

2024 Annual Impact Report



*Promoting a thriving region through service,
connectivity, and innovation.*



Ryan Vogt
Executive Director

2024 marked **57 years** of Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG, or simply the COG) service to the people and communities of Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties. Over the last year, we've made a number of changes, all with the goal of better fulfilling our mission of *promoting a thriving region through service, connectivity, and innovation*.

One of the most notable changes is the expanding partnership between COG and Community Services Consortium (CSC). For the last 4 years, CSC and OCWCOG have been strengthening our partnership; and as of 2024, now enjoying shared IT, HR, and Communications teams. We are also co-housed in our Corvallis office.

After years of assessment, planning, and success in the growing partnership, it was announced the agencies would share a new Executive Director overseeing the larger operations and strategic direction of both. With that transition, we welcomed a new COG Agency Director, Paul Egbert, in the spring of 2025, who you will be seeing and hearing more from this year.

As I reflect on the accomplishments and strides made over the past year, I am excited to welcome you to our annual report. You will discover the profound impact of our collective efforts and unique services to the many communities and individuals we impact. Our agency is large, the work is vast, and we invite you to learn about it and the impact we may be making near you.

Thank you for joining us on our journey to improve the lives and communities we have the honor of serving.

As a longtime Commissioner for Lincoln County, I have seen firsthand the impact COG and its programs have in our communities for many years, and it's been my honor to serve on the board for 21 years and, mostly recently, as board chair. While I will still be an engaged member of the board going into 2025, my colleague in Benton County, Commissioner Malone, will be taking over chairing the board.

Over my tenure with the COG, I have seen many evolutions and leadership administrations, and none as energizing as the last couple of years, especially in 2024.

In this report, you will see a sampling of the incredible work COG has been doing across our region, including feeding thousands of seniors, providing millions of miles of transportation, expanding local businesses and economies, protecting seniors and people with disabilities, reducing debt, and so much more.

We warmly welcome you to read the following pages and learn more about this amazing work for yourself.

OCW
COG



Claire Hall
*Lincoln County
Commissioner &
OCWCOG Board Chair*

2023-2025 Strategic Plan

2024 - Year Three

EXPANSION AND INNOVATION

Data-led assessment of agency reach and impact. Be positioned to anticipate and respond to emerging regional needs, and state and national changes.



Hosted first regional economic planning summit, including four counties, in over 10 years to restart regional strategic planning



Hired a grant writer to help us and our members find and access new funding opportunities to make our communities better

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Efficient, high-value operations and processes to make data-informed decisions, support and empower staff, and enhance program delivery and collaboration.



Implemented new and improved enterprise systems and internal processes to modernize and streamline business operations



Provide Human Resources and Information Technology services for partner organizations and member governments

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Further alignment with sister organization, Community Services Consortium (CSC), and expansion of engagement with other partners and board members.



Development of shared leadership with CSC, including new joint Executive Director with collaborative Agency Directors for each respective organization



Fully co-housed with CSC in Benton County at new Corvallis office for one year, enhancing coordination of services and public access



The shared Corvallis building is located at located at 1121 NW Ninth Street, cohoused with CSC.

2023-2025 Strategic Plan

2024 - Year Three

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Identify and address historical gaps and barriers to accessing vital services. Meaningful engagement with under-represented communities to improve access and enhance our workforce to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.



Formally chartered internal Community Awareness, Responsibility, Empathy (CARE) Committee



Implemented standardized agency-wide trainings, including enhanced new employee orientation

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

New mission, vision, and values to align with where COG is and the strategic direction we're going. Strong brand recognition, communication, and outreach to make communities aware of available services from COG and our close partners.



Mission, vision, and values established in 2023 and continued dedication and commitment to core principals as an agency



Participated in many outreach events across Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties to meet communities where they are

MISSION

To promote a thriving region through service, connectivity, and innovation.

VISION

We are a regional leader and partner providing inclusive services to meet individual and community needs.

VALUES

Compassion • Collaboration • Integrity
Respect • Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



Senior & Disability Services

Senior and Disability Services (SDS) is dedicated to providing services, support, and resources to keep older adults and people with disabilities independent, safe, and healthy in our communities.

AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CONNECTION (ADRC)

The Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) is a **free** service that offers the public a single point of entry to access resources, information, and assistance on issues affecting older adults and people with disabilities regardless of their income.



7,235
REFERRALS
PROVIDED



2,897
CONSUMERS
SERVED

In-home Service & Equipment

Family & Caregiving Support

Medicare Counseling

Over **65%** were older than the age of 65, and **50%** reported a disability or difficulty doing daily tasks.

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS)

APS workers operate within the SDS department and respond to allegations of abuse and neglect of older adults and people with physical disabilities.



4,155
CALLS
RECEIVED

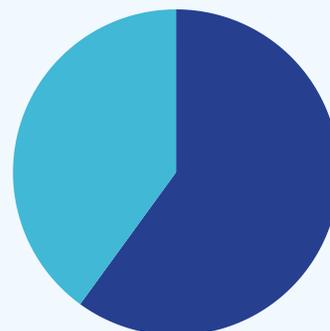


1,538
RESULTED IN
INVESTIGATIONS

Investigated
APS Calls

39.9%

705 Facility
Investigations



60.1%

803 Community
Investigations

HOUSING SERVICES

Senior and Disability Services hired two new positions, a Housing Navigator and a Housing Coordinator, to support Long Term Care Services and eligible individuals in the region with intensive case management. These positions help address housing risks and issues throughout the region.



159 CONNECTIONS MADE
with Individuals

ADULT FOSTER HOMES

Adult Foster Homes (AFH) are single-family homes that offer 24 hour care. These unique residences provide individuals with support with activities of daily living like bathing and dressing, while still allowing them to live in the comfort of a home like setting.



49 ADULT FOSTER HOMES
provided residents safe housing

ELIGIBILITY SERVICES

Medicaid-funded programs in partnership with Oregon Department of Human Services, providing essential support to eligible Oregonians. Including, medical, food, financial assistance, childcare, and more. Medical assistance may cover long term supports, such as in-home or facility care, as well as help with Medicare premiums.



25,938 ACTIVE MEDICAL
CASES

LONG TERM CARE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS (LTSS)

Of the 2,806 cases supported across Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties, **1,944** received in-home care, **221** received care in a nursing facility, **556** in Assisted Living or Residential Care Facility, and **85** in an Adult Foster Home.



2,806 CASES
MANAGED

OREGON PROJECT INDEPENDENCE

Oregon Project Independence (OPI) provides monthly assistance supporting daily life activities with the help of a home care workers or in-home care agencies. Support can include bathing and dressing, meal preparation, shopping, housekeeping, and more. These vital services help seniors and people with disabilities **maintain their daily needs and quality of life.**



185 OPI RECIPIENTS
SUPPORTED

THE POWER OF CARE

A senior resident in Albany connected with COG about a year ago in need of increased home care support. She was eligible and enrolled in the OPI program. At the start of her care, she was primarily eating ramen noodles and leftover fast food from housemates. She had health issues related to the poor nutrition and not being able to properly bathe due to a lack of needed equipment for her shower and bath.

She has had a dedicated home care worker helping her prepare nutritious meals multiple times a week, assistance with regular bathing and hygiene, and her physical and mental health has drastically improved. At her recent one-year reassessment, she shared, "I am deeply grateful for the OPI program. I can't express how much it has improved my quality of life!"

MONEY MANAGEMENT

The Money Management Program (MMP) provides free assistance with personal money management tasks through specially trained volunteers. Services are offered free of charge to eligible individuals and includes **bill pay**, where clients receive assistance with budgeting and check writing, and a **representative payee** program, where a designated representative can make payments on behalf of an incapable beneficiary.



6 BILL PAY
CLIENTS



35 REPRESENTED
PAYEE CLIENTS

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

COG administers the state SNAP program, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, for Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties on behalf of the State of Oregon to eligible, low-income individuals and families.



9,564 TOTAL SNAP
RECIPIENTS

MEALS ON WHEELS

Meals on Wheels (MoW) serves fresh, nutritionally balanced meals to older adults, people with disabilities, and life partners who often live alone and have limited resources or ability to care for themselves. This is a **volunteer-led program**, made possible through hundreds of amazingly dedicated volunteers across the region! Beyond food, MoW also provides consistent wellness checks and social connection, empowering low mobility clients to remain safe and independent in their own home.




