

2014



# Gateway Community Livability Assessment & Recommendations Report

## Sweet Home, Oregon



This report prepared by  
The Conservation Fund in  
collaboration with the  
Federal Highway  
Administration.

THE  
CONSERVATION FUND

U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Highway  
Administration**

Federal Lands Livability Initiative

## REPORT PREPARED BY:

# THE CONSERVATION FUND

## CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP NETWORK

The Conservation Fund (TCF) is a national non-profit environmental organization that has protected over 7 million acres of land and water in all 50 states. Working with community, government and business partners, TCF strives to balance economic and environmental goals.

TCF's **Conservation Leadership Network** is a team of experts that brings diverse professionals together to forge conservation solutions. The Conservation Leadership Network assists communities plan for the future, connects regions, develops leaders, and provides innovative resources to balance nature and commerce.

## IN COLLABORATION WITH:



The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provides stewardship over the construction, maintenance and preservation of the Nation's highways, bridges and tunnels. FHWA also conducts research and provides technical assistance to state and local agencies in an effort to improve safety, mobility, and livability and encourage innovation.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In 2009, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development created the Partnership for Sustainable Communities “to help improve access to affordable housing, more transportation options, and lower transportation costs while protecting the environment in communities nationwide” (<http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov>). Through the goals of this partnership, the federal government has committed significant resources and attention to implementing livability in state and local governments.

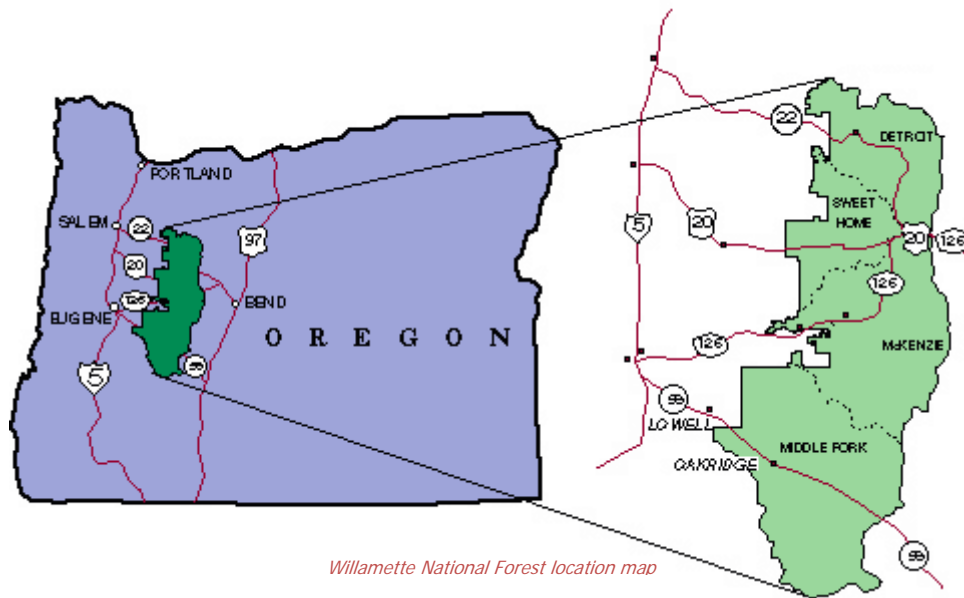
This Federal Lands Livability Initiative, a research project led by the Federal Highway Administration’s Federal Lands Highway Program, is an extension of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities and provides an opportunity to direct attention to livability beyond urban areas and focus on America’s gateway communities—communities that exist in close proximity to public land. Gateway communities are often affected by decisions made by managers of the surrounding public lands. The decisions of leaders of gateway communities similarly may affect the management of resources on adjacent public lands. Gateway communities also often support public lands by offering unique recreational and cultural heritage experiences and providing for food, lodging, and other essential services for visitors. Transportation access between gateway communities and their neighboring public lands is integral to health and viability of each. Hence, special emphasis is made on transportation for the Federal Lands Livability Initiative.

Livability in these communities relies heavily on the coordinated decision-making and partnership between communities and public land managers. This Livability Assessment and Recommendations Report is the result of an evaluation of natural, cultural, physical (infrastructure), commercial, and economic health of the gateway community and surrounding landscape and their relationship to the six principles of livability adapted for gateway communities:

1. Provide more transportation choices for residents, workers, and visitors.
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing and lodging choices that meet the needs of residents, workers, and visitors.
3. Enhance economic competitiveness by valuing the public lands and natural, cultural, recreational, and environmental assets associated with the gateway community.
4. Support existing gateway communities and sustain their unique character.
5. Coordinate policies and leverage investments within the community and between the gateway community and public lands.
6. Value communities, neighborhoods and landscapes, and the area’s natural, cultural heritage, and recreational assets that foster social, economic, and public health.

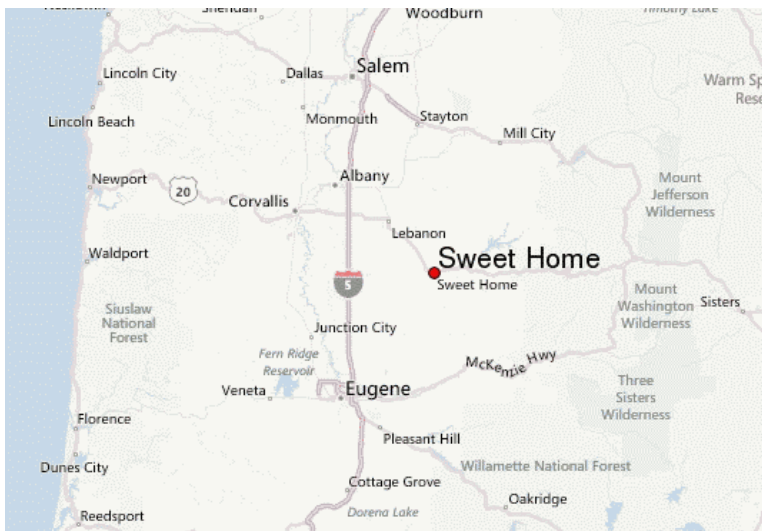
A Livability Assessment Team comprised of representatives of The Conservation Fund and the Federal Highway Administration gathered information from background materials, community leaders, stakeholders, and site visits to provide this assessment as a tool to assist Sweet Home, Oregon, and its public land partners in supporting and enhancing livability in their area.

## SWEET HOME, OREGON—GATEWAY TO WILLAMETTE NATIONAL FOREST



*Willamette National Forest location map*

The gateway community of Sweet Home, Oregon, and its partner, Willamette National Forest, were selected from the pool of applicants due to their demonstrated commitment to partnership with surrounding public land managers and recent efforts to invest in livability improvements. Travelers to the Willamette National Forest and the neighboring U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Foster and Green Peter lakes follow a scenic transportation route that takes them through downtown Sweet Home.



