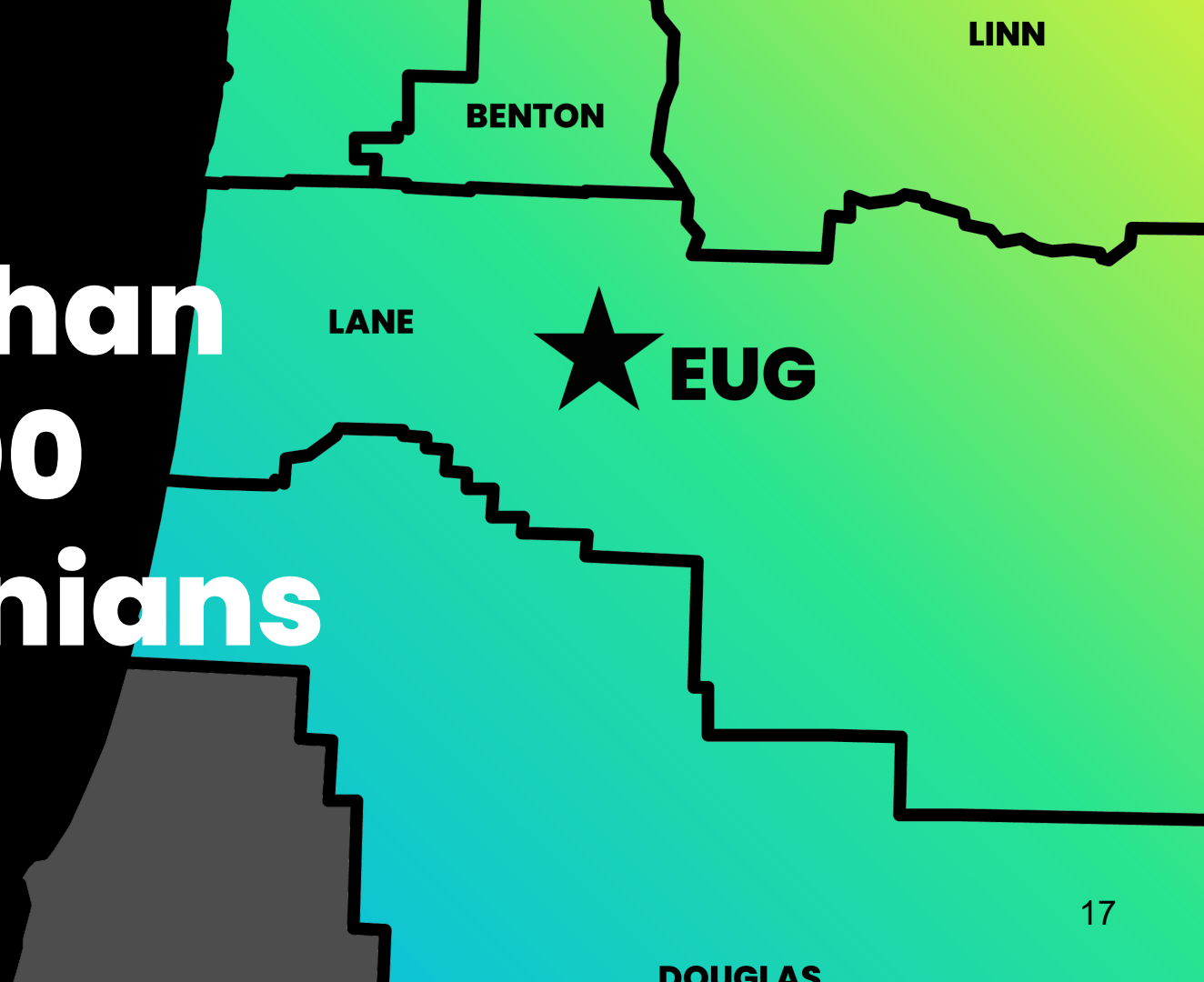
Site No.	Site Name	Beneficiary
1	5655 N HWY 101	City
2	4006 NE West Devils Lake Road	DLWID
3	2930 and 2940 NE HWY 101	Private
4	Forest Lake	Habitat
5	NW 21st St and NW Inlet Ave	Private
6	NWCH NE 10th Street Property	NWCH
7	296 NE HWY 101	Private
8	D River State Recreation Site	City
9	South of City Hall	City
10	SE 23rd Drive Industrial Area	City
11	Fritchey Property	City
12	3500 SE HWY 101	City
13	SW 51st Street Taft District	City
14	5111 SW HWY 101	Private
15	5128 SE HWY 101	Private
16	Taft Laundry West	Private
17	Schooner Creek Property	City
18	Street Car Village	Private
19	Rouske Property	City
20	1423 SE 23rd Dr	City
21	1424 SE 23rd Dr	City
22	2817 SE 23rd Dr	Private
23	1400 Blk SE 23rd	City