302,423
TOTAL MEALS SERVED



286,123
HOME DELIVERED MEALS



15,050
IN-PERSON DINING MEALS



11
MEAL SITES



1,250
SHELF-STABLE FOOD BOXES



2,410
CLIENTS SERVED



THE POWER OF FOOD

In Lebanon, there is a long-time Meals on Wheels recipient who is so grateful and happy to see her volunteers every time they arrive, she cries tears of joy and welcomes them in. At a recent visit, she shared "it's not just about the meal, though I am so appreciative of every one of them. It's that someone is here to check on me, think of me, and bring me comfort."

THE POWER OF SUPPORT

We received almost **\$200,000 in community donations** last year! We are deeply appreciative of our generous donors and volunteers that make this program possible.

More than ever, we need your support to ensure we can continue the services and impact above.



DONATE TODAY → [OCWCOG.KINDFUL.COM](https://ocwco.org/kindful.com)



Community Services Programs

Community Services Programs (CSP) are designed to assist residents to maintain their health, wellness, independence, dignity, and reduce social isolation by building community connection.

\$TAND BY ME

\$tand By Me (\$BM) is a financial empowerment program that offers free financial coaching to individuals seeking help with their budget, credit, debt, and savings. Participants receive free personal 1:1 financial coaching to help achieve financial wellness. Last year, coaches helped participants save and reduce debt for a combined total of over \$500,000.



20
WORKSHOPS

Coaches provided workshops across the region on the basics of financial wellness, credit, business ownership, and more.



84
PARTICIPANTS

Participants receive free personal 1:1 coaching to help achieve financial wellness and goals. In 2024, 271 personal appointments were provided.



\$281,461
TOTAL SAVINGS

Clients receive tools and education on how to save on spending and for big purchases such as homes, cars, and more.



\$233,712
DEBT REDUCED

Coaches work with clients to reduce their overall debt and increase their credit score, improving their financial health and wellbeing.

BENTON COUNTY VETERAN SERVICES OFFICE

The Benton County VSO is staffed by OCWCOG to assist Veterans and Veteran Families in submitting claims for VA benefits including compensation, pension, survivor's benefits, and VA Healthcare.



346
INTERVIEW
APPOINTMENTS



\$1.2M
TOTAL CLAIMS, BENEFITS,
AND RETRO AWARDS

OCW
COG

THE POWER OF SERVICES

*A VSO met with a surviving spouse of Vietnam Veteran. She had been diagnosed with terminal lung cancer and the VSO went to her home to assist with claim. Thanks to his diligence, she was awarded a **retro payment \$56K she was owed**. These funds will help her family as they care for her.*



AmeriCorps Seniors Programs

SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM

Senior Companion volunteers provide assistance and friendship to older adults who have difficulty with daily tasks, such as shopping or paying bills. Through this program, volunteers keep seniors independent longer and provide respite to family caregivers.

 **19**
VOLUNTEERS

 **9,151**
HOURS

 **42**
SENIORS SERVED

20 transportation care plans provided rides to homebound seniors to assist with important tasks such as grocery shopping and medical appointments.
22 companionship care plans provided care and socialization for older adults.

FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

We partner with schools, after-school programs, and other community partners to provide the regional Foster Grandparent program. This intergenerational program is offered across seven cities, providing **volunteers aged 55 and over the opportunity to help children ranging from 3 to 18 years old gain personal and academic confidence.**

 **26**
VOLUNTEERS

 **16,860**
HOURS

 **13**
PROGRAM PARTNERS

SENIOR HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance Program (SHIBA) is administered by OCWCOG on behalf of the State of Oregon. This program educates local residents on Medicare benefit elections. SHIBA counselors provide free one-on-one counseling services, certified by the State.

 **1,942**
CONSUMERS SERVED

 **26**
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

 **247** MEDICARE PRESENTATIONS

THE POWER OF NAVIGATION

"Our SHIBA counselor was very friendly, extremely knowledgeable and made us feel comfortable immediately."

"SHIBA helps me make the best decisions for my healthcare each year. I'm so thankful!"

"SHIBA helped my understanding of Medicare tremendously. I don't know how I would navigate healthcare without you. Thank you for ALL you do!"