Sweet Home is located in eastern Linn County, less than two hours from Portland and less than one hour from Eugene and Corvallis. The city lies at the junction of Oregon State Highway 228 and U.S. Highway 20, also known as the Santiam Highway. This highway also serves as Sweet Home’s Main Street. Beyond the town’s boundaries U.S. Highway 20 is part of the Over the Rivers & Through the Woods Scenic Byway, a 66-mile route that begins to the west in the rich farmland of the



Willamette Valley near Brownsville and Interstate 5 and winds along the rushing streams and forests of Linn County as it passes through Sweet Home and into the Willamette National Forest to its east.

An alternative route for travelers in the area is the Quartzville Back Country Byway which is approximately 50 miles in length and connects U.S. Highway 20, one mile east of Sweet Home and State Highway 22, 19 miles east of Detroit, Oregon. The land surrounding this byway is called the Quartzville Recreation Corridor and is managed in partnership by several public land managers as well as private land owners. In 1988 the U.S. Congress added the lower 9.6 miles of Quartzville Creek (beginning at Green Peter Reservoir) to the National Wild and Scenic River System. The public lands along the designated segment are managed by the BLM to protect the free-flowing qualities and outstanding resource values of Quartzville Creek.

Sweet Home has a rich history that includes Native American heritage and early frontier settlement. White settlement of the Sweet Home Valley and the town dates back to 1851. In the 1940s, Sweet Home became well known for its timber, as the area responded to wartime demands. The timber industry continued to grow and prosper over the next several decades. Exports reached 100 million board feet in the 1980s, but new forest and endangered species regulations, as well as the advent of mechanization of logging in woods and mills, soon forced the closure of some sawmills and logging operations. The resulting decline in industry contributed to a major decline in Sweet Home's population.

Despite the downturn of the timber industry, the community has persevered. In the 1990s, Sweet Home received federal grant dollars to revitalize its downtown corridor, implemented small business recruitment strategies, and developed assisted living facilities for retirees. Sweet Home also continues to diversify its economy as the "Gateway to the Santiam Playground." Leaders have been proactive about finding opportunities to develop a sustainable tourism industry and invest locally to improve the quality of life for residents. The Oregon Jamboree, a three-day music festival held annually, attracts more than 15,000 people each day, providing a valuable boost for the local economy. The Sweet Home Economic Development Group looks to implement economic development strategies to build and support local enterprises. And the Sweet Home All-Lands Collaborative is an impressive public-private partnership among the city, federal land managers, community organizations, and other stakeholders that looks for opportunities to coordinate land and watershed management to gain environmental, economic, and social benefits.

## KEY OBSERVATIONS

Over the course of the four-day assessment in Sweet Home, the Livability Assessment Team made the following observations of key opportunities and challenges associated with livability:

- Collaborative partnerships are impressive. The region has excelled at using local resources to develop and manage recreational attractions and to coordinate among public agencies and other partners.

- Sweet Home’s economy has relied heavily on the timber and logging industry for decades. Recent declines in this and related industries have left many long-time residents without jobs or underemployed. There are also many disabled residents as a result of the dangers of the timber industry who are unable to work and in need of public service assistance.
- Transportation access between federal lands and Sweet Home is good, but there is a need to better target community investments to improve connections of transportation facilities in the downtown (sidewalks, bike lanes, trails), as well as to increase access to good jobs, affordable housing, quality schools, and safe transportation.
- Safety concerns observed during the assessment include dispersed camping, road safety, water safety, and emergency service access. There is a need to improve safety for visitors, residents, and federal land employees on the public lands. This is critical to the livability and economic opportunities of the region.
- Affordable housing and housing security are major concerns in Sweet Home. A high number of school-aged children and their families live in substandard and energy inefficient housing conditions or are homeless. A large veteran population in need of stable housing is also a pressing issue.
- The city and its partners need to put in place a process for setting community priorities. This process should engage the community, build community awareness of local issues, engage residents in supporting change, and inviting the broader regional community to celebrate success.

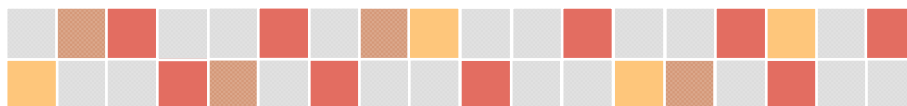
## PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

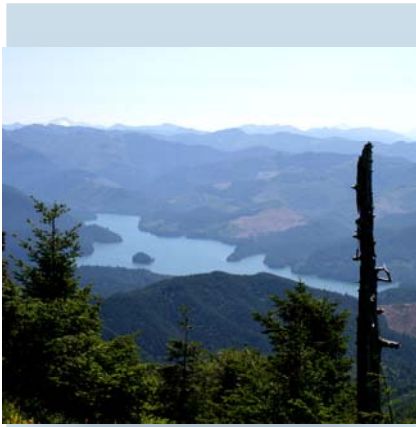
Based on our findings, the Livability Assessment Team offers the following priority recommendations. These recommendations and others are expanded upon further in the body of this report.

- **Take a regional approach.** Regional approaches and partnerships are critical to Sweet Home’s success. As advised in an African proverb, “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” Working together and following an “all boats rise” approach will enable the region to leverage internal resources and attract outside support. Existing partnerships and collaboration among the city of Sweet Home and other key players are commendable; continued and expanded regional collaboration is recommended for the area to achieve far-reaching livability goals.
- **Develop a strategic economic development plan.** There is a need for diverse economic development and jobs that incorporate multiple disciplines, from legacy industries such as timber and logging to new technology-based firms, creative business niches, healthcare, education, sustainable tourism, and public services. A strategic economic development plan should look at cultivating these opportunities and enhancing

regional connections that can support workers and their access to and from jobs in Sweet Home.

- **Invest in existing infrastructure and downtown.** The economic reliance on timber and logging has created an infrastructure that caters to the production and transport of timber. With those constructs no longer pressing, the city should evaluate options for repurposing existing community infrastructure (vacant mill properties, downtown buildings, roads, etc.) to meet the current and future needs of residents, workers, and visitors.
- **Become active stewards of the community's character and natural resources.** Just as the preservation of community character and downtown infrastructure is important to developing and sustaining a sense of place, the conservation of the natural landscape is important to preserving this defining element of Sweet Home. It is important that the town and community recognize the economic value of its natural landscape as the foundation for sustainable tourism and sustainable natural resource-based industry development and reflect this in the cultivation of community character in the downtown. The community's character and the natural resources within and just beyond Sweet Home are the foundation that will continue to make the area a desired destination that will attract visitors as well as create a more livable community that will attract and retain residents and businesses.
- **Make improving quality of life for residents a priority.** Community planning and development should focus on improving the quality of life for residents. Tourism is one tool to drive economic development and can be successful in Sweet Home by improving the visitor experience, but Sweet Home should not pursue tourism for tourism's sake. Rather, the community should identify priorities that will support livability improvements in transportation, access to jobs, affordable housing, and access to education and public services that will help to meet the day-to-day needs of residents and enhance the community's attractiveness for outsiders.