11. Discussion: CEDS Working Groups	• <i>Cascades West Innovation Hub</i>: Chair Schuytema shared that the CW Innovation Hub is in partnership with the city of Florence and having a pub-talk on how to bring capital into an innovative business. • <i>Broadband Action Team (BAT)</i>: No updates provided. • <i>Blue Economy Update from EDALC</i>: No updates provided. • <i>Cascades West Regional Consortium (CWRC)</i> : No updates provided. • <i>Early Childhood Education (on pause)</i> : No updates provided. • <i>Rural Economic Alliance (REAL)</i> : No updates provided. • <i>Lane Economic Committee (LEC)</i> : No updates provided.	Chair Schuytema shared updates on the CW Innovation Hub
12. Other Business:	Jurisdictional Updates: CEDS/CWEDD Marketing Video Update Next Regional Meeting Discussion 2026 Meeting Schedules Topics for 2026 Meetings	No Other Business shared with the Board
13. Adjournment	<i>Next Meeting: September 10, 2026, Benton County</i>	The meeting was adjourned by Chair Paul Schuytema at 11:00 am

**LIFT
OFF
EUG**

**More than
700,000
Oregonians**





1.8M passengers

An architectural rendering of a modern airport concourse. The space is characterized by a high ceiling with exposed wooden beams and a series of long, narrow windows. The floor is dark, and the walls are light-colored. In the foreground, there are rows of black airport-style seating. A man in a wheelchair is seated at a white desk on the left. A woman is walking towards the center, and another woman is walking away. In the background, there are more desks, chairs, and a few people standing. The overall atmosphere is clean, bright, and functional.