"I can't imagine how anyone can figure Medicare out without SHIBA, the counselors are so knowledgeable and helpful."



Community & Economic Development (CED)

The Community & Economic Development (CED) Department provides economic development, business lending, and planning services to local governments, businesses, and nonprofits; provides non-emergency medical transportation services; and leads regional transportation planning and coordination. A summary of CED's projects and various program accomplishments for 2024 are summarized in the following pages.

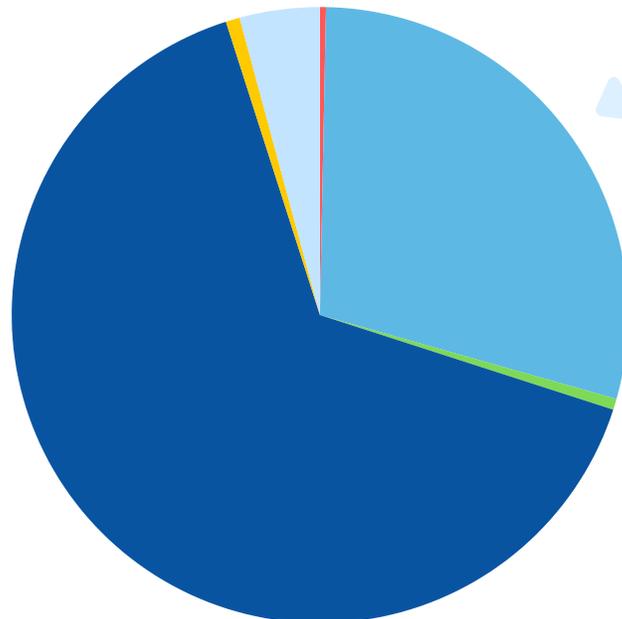
COLLECTIVE IMPACT - A YEAR OF FUNDING IN REVIEW

During 2024, CED launched its grant-writing program, offering member agencies assistance with fund prospecting, project development, and grant-writing. Through coordination with state, federal, and philanthropic partners, staff supported communities in identifying funding opportunities for technical assistance, transportation enhancement, infrastructure expansion, improved energy efficiency, and more. This program is critical for helping communities in our tri-county region to thrive today and in the future. See a breakdown of the overarching funding below:



\$9.5M IN TOTAL GRANT FUNDING

- Land use & Housing
- Parks & Rec
- Energy & Efficiency
- Business Development
- Infrastructure
- Transportation



Economic Development

CASCADES WEST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

COG provides the administrative staffing for the federally-designated Cascades West Economic Development District (CWEDD), which encompasses the counties of Linn, Benton, Lincoln, and Lane. We partner with Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) to provide economic development planning and priority-setting for this region. **For the first time in 10 years, the CWEDD held a regional economic meeting, hosted and facilitated by our COG staff.** This milestone meeting brought together the two councils of governments and many regional stakeholders and partners in economic development. It also kicked-off the update to our regional 2025-2030 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) plan. A major achievement for COG and region that will impact our regional communities and economies for years to come!



CASCADES WEST BUSINESS LENDING

Cascades West Business Lending (CWBL) fosters economic development across Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties by providing access to capital for small business owners, for either start-up or expansion needs when they cannot obtain traditional financing.

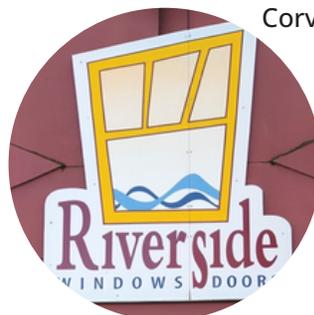


Below are just some of the continuing collaborations we helped finance to give our small businesses a chance to thrive and achieve their dreams!

Lincoln City



Corvallis



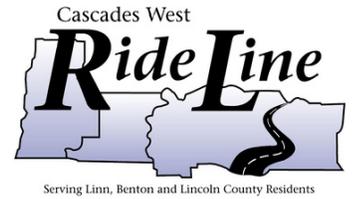
Albany



Transportation & Planning

CASCADES WEST RIDE LINE (CWRL)

CWRL is the region's Non-Emergent Medical Transportation (NEMT) which provides rides to non-emergency medical appointments for eligible Oregon Health Plan (OHP) and some Medicare clients in Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties.