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# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT LIVABILITY—PRINCIPLES FOR GATEWAY COMMUNITIES

U.S. DOT defines achieving improved livability in communities as tying the quality and location of transportation facilities to broader opportunities such as access to good jobs, affordable housing, quality schools, and safe streets.

In 2009, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development created the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. This partnership developed six Principles of Livability. While substantial work is being done to support, promote, and implement livability nationally, the Federal Lands Livability Initiative focuses on what *livability* means and how it is measured in gateway communities.

For the purposes of this report as part of the Federal Lands Livability Initiative, livability in gateway communities is defined as using existing natural and physical assets and ongoing investments to sustain and enhance community health and well-being (including economic resiliency, ecological functionality, and social health) for residents and visitors. One of the common characteristics of gateway communities is that they provide essential services, such as food and lodging, to visitors of our nation's public lands. Gateway communities attract both visitors and residents who are seeking unique recreational and cultural heritage experiences. Gateway communities face distinctive challenges and must work in a symbiotic relationship with public land partners to overcome these challenges. As such, we propose using an adapted version of the six Principles of Livability, as follows (adapted text is italicized):

1. Provide more transportation choices *for residents, workers, and visitors.*
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing *and lodging choices that meet the needs of residents, workers, and visitors.*
3. Enhance economic competitiveness *by valuing the public lands and natural, cultural, recreational, and environmental assets associated with the gateway community.*
4. Support existing *gateway communities and sustain their unique character.*
5. Coordinate policies and leverage investments *within the community and between the gateway community and public lands.*
6. Value communities, neighborhoods, *and landscapes and the area's natural, cultural heritage, and recreational assets that foster social, economic, and public health.*

## ABOUT THIS PROJECT

In September of 2012, The Conservation Fund (TCF) in collaboration with the Federal Highway Administration and a steering committee comprised of representatives from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and

Bureau of Land Management, commenced a multi-year Federal Lands Livability Initiative. Central to this initiative was strengthening livability capacity in selected gateway communities and their neighboring public lands, with particular emphasis on improving transportation access and options in ways that would support livability.

Selected communities receive technical assistance in the form of a livability assessment and a subsequent action-planning workshop. This two-step process is designed to help communities identify potential projects to improve livability and plan for project implementation. The livability assessment can be used as a baseline for enhancing or improving existing conditions, while communities and public land partners use the workshop to spur implementation of on-the-ground livability improvement projects.

The livability assessment involves reviewing and evaluating the characteristics of a gateway community and its nearby public lands and then summarizing observations and recommendations in a written report. The assessment team (consisting of TCF and FHWA representatives) evaluates the natural, cultural, physical infrastructure, commercial, and economic health of the community and surrounding landscape, with a focus on how these factors relate to the six principles of livability.

The assessment process consists of a site visit; interviews with key stakeholders; and review of reports, brochures, plans, websites, news articles, and other relevant materials. The assessment looks at attractions; visitor services; physical infrastructure; organizational capacity and partnerships; the condition and preservation of resources; economic development; public support for sustainable tourism and livability; and education, outreach, and marketing.

This report is the result of these efforts. In addition to summarizing findings, the report provides specific recommendations for planning and implementing livability improvements, with an emphasis on the challenges and opportunities that are unique to gateway communities and their nearby public lands.

### Criteria for Selection of Communities

The Federal Lands Livability Initiative announced a nationwide request for applications to federal public land managers with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Bureau of Land Management. To evaluate applicants and determine appropriate candidates for the initiative, the Livability Initiative Steering Committee evaluated four main criteria:

1. The selected community must be a gateway community, that is, a community directly adjacent to or near public lands managed by a federal agency that actively provides services to public land visitors. Ideally, the community identifies itself as a “gateway community,” willingly associates itself with the public land, and views the public land as a destination and asset for tourists and residents alike.

2. Leaders from the selected community and public land must demonstrate evidence of an existing collaborative partnership.
3. The selected communities and associated public lands will represent (as a group) a mix of community types with diverse geographies, community size, and socioeconomic characteristics.
4. Leaders from the selected gateway community and associated public lands will demonstrate a level of readiness to engage in this initiative, including participation in the assessment and subsequent community action planning workshop.

On the basis of these criteria, the community of Sweet Home, Oregon, and its nearby public lands were selected to be part of the Federal Lands Livability Initiative.

### Sweet Home Assessment Process

The assessment visit to Sweet Home was conducted December 15–19, 2013. The local assessment design team developed the itinerary, which involved visiting the downtown and neighborhoods of Sweet Home, surrounding public lands, major transportation routes, and other destinations of importance to livability in and around the city. The team also talked with community and public land stakeholders to gather information about the unique character of this gateway community, livability challenges and opportunities, access to public lands and other public services, and other related issues. The assessment design team provided current studies, plans, and other materials to familiarize the assessment team with the area's resources and trends in livability. (See the appendix for a copy of the itinerary.)

The Livability Assessment Team worked with the local planning team to customize the initiative to meet the community's specific needs and objectives. To this end, the Livability Assessment Team discussed with the local planning team members their goals for participating in the Livability Initiative. The three goals identified by the Sweet Home planning team are shown below:

### **SWEET HOME GATEWAY COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT GOALS**

- To define livability for Sweet Home and develop a communitywide vision for livability that is consistent across planning efforts.
- Make the case for connecting people to public lands by demonstrating the benefits and values for the community.
- Leverage the momentum of ongoing projects to coalesce efforts for on-the-ground change.



# ASSESSMENT AREA BACKGROUND

The assessment area for this report is the city of Sweet Home, Oregon, the gateway community to the U.S. Forest Service's (USFS) Willamette National Forest and USACE's Green Peter and Foster lakes. The South Santiam River flows from the Foster Lake reservoir along the northern city limits. The Ames Creek and Wiley Creek flow into the South Santiam River within the city limits, as part of the Santiam Watershed. Sweet Home has been labeled "the Gateway to the Santiam Playground."

Sweet Home is located in eastern Linn County, less than two hours from Portland and less than one hour from Eugene and Corvallis. The 5.75-square-mile-city located at the junction of Oregon State Highway 228 and U.S. Highway 20 (Santiam Highway), which serves as Sweet Home's main street and part of the Over the Rivers & Through the Woods Scenic Byway.