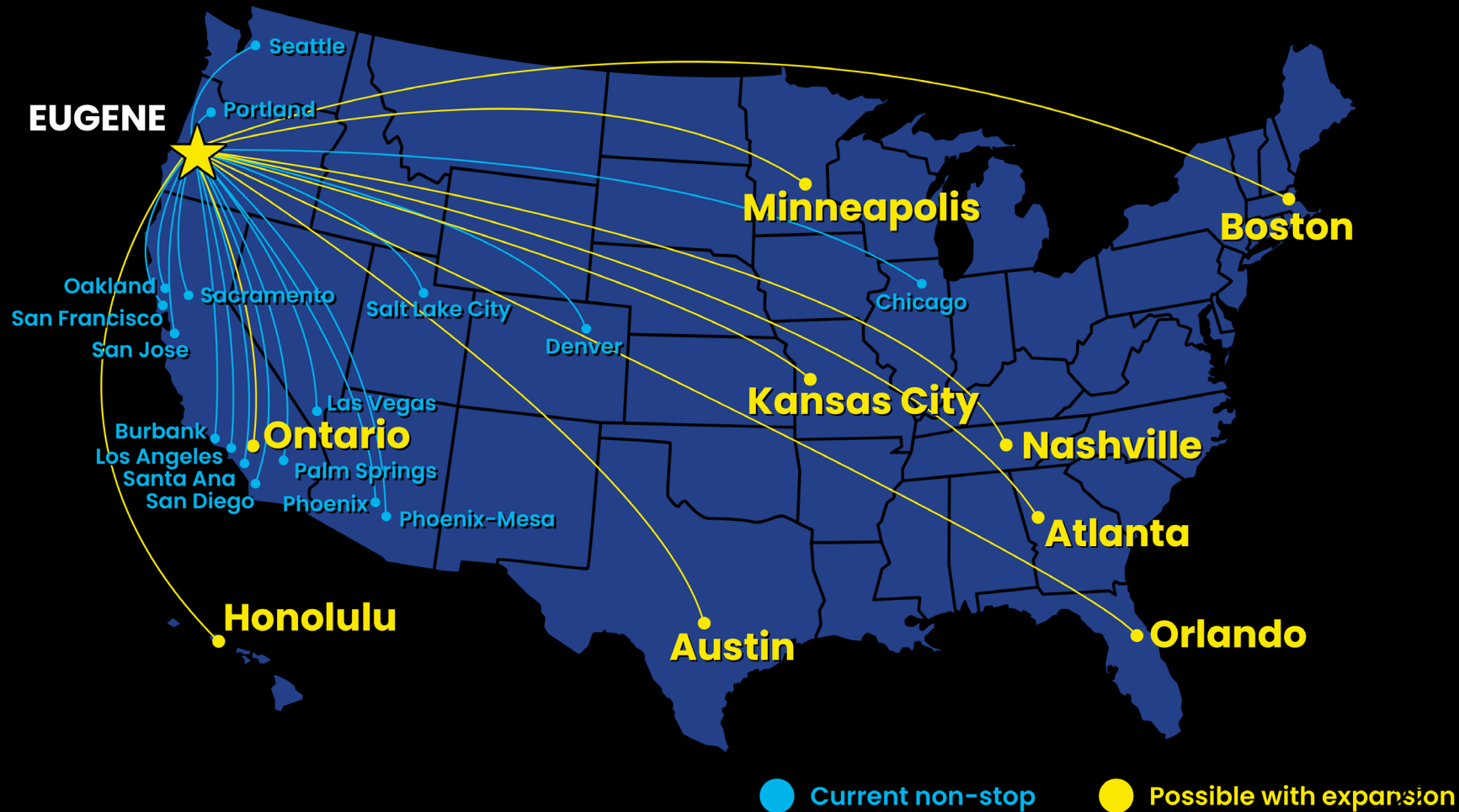
Concourse A: Funded and Underway



Concourse C: The Next Phase

\$1.6B

\$3.6B





**National
scan**

**Stakeholder
engagement**

**Feasibility
study**

\$450M Total Cost

\$240M Unidentified
Funding

\$3M Recently
Awarded



JANUARY 2027 —————→
Oregon Legislative Session

OCTOBER 2026 —————→
Eugene City Council

JULY 2026 —————→
**Expansion
Showcase**

LIFT OFF EUG

EUGENE AIRPORT

Infrastructure Expansion

**THE PROJECT**

Concourse C is part of the next phase of expansion at the Eugene Airport (EUG). This phase adds eight new gates, including a swing gate for chartered flights, expanded ticket counters and a modernized baggage claim system. More gates means more flights, more nonstop destinations and a region that can grow.

Total expansion program: estimated at \$450 million across all phases.

Concourse C unfunded phase: more than \$240 million.

THE NEED

Investment of more than \$240 million would fully fund the second phase and close the unfunded gap, enabling accelerated completion. Without direct investment, traditional funding sources stretch the buildout to 30 years. Projected growth of \$56 million per year in state and local tax revenue represents a strong return on investment.

TIME FOR INVESTMENT IN THE SOUTHERN WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Investment at scale in the Southern Willamette Valley would provide the aviation infrastructure a growing regional economy requires and level the playing field for the region's continued competitiveness. The region is home to the University of Oregon and Oregon State University and 17 percent of Oregonians. It also generates approximately 1 in 9 dollars of Oregon GDP.

The Eugene Airport is the priority infrastructure project for the Southern Willamette Valley Innovation Corridor (SWVIC) Initiative and is vital to the region's continued economic growth. EUG served 1.8 million passengers in 2025 and has been operating at or beyond functional gate capacity since September 2021. Concourse C is what expands capacity to meet the demands of the area. More gates mean more flights, more nonstop destinations and the connectivity the region's businesses, universities and industries need to compete.

METRIC	CURRENT	WITH EXPANSION	GROWTH
Jobs supported	10,383	23,561	+13,178
Personal income	\$441M	\$957M	+\$515M
Business revenue	\$1.2B	\$2.1B	+900M
State and local tax revenue	\$43M	\$99M	+56M
Total economic impact	\$1.6B	\$3.6B	+2.0B

Sources: 2019 EUG economic impact analysis and Concourse C expansion economic projections. Regional five-county catchment area.



CWEDD Board 9 10 2026 Meeting
Working Committee Updates

Blue Economy

Economic Development Alliance of Lincoln County (EDALC) and the Hatfield Marine Science Center continue to work with several innovative companies to set up a funded demonstration project in seawater system nitrogen removal.

Wednesday, September 2nd was the first meeting of the jointly appointed Blue Economy Task Force that came out of the legislature's last long session. Of the 16-member task force, six members live and work in the Cascades West EDD region.

Broadband Action Team (BAT)

On August 14, 2026, the FCC voted to adopt its annual Section 706 Report. Findings include 96.9% of Americans now having access to fixed terrestrial 100/20 Mbps broadband, a roughly 43% reduction over two years in the number of Americans lacking that service, and 95.2% having access to 5G speeds of at least 35/3 Mbps (though a caution here - since cell Internet often has data caps that can seriously throttle functional speeds).