 **69,439**
CALLS
ANSWERED

 **159,875**
TRIPS
PROVIDED

 **2,902,410**
MILES
TRAVELED



The amount of miles Ride Line traveled in 2024 could **wrap around the earth 117 times!!**

THE POWER OF RESOURCES

A local resident was discharged from a medical facility in Eastern Oregon on Christmas Eve, needing support to be transported back home to Eddyville. There were no local providers available to transport him, so Ride Line staff began calling driving companies and resources in eastern and central Oregon with no luck. With hope dwindling, staff reached out to the local brokerage in central Oregon, who happened to have a volunteer driver who loves long car rides. On Christmas Eve, we were able to coordinate a trip home through the unwavering effort and dedication of Ride Line staff and the kindness of a volunteer who sacrificed his holiday to drive from La Pine to Eddyville to ensure the client made it home safely.

LINN & BENTON BROWNSFIELDS ASSESSMENT

Brownfields are properties that are not being used to their full potential because of known or suspected environmental pollution. For example, a former gas station needs special testing to be ready to be turned into land for a park.

 **4** BROWNFIELDS
SITES SELECTED

 **54** ACRES
OF LAND

Including the Champion Mill in Lebanon, Quonset Hut in Tangent, Action Yard in South Corvallis, and Downtown Parking Lots in Albany. **This land is on its way to becoming something more usable and productive in our communities!** Nominations for new sites are in, so keep an eye out for more in 2025...



Transportation & Planning

SWEET HOME EMERGENCY GENERATORS

CED grants services identified an opportunity to help the City of Sweet Home to scope and purchase three generators for emergency city resources and facilities.



\$700,000 Grant
for generators supporting safe drinking water and public works



ALBANY AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) is the designated organization coordinating transportation options and specialized projects for Albany, Jefferson, Millersburg, Tangent, and portions of Benton and Linn Counties.



\$696,000
Committed to Tangent Drive Modernization, widening lanes and creating bike lanes



\$1.2M
Committed for the safety widening of Goldfish Farm Road in Albany

CORVALLIS AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) is the designated organization coordinating transportation options and specialized projects for Corvallis, Philomath, Adair Village, and portions of North Albany and Benton County.



\$1.3M
dedicated in passthrough funding to resurface 19th Ave in Philomath



\$25M
identified in safety, transportation, & congestion relief along Highway 20



Bus Driver Shortage
Conducted research project to identify causes and solutions to local bus driver shortage for future workforce investments



Safe School Routes
School mapping to determine safest walk and bike routes for children and identified potential areas for safety improvements



CASCADE WEST (CW) RIDE

CW Ride provides transit coordination and ride options across the tri-county region. Including, the Seamless Transit Project, which aims to unify the currently fragmented public transit systems across the region, and Get There Oregon, providing free trip planning, including carpooling and more.



\$129,000 Awarded
For Seamless Transit Project to continue progress for the next two years to streamline public transit



Community Outreach

In 2024, we held and/or participated in **25 regional community events!** This is just one of the ways we meet our partners and community members where they are. Don't miss us in 2025 at events near you!



Linn-Benton Festival Latino

OCWCOG participated in this incredible annual event for Latinx and Spanish-speaking populations, and all members of the public! A dedicated COG employee, Ana Ojeda Duffy, participated in the planning and execution as part of the Linn-Benton Hispanic Advisory Committee. There was an estimated 750 community members in attendance last year, more than 30 service providers, and 3 local food vendors, as well as regional music groups and cultural performances.

Albany Pride Festival

Albany's pride festival is the regional pride event between Eugene and Salem. We also participated in pride events in Newport and Lincoln City on the coast. OCWCOG is honored to participate annually, along with many other service providers and local vendors. The festival includes resource booths, a rally, a march through historic downtown Albany, drag performances, speeches and presentations from BIPOC community leaders, music, food, and more!



Oregon Coast Community College Resource Fair

OCCC holds an annual resource fair for students and members of the public at their Newport campus, connecting local residents to the array of services and resources available to them, including what we're able to offer at the COG. We were honored to participate again last year along with close community partners and providers covering mental and emotional health, child care, employment opportunities and more!



Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments

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541-336-2289