Sweet Home has a rich history that includes Native American heritage and frontier settlement. White settlement in the Sweet Home Valley dates back to 1851. Sweet Home grew in the 1940s, as timber grew in demand during World War II. When new forest and endangered species regulations forced the closure of many sawmills and logging operations in the 1980s, the community experienced a major decline in population.

Despite the impact of these changes on the economy, the community has persevered. In recent years, Sweet Home continues to diversify its economy as the gateway to the Santiam Playground, and city leaders are seeking out opportunities to develop a sustainable tourism industry in partnership with its surrounding public lands and make local investments that improve the quality of life for residents.



## SWEET HOME DEMOGRAPHICS

**Population (2010):** 8,925

**Population Growth (2000-2010):** +20%

**Racial Composition (2010):**

93.0% White

4.7% Hispanic/Latino

3.0% Two or more races

1.3% Native American

0.8% Asian

0.3% Black/African American

**Median Age (2010):** 40.8 years

**Median Household Income (2010):**

\$36,205

**Residents Living in Poverty (2010):**

21.8% of all residents; 27% of children

**Unemployment (2013):** 5%

**Educational Attainment (2011):** High School Diploma: 37.8%, Bachelor's Degree: 8.9%, Graduate or Professional Degree: 4.5%

**Top Four Industries (2011):**

1. Education, Health, & Social Services
2. Retail Trade
3. Manufacturing
4. Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, & Hospitality

**Commuting:** 80.6% drive alone, 10% carpool, 3.8% walk

Mean travel time to work: 25 minutes

**Housing (2011):** 3,768 total housing units; 3,440 occupied, 328 vacant (31 for seasonal uses); 61.8% owner occupied, 38.2% renter occupied

(U.S. Census)



## WILLAMETTE NATIONAL FOREST

**Land Manager:** U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Sweet Home Ranger District.

**Acreage:** 1,775,407 acres of varied landscape, including high mountains, narrow canyons, streams, rivers, and wooded slopes. The national forest stretches 110 miles along the western slopes of the Cascade Mountain Range.

**Amenities:** There are over 1,500 miles of rivers and streams, 375 natural lakes, and old growth Douglas-fir stands. The forest hosts over 300 species of fish and wildlife. Campgrounds, trails, river access, and scenic overlooks are available for recreational uses. All of the reservoirs in the forest have campgrounds, picnic areas, and boat launches.

**Access:** Four major highways provide access to the forest: U.S. Route 20, and Oregon State Routes 22, 58, and 126. U.S. Route 20 runs directly through the city of Sweet Home. Two National Scenic Byways—McKenzie Pass-Santiam Pass National Scenic Byway and the West Cascades National Scenic Byway—run through the forest.

## GREEN PETER & FOSTER LAKES

**Land Manager:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District, in partnership with Linn County Department of Parks and Recreation.

**Acreage:** Green Peter Lake is 3,720 acres and located off the Middle Santiam River and Quartzville Creek; Foster Lake is 1,220 acres and located along the South Santiam River.

**Amenities:** Green Peter Dam and Lake provides two boat ramps managed by Linn County Parks and Recreation; campsites; group picnic sites, and hiking trails. At Foster Lake, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates Wiley Park, a year-round day-use area with picnic area and boat ramp, and Linn County Parks and Recreation operates three boat ramps and three day-use areas with campgrounds.

**Access:** Green Peter Lake is located ten miles northeast of Sweet Home accessed by Quartzville Road. Foster Dam and Lake is located along U.S. Highway 20, four miles northeast of Sweet Home at the edge of the city's limits.

## QUARTZVILLE RECREATION CORRIDOR

**Land Manager:** Bureau of Land Management, Salem District; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District; U.S. Forest Service, Sweet Home Ranger District; and Linn County.

**Area:** The Quartzville Recreation Corridor surrounds the Quartzville Back Country Byway that runs from Sweet Home through a portion of Willamette National forest consisting of a mix of private and public lands managed by the agencies above. The byway is approximately 50 miles in length.

**Amenities:** In addition to the local amenities listed by managing agency above, the BLM manages two recreation sites, a recreational mining corridor and the Quartzville National Wild and Scenic River.

**Access:** The Quartzville Back Country Byway connects U.S. Highway 20, one mile east of Sweet Home and State Highway 22, 19 miles east of Detroit, Oregon.



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## Design Team

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Dave Furtwangler, *Cascade Timber Company*  
Cindy Glick, *U.S. Forest Service, Willamette National Forest*  
Craig Martin, *City of Sweet Home*  
JoAnn McQueary, *Sweet Home Economic Development Group*  
Jon Meier, *U.S. Forest Service, Willamette National Forest*  
Frank Moore, *Linn County Health Department*  
Brigetta Olson, *Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services*  
Amy Ramsdell, *Oregon Department of Transportation*  
Cindy Rice, *Sweet Home Emergency Ministries*  
Eric White, *Oregon State University*

## Community Stakeholders & Assessment Support

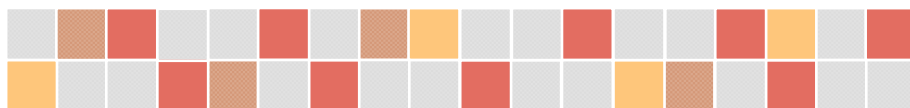
Kristin Adams, *Sweet Home High School*  
Mike Adams, *City of Sweet Home*  
Mike Beaver, *Sweet Home Fire and Ambulance District*  
Hank Berg, *Professional Land Surveyor [Ret.]*  
Ken Bronson, *Sweet Home Senior Center*  
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Joe Graybill, *City of Sweet Home*  
Eric Hartstein, *South Santiam Watershed Council*  
Julie Harvey, *Sweet Home School District*  
Alan Holcombe, *White's Electronics*  
Donna Holt, *Linn-Benton Housing Authority*