A late-added pole attachment requirement in the BEAD program has become a major sticking point for electric cooperatives nationwide, and it's already driving some out of the program entirely. So far, 9 of the 62 electric cooperatives that initially qualified for BEAD funding have dropped out of the program.

The final six rejected BEAD projects were picked up by six previously-approved ISPs - one of those being Amazon's Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite service, which will serve over 5,000 locations in Oregon (the Amazon LEO service is about a year behind Starlink). There was also some worrisome news that ODOT does not consider fiber as a "utility" and might require ISPs to pay an annual \$1/foot fee to exist on ODOT right-of-way. If this holds, it could scuttle most of the BEAD projects, since those fees were not factored into the proposals.

Cascades West Innovation Hub

Some upcoming innovation-focused events in our CWEDD region:

Startup Coffee Meetups are back! After a summer break, our monthly gathering for founders, entrepreneurs, innovators, and startup-curious community members returns on Thursday, September 10, from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. at the Lane Community College SBDC Downtown Campus. No pitches, no pressure, and no need to have everything figured out. Just bring your questions, your curiosity, and your entrepreneurial energy.

Have a business idea, a side hustle ready to grow, or a venture you are finally ready to make official? Join us for a special PubTalk on Tuesday, September 29 from 4:00 to 6:00 PM at the newly renovated Smitty's in Veneta for an evening built around local entrepreneurship, practical insight, and great connections. Hear from City of Veneta, Lane Small Business Development Center, Cascades West Innovation Hub, RAIN Catalysts, WorkSource Oregon Lane and SCORE Central Oregon about real in-community resources for your business.

Join the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center (OMIC) for an Interactive Insights Session in Newport from 2:00 - 3:30 pm at the Oregon Coast Community College. OMIC R&D offers this session for founders who are creating

hardware, consumer, industrial, or manufactured products to find out more about how OMIC can help them move towards commercialization. Their program has pro-bono funds to use so startups can leverage OMIC R&D's expertise, facilities, and programs to strengthen their product development.

October OEN PubTalk: Networking in Newport (5:00 - 7:00pm at Primal Tones in the Aquarium Village. This is a traditional networking PubTalk and we have discounted the cost for non-members to just \$5. We'll have food and drink for attendees and will have two 5-Minute Pitches and play our "Ask & Offer" game.

For more information, visit: <https://innovatecascadeswest.org/>

Cascades West Regional Consortium

The CWRC met on July 21st and will meet again on September 15th. The group is currently reviewing the "SB1537 Summary Report: Impacts of State Policies and Programs on Housing Production" Report. The group is focused on the wetlands findings in the report and working on creating a list of priorities to advocate for. The group is also interested in having a wetland consultant present at a meeting. For more information contact: Justin Peterson, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, jpeterson@ocwcog.org

Lane Economic Committee (LEC)

June 8, 2026 Meeting

Presenter: Sandra Easdale, Loan Program Manager at Lane Council of Governments (LCOG)

The Lane Economic Committee was asked to consider two actions related to the Loan Advisory Committee (LAC): 1) 2026-27 Membership, and 2) Loan Advisory Committee Bylaws amendments

Both items were recommended to be sent to LCOG Board for final approval.

Presenter: Caitlin Vargas

Lane County Entrepreneur and Innovator Support of Collaborative Economic Development Oregon

Ms. Vargas presented an overview of the [Cascades West Innovation Hub](#) is an initiative led by the Regional Accelerator & Innovation Network (RAIN) and funded by Business Oregon. The Hub connects entrepreneurs, universities, investors, service providers, and community partners to grow innovation-driven businesses in Oregon's Benton, Lane, Lincoln and Linn Counties. They provide support, resources, and navigation for innovators and innovation-based traded-sector businesses. CWIH's mission is to strengthen the innovation ecosystem, expand access to resources, and foster inclusive economic opportunity across the region.

No Meetings for July and August 2026

For More Information, contact: Sandra Easdale, Lane Council of Governments, SEASDALE@lcog-org.gov

Rural Economic Development Alliance (REAL)

Scott McDowell from REAL met with Susan and Maddy from the OCWCOG to review and discuss an opportunity to use de-federalized dollars in a revolving loan program for the REAL member cities. U.S. Representative Janelle Bynum is scheduled a visit for an upcoming REAL meeting. Nate Conroy attended several community events this summer spreading the word and mission of REAL to the people. Website: [About REAL](#) For more information contact Scott McDowell, City Manager Brownsville, admin@ci.brownsville.or.us