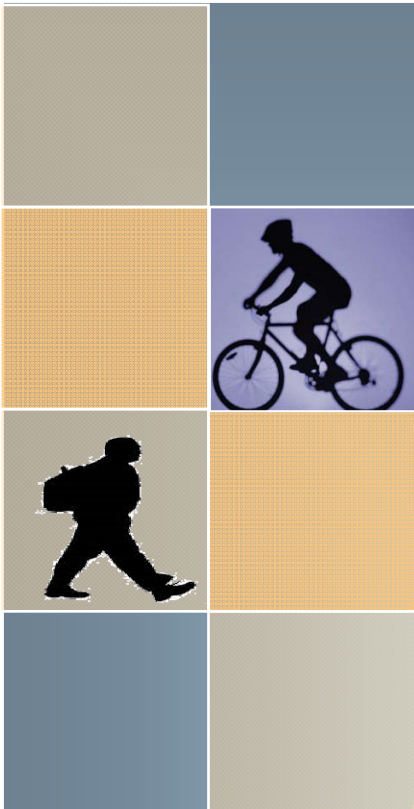
Larry Horton, *Sweet Home School District (Retired)*  
Milli Horton, *Sweet Home School District Food Services*  
Christie Johnson, *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Willamette Valley District*  
Mollie Kerins, *Boys and Girls Club of Greater Santiam*  
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Terry Knoll, *Community Services Consortium*  
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John Morrison, *Linn County Parks Board*  
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Will Tucker, *Linn County Commission*  
Jenniver Valez  
Mark Vollmert, *Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation*  
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Dr. Henry Wolthuis, *Wolthuis Family Dentistry*  
Dr. Ivan Wolthuis, *Wolthuis Family Dentistry*  
Ed Wood, *Oregon Solutions*  
Jim Yon, *Linn County Sheriff's Department*  
The impressive student group of young leaders at Sweet Home High School

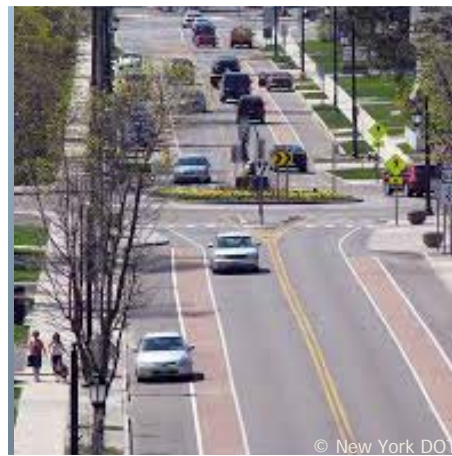
Lodging and Meals

Sweet Home Inn  
Marks Ridge Winery  
Sweet Home Senior Center  
Manna Meals at the United Methodist Church





# LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE 1: PROVIDE MORE TRANSPORTATION CHOICES FOR RESIDENTS, WORKERS, & VISITORS





# PROVIDE MORE TRANSPORTATION CHOICES FOR RESIDENTS, WORKERS, & VISITORS

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## KEY OBSERVATIONS: TRANSPORTATION ACCESS & CHOICE

- Major transportation routes between Sweet Home and public lands are in good shape. Sweet Home is well connected with Portland, Eugene, and other major population centers.
- Pedestrian safety on downtown streets is a concern. The city has recently undertaken sidewalk and bike lane improvements to address these concerns.
- The Sweet Home All-Lands Collaborative is an impressive multi-constituency stakeholder group that is constructing a community forest trail to connect Sweet Home and its surrounding federal lands.
- The Sweet Home Trails Group has made significant strides in improving connection, access, and maintenance of trails. It has received a grant for technical assistance to make trail connections around Foster Lake to Sweet Home.
- The Over the Rivers & Through the Woods Oregon Scenic Byway and Quartzville Creek Back Country Byway are scenic drives that highlight the natural beauty of the area.
- Local public transit provided over 80,000 rides in 2012. Students travelling to the community college make up about 50 percent of the Linn County Connector ridership.

Transportation infrastructure is a fundamental part of any community because it provides people with access to jobs, education, goods and services, and recreational activities of all kinds. In gateway communities, transportation contributes to livability through investments that enhance access and connections to services for residents and visitors, while providing connections that highlight the character of the community as an entrance to our nation's natural treasures. Transportation investments can mean safer highways and intersections, context-sensitive roadway design, and multi-purpose trails, as well as downtown enhancements that encourage walking and biking that provide health benefits, social interaction, and access to local businesses, services, and recreational attractions.



FHWA's Livability Initiative promotes strategies to encourage transportation choices and connections into rural and gateway area transportation networks at the local and regional level. To read more about FHWA and Livability visit <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/>.

FHWA has identified the following strategies for rural livability:

- Add sidewalks, curb extensions, crosswalks, parking, and landscaping to make small towns more walkable and economically viable.
- Build and connect bicycling and trail networks.
- Link ridesharing, rural on-demand transit vans, and commuter buses to regional employment centers and services.
- Improve connections between neighborhoods and Main Streets, schools and parks, and housing and services.
- Coordinate town and county plans and infrastructure investments with a regional vision for growth and resource protection.
- Incorporate community design and land use planning, mobility and accessibility, public health, environmental protection, and economic development.<sup>1</sup>

As a gateway community providing direct access to Willamette National Forest, the city of Sweet Home must work with federal land managers and transportation agencies to ensure safe connections and access through a mix of transportation modes between the city and the area's natural resources. The major highway infrastructure through Sweet Home and into Willamette National Forest is in good condition and generally makes vehicle travel to and around Sweet Home easy and safe. However, the Assessment Team observed several areas where transportation investments could enhance livability for residents and improve the visitor experience. The Assessment Team recommends several general and site-specific improvement projects that would facilitate access between Sweet Home and surrounding federal lands and would create a walkable, attractive downtown that encourages healthy living and community interaction.

This section includes a set of priority recommendations to enhance transportation access and choices under the categories of transportation planning, support for trails and multi-use paths and roads, and public transit.

## **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING FOR LIVABILITY**

Implementing transportation projects on the ground can take years, require significant local investment dollars, and involve a rigorous evaluation process before the shovel hits the ground. A clear planning process, a set of priorities, and collaboration can help communities navigate these implementation complexities in an efficient and effective manner.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, Livability Initiative, "Transportation and Rural Livability," [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/fact\\_sheet/transandrurallivability.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/fact_sheet/transandrurallivability.cfm).

## Recommendations

- **Prioritize transportation projects.** The Livability Assessment Team recommends that the city of Sweet Home engage transportation planners from Linn County, the state of Oregon, and federal agencies to discuss roles, planning processes, and short- and long-term priorities. Priorities should focus on the big picture—those projects that improve access for the greatest number, are environmentally sustainable, and will positively impact economic growth. The Livability Assessment Team recommends prioritizing projects that improve multimodal connections between Sweet Home and public lands and that enhance public safety. For more information about setting priorities, see the National Association of Development Organization’s “Transportation Project Prioritization and Performance-based Planning Efforts in Rural and Small Metropolitan Regions” at <http://www.nado.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/RPOprioritization.pdf>.
- **Develop network of transportation stakeholders for livability.** The trend for federal transportation funding is for projects that demonstrate a broadening of silos—that is, that include diverse programs and stakeholders that support the objectives and goals of potential projects. In setting priorities, the Team recommends that the city coordinate transportation planning efforts for Sweet Home and Linn County by involving city officials, federal land managers, regional planning organizations, and nontraditional partners from housing, education, environmental, and public health organizations. Maintaining open communication with state and federal transportation representatives will also better inform the decision-making process while also potentially opening discussion for new projects that can align with future initiatives or strategic transportation priorities, such as possible bicycle and pedestrian demonstration projects that mesh with the state’s updated bicycle and pedestrian plan.
- **Collect user data.** Data gathering is especially important to inform the funding process. Sweet Home should collect detailed traffic counts, accidents reports or other indications of safety issues, and the number of pedestrians, bikers, buses, cars, and other types of vehicles that travel on the roads in and around the city. This quantitative data can be used to demonstrate and support the need for improvements and better position funding applications. Data also should include visitor surveys that document from where people are travelling, the activities in which they are participating, where they are staying, and how long they are visiting. Additionally, economic statistics can demonstrate the overall impact that businesses, visitors, and specific recreational users have on the local, county, and regional levels—further making the case for transportation projects that can improve economic resiliency. Counting transportation and recreational users and tracking use patterns over time can demonstrate demand for specific transportation improvements and indicate the importance of continued maintenance and management of existing roads and trails.

Some of these data can be obtained by local and regional transportation organizations, but others may need to be collected through area outfitters, visitor centers, recreation clubs or groups, or volunteers who compile user data for key intersections, trailheads, and other destinations.

- **Think creatively about transportation.** Transportation is not limited to roads. Transportation influences housing affordability, economic development, and access to public services. Federal and state transportation agencies and others recognize this relationship and work to provide opportunities to support multiple modes by improving trails, sidewalks, and bicycle safety, as well as opportunities to revitalize downtowns and neighborhoods. Being able to demonstrate demand, priorities, and quantitative impacts and communicating openly with transportation representatives will help the community find the right programs for its needs.

## SUPPORT FOR TRAIL AND MULTI-USE PATH DEVELOPMENT & CONNECTIONS

Sweet Home has impressive momentum toward the vision for multi-use path development in the area. The Sweet Home All-Lands Collaborative (SHALC) has engaged in the preliminary planning of a trail for use by non-motorized vehicle users. This Community Forest Trail will connect the city of Sweet Home to the Willamette National Forest and beyond to Sisters, Oregon. The Sweet Home Trails Group is working diligently to improve trail access throughout the city for residents and visitors. The group has secured a technical assistance grant from the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) for trail planning for bicycles and pedestrians on the Foster Lake Loop in Sweet Home. And Shea Point is slated for multi-use paths that extend access into Sweet Home in the 2016–2018 Oregon State Transportation Improvement Plan update.

These multimodal, multi-use paths connect people to the area's amenities, downtown, and homes and jobs. Physical transportation connections, such as trails and paths, create a safe environment for users of various modes to travel around town and enjoy physical activity and recreation—all of which contribute to a healthy, viable community.

### Recommendations

- **Create a communications plan.** There are many trail planning, development, and improvement projects occurring in the Sweet Home area. These and future trail and multi-use path developments—from the development of the Community Forest Trail to the city's sidewalk improvement implementation to potential trail construction on BLM and USFS land—should be thought of as part of a larger livability improvement effort. The trail groups involved should work together to lead a coordinated communications planning process that brings together their efforts and informs the public of the work that these groups are doing and the benefits to the community. A major component of such a plan should be to communicate expectations for private land owners, as their

support will be valuable in securing rights-of-way for some trail development projects. Even though different entities are leading each project, the larger goals are overlapping; communication among entities will help to leverage resources and opportunities.

- **Engage the public in the Community Forest Trail.** The Community Forest Trail is an ambitious endeavor that will have great benefits for the area in terms of livability. This is a trail for the community, and its goals should be expressed clearly to the public as developments continue. SHALC should continue to engage the public on the trail planning, clearly communicate the trail's benefits, and explain how the trail serves as a community asset to be enjoyed by all residents of Sweet Home.

## BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLANNING: Virginia Creeper Trail, Damascus, Virginia

The Virginia Creeper Trail stretches 34 miles from Abingdon to Damascus, Virginia. The trail, which follows the Whitetop Laurel River to its highest point near the North Carolina state line at Whitetop Station, Virginia, is open to hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. In response to demand for visitor services generated by the trail, nearby towns offer bike rentals, shuttle services, food, lodging, and specialty shops. The towns also market fly fishing, hiking, horseback riding, and other recreational activities along the trail. In 2004, USDA estimated that the Virginia Creeper Trail generated \$1.59 million in annual revenue and supported 27 new full-time jobs.

See Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, *From Trail Towns to TrOD: Trails and Economic Development*, August 2007.





- **Enhance public knowledge of trails.** From local Sweet Home and Linn County parks and greenways, USACE trails, and the extensive networks through Willamette National Forest, the Sweet Home area has the opportunity to capitalize on their trail connections by promoting them to the public. Sweet Home should provide information about recreational opportunities that are easily accessible from the downtown. This list should include informal sidewalks to local parks, dedicated bike lanes, and/or multi-use paths around the lake to help residents and visitors better understand how to access the recreational amenities that exist in the downtown. The creation of maps, websites, and mobile applications, coordinated walks in downtown Sweet Home, and creative interpretive programs with USFS in partnership with USACE, BLM, or the city can all help raise awareness of local trail amenities. In addition, many hikers may choose to travel through Sweet Home to trails farther into the wilderness of the national forest. The city of Sweet Home should explore opportunities to work with federal land managers to compile information about potential trails for this purpose, and better expose the services and amenities of Sweet Home to national forest visitors.



*The Assessment Team at the Foster Lake Loop Trail*

- **Raising local match.** Raising local match funding for trail and transportation projects can be difficult. The Assessment Team recommends that the city work with the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG), federal land managers, and local and regional transportation contacts to look for alignment in project goals and objectives that can leverage money to meet the match criteria of grants. It is also important to look for creative fundraising opportunities such as crowdsourcing to incorporate projects into county, regional, and state recreation, transportation, or multimodal plans as appropriate.



## RAISING LOCAL MATCH: The Wilbur Wright Trail in Henry County, Indiana

In 2004, Henry County was awarded Transportation Enhancement funding from FHWA (now available through the Transportation Alternatives Program) for the construction of a two-mile, asphalt-surface pedestrian and bicycle trail that connected the county's YMCA and a trailhead at Wilbur Wright Fish and Wildlife Area. In total, the trail would cost \$1,403,700. To raise the local 20-percent match, the nonprofit Healthy Communities of Henry County developed a fundraising campaign that engaged local residents as sponsors. For a donation of \$450–2,500, individuals or businesses could have benches, bike racks, interpretive signs, kiosks, or mile markers installed in their name. Local leaders also utilized funds from the Henry County food and beverage tax, the Henry County Community Foundation, United Way of Indiana, New Castle Redevelopment Commission, Henry County Hospital Foundation, and others. The part of the trail that has been constructed to-date serves as equal parts tourist attraction and recreational outlet. The county is moving forward with an additional construction of 1.1 miles and is already raising funds through the community.

### SUPPORTING USE OF ROADS FOR BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS

Bicycling and running are not only environmentally friendly transportation alternatives to driving, they are also popular, healthy recreational activities that enhance quality of life and connections to the environment. Evidence from the Alliance for Biking and Walking shows that bicycling and walking projects create 11 to 14 jobs per \$1 million spent on highway projects.<sup>2</sup> In 2012, the bicycle industry supported an estimated 1.4 million jobs; generated over \$25 billion in federal, state, and local taxes; and contributed \$81 billion to the U.S. economy.<sup>3</sup> These economic benefits extend to other industries as well. Bicycling is characterized as a "gateway activity," since 80 percent of bikers



<sup>2</sup> Alliance for Biking and Walking, *Bicycling and Walking the United States: 2012 Benchmarking report*. [http://www.peoplepoweredmovement.org/site/index.php/site/memberservices/2012\\_benchmarking\\_report/](http://www.peoplepoweredmovement.org/site/index.php/site/memberservices/2012_benchmarking_report/).

<sup>3</sup> Outdoor Industry Foundation, *The Outdoor Recreation Economy*, 2012. [http://outdoorindustry.org/pdf/OIA\\_OutdoorRecEconomyReport2012.pdf](http://outdoorindustry.org/pdf/OIA_OutdoorRecEconomyReport2012.pdf).

## RESOURCE: Active Transportation in Small Communities

A 2012 report documents the importance of biking and walking to rural communities. Bicycling accounts for 12 percent of all trips taken in America. According to the National Household Travel Survey, in rural communities that number ranges between 6.9 and 9.6 percent, depending on the size and geography of the community.

Nationwide, bicycle commuting rose 40 percent in the past decade. Active transportation facilities cost a tiny fraction of roadways and, given the pent-up demand for safe and convenient bicycling and walking networks, investments in active transportation offer taxpayers a far greater return. Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects also create more jobs per dollar than highway projects, and more of the money stays within the community.

(Rails to Trails Conservancy. *Active Transportation Beyond Urban Centers: Walking and Bicycling in Small Towns and Rural America*, 2012.)

participate in one or more other outdoor activities such as kayaking, canoeing, and camping<sup>4</sup>—many of the activities that Sweet Home and the Willamette National Forest have to offer.

Sweet Home is a prime location for bicycle facilities that can attract and enable cyclists of all types—from long-distance road tourists, to mountain bikers, to family excursionists—to enjoy the area's many amenities. Establishing and maintaining the requisite facilities for bikers and runners can generate local tax revenues, create local jobs, and increase revenues in recreational and service industries.

### Recommendations:

- **Create a bicycle and pedestrian mobility plan.** To increase accessibility and connections to natural resources and downtown amenities, the town should consider developing a bicycle and pedestrian mobility plan that can be integrated into regional planning frameworks and revitalization efforts. In addition, the city should seek opportunities to prioritize investments that improve roadway and sidewalk connections to area trailheads for hikers and bicyclists.

With the installation of sidewalks downtown, the city is already making great strides toward greater mobility for residents. The city and key partners—including federal land managers, ODOT, and FHWA—should improve bicycle facilities along U.S. 20 and Oregon Route 228 to provide a potential scenic road biking experience that connects to the national forest and regional destinations such as Brownsville, Lebanon, and Albany.

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<sup>4</sup> The Outdoor Foundation. *Outdoor Recreation Participation Report*, 2012.  
[http://outdoorindustry.org/images/researchfiles/OIA\\_OutdoorRecreationParticipationReport2012.pdf?170](http://outdoorindustry.org/images/researchfiles/OIA_OutdoorRecreationParticipationReport2012.pdf?170).

Sweet Home's downtown is also a convenient location to connect residents with neighborhoods, the main street, and schools. Dedicated bike lanes, signage, and bicycle safety campaigns should be explored to assess priorities for improvement. Bicycle improvements on roadways connecting to federal lands may be eligible for funding from FHWA's Federal Land Access Program. In addition, the city should explore potential opportunities to provide bicycle storage, public restrooms, and bicycle racks as support infrastructure for the cyclists. This can help to make Sweet Home a welcoming destination for touring bicyclists. (See Resources & Case Studies for more information about possible funding and bicycle facilities.)

- **Make safe routes to schools.** The Safe Routes to School program (SRTS) enables and encourages America's children and teens, including those with disabilities, to walk and bike, to and from school. Sweet Home Middle School will be writing an SRTS action plan with help from Oregon Cascades West Council of Government. It is recommended that

## BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLANNING: Village of Altamont, New York

Altamont, a rural community northwest of Albany, New York, developed a bicycle and pedestrian master plan that includes priority enhancements to three state roads that run through the community and connections to regional trails and local destinations. See [http://www.altaprojects.net/altamont/Altamont\\_Final\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.altaprojects.net/altamont/Altamont_Final_Plan.pdf).

## BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLANNING: Lower Savannah Council of Governments, South Carolina

The Lower Savannah Council of Governments Bicycle and Pedestrian Regional Plan is considered a model for planning that uses a holistic approach to address infrastructure, policies, and programs that affect bicycling and walking activity rather than conventional methods that consider infrastructure alone. The program's strategic plan includes a review of existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities and recommendations for infrastructural and non-infrastructural improvements.

The main source of funding came from the South Carolina Department of Transportation which programmed \$350,000 for the entire plan. The implementation of the plan is expected to deliver economic benefits to the community residents and businesses in the form of cheaper means of transportation and the encouragement of tourism, health, and livability benefits. See <http://www.lscog.org/common/content.asp?PAGE=396>.

the city coordinate with this effort to pursue opportunities to leverage priorities; involve USACE, USFS, BLM, and other stakeholders; and align goals with other initiatives. For more information, see <http://oregonsaferoutes.org/>.

- **Adopt a Complete Streets policy.** Sweet Home's downtown provides many amenities such as shops, restaurants, and services. The close proximity of these amenities to the city center allows for access from adjacent neighborhoods by foot or bicycle; however, the infrastructure may not ensure mobility for all residents. The town should investigate the mobility needs of seniors, families, and disabled populations to identify barriers and areas for improvement for walkers, bikers, wheelchairs, transit, and personal vehicles. A Complete Streets policy can assist future road infrastructure planning decisions to look for street connects and street design that provides safe access for all users.

## COMPLETE STREETS: Basalt, Colorado

Creating Complete Streets requires transportation agencies to change their approach to community roads. By adopting a Complete Streets policy, communities direct their transportation planners and engineers to routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. Every transportation project is designed to make the street network better and safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists – making the town a better place to live. For more information, visit the National Complete Streets Coalition (<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets>).

Basalt, Colorado, a town of 2,500 located about 25 miles from Aspen, adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2005 and created a Complete Streets design manual outlining overall street design requirements. The design manual aims to provide a comprehensive toolkit for the creation of safe, pleasant, efficient, interesting, and active mobility corridors. The 34-page design manual classifies street types, functions and design criteria for historic, bicycle, pedestrian, lighting, and infrastructure facilities. (<http://www.basalt.net/planningpdf/streetsfinal.pdf>)

- **Inform the Oregon's revision of Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.** ODOT is focused on a revision of its Bicycle and Pedestrian plan. This offers a prime opportunity for the city to engage ODOT for support of rural multimodal infrastructure. Sweet Home should look for opportunities to align goals and priorities with the new plan and propose demonstration projects that will assist in the implementation of this new plan.

Points of emphasis for the revised plan are to:

- Refine the future for biking and walking in Oregon;
- Provide a policy framework to guide future decision making for bicycle and pedestrian modes;
- Provide guidance to better integrate bicycle and pedestrian systems statewide and with other modes;
- Promote connectivity, mobility, safety, accessibility, and other statewide goals;
- Provide guidance to promote a consistent approach for balancing objectives of bicycle and pedestrian with other modes, and promote the selection of investments to meet those objectives.

- **Capitalize on running and bicycling events.** The city of Sweet Home should capitalize on the potential for increased bicycle use by investigating opportunities to implement and/or enhance running and bicycling conditions that cater to competitions and events. The inaugural “mud run” on the Foster Lake Trail sponsored by the Sweet Home Trail Group had a good turnout. Trends in outdoor recreation demonstrate that people want more distance races and nontraditional running and biking events, such as mud runs and obstacle courses. Marathons, triathlons, and other such races could be tied to the Oregon Jamboree or other existing events.

The city should work with established groups such as Cycle Oregon (<http://www.cycleoregon.com>) and Bicycle Rides Northwest (<http://www.bicycleridesnw.org>) to identify opportunities for additional events in Sweet Home and surrounding federal lands.



### RESOURCE: Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guide

The 2011 planning and design manual for pedestrian and bicycle transportation in Oregon shows ODOT standards and designs used for State Highway projects. These standards are recommended (but not required) for local jurisdictions in Oregon. Access the guide at [ftp://ftp.odot.state.or.us/techserv/roadway/web\\_drawings/HDM/2011%20HDM%20Rewrite/2012%20Appendix%20L%20Bike%20Ped%20Design%20Guide.pdf](ftp://ftp.odot.state.or.us/techserv/roadway/web_drawings/HDM/2011%20HDM%20Rewrite/2012%20Appendix%20L%20Bike%20Ped%20Design%20Guide.pdf).



## RESOURCE: Cycle Oregon Fund

Cycle Oregon showcases unique and beautiful parts of Oregon and connects riders to the land and communities. The Cycle Oregon grant fund supports two main causes: (1) projects in communities through which Cycle Oregon members ride, and (2) bicycling advocacy and projects in Oregon. With nearly \$2 million currently in the fund, Cycle Oregon disburses approximately \$100,000 each year in grants that spotlight the kind of endeavors that frequently lack statewide attention but often yield a considerable impact to the people in small towns. In addition, Cycle Oregon provides approximately \$130,000 each year to the communities that host its rides. For more information, see <http://www.cycleoregon.com/cycle-oregon-fund/>.

### IMPROVING PUBLIC SAFETY

During the assessment, stakeholders identified several specific public safety issues regarding transportation that are affecting how people use neighborhood roads and access recreational opportunities. Additional safety concerns have deterred residents and visitors from enjoying parts of the national forest or walking the downtown. Addressing these issues can help to increase appreciation of natural resources, encourage more frequent visits to the national forest and downtown businesses, and enhance quality of life for residents.



### Recommendations

- **Consider consistency in the speed limit across town.** On Main Street, through Sweet Home, the speed limit is 25 miles per hour from 22<sup>nd</sup> street to Highway 228 where it then increased to 35 miles per hour, and then again to 45 miles per hour. As a result, traffic tends to move at a higher speed through the main corridor without acknowledgement of these changes. The Assessment Team recommends the city discuss with ODOT the need to extend the speed limit of 25 miles per hour past the downtown business core. A reduced speed allows for safer pedestrian crossings and provides an opportunity to capture drive-through traffic, as drivers are better able to see what local businesses are available and to more easily make a stop. The city should assess how safely and comfortably pedestrians and bicyclists are able to navigate the areas in these higher speed areas and look for options to slow traffic down if needed.
- **Make pedestrian crossings a priority.** There are existing painted pedestrian crosswalks with signs and islands along Main Street in downtown Sweet Home; however, the Assessment Team observed that high speeds and unyielding drivers make the crossings unsafe. The city should reassess the pedestrian crossings along Main

Street and throughout the city to assess the possible implementation of traffic calming, on-demand crossing signals, lower speed limits, and other measures to alert drivers to pedestrians and bicycles at intersections.

### RESOURCE: FHWA's Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Education and Outreach

**FHWA's Pedestrian Safety Campaign** is a comprehensive set of materials for local communities to use in implementing their own pedestrian safety campaigns. It includes materials designed for use in television, radio, cinema, and print advertising.

**The Bicycle Safety Education Resource Center** provides bicycle safety education information for all age groups. The Resource Center consists of a database of all training materials for all audiences, a guide that helps identify the training needs of each audience, and a "good practices guide" that provides the process of designing your own program. For more information, see [http://www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/education](http://www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/education).

- **Create a bicycle and pedestrian safety campaign.** A pedestrian is killed in the United States every seven minutes. Coupled with better infrastructure that accommodates all road users, raising awareness of bicycle and pedestrian safety issues helps reduce the number of accidents and makes the streets safer for people of all ages and abilities. It is recommended that the city work with partners to develop a bicycle and pedestrian safety campaign that demonstrates to the public how bicyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles can jointly and safely navigate the same space and emphasizes the benefits of creating a safe, walkable, and bicycle-friendly downtown.
- **Involve stakeholders to build awareness.** Linn County School System, Sweet Home Community Center, and Sweet Home and Linn County emergency service providers (police, fire, and hospitals) are major partners in supporting the implementation of a safer downtown for pedestrians and bicyclists and can provide resources to educate children, families, and adults on how to safely use transportation modes and the benefits of doing so. Partners should also be encouraged to sponsor walking and biking events to showcase safe use of roadways and the benefits of getting outside and moving.



## ENHANCE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Local bus, paratransit, and medical and service-oriented transport play increasingly vital roles for people in rural communities. In recent decades, rural demographics have skewed towards an increase in older populations and lower-income citizens—the populations that directly benefit most from viable public transportation options. Federal and state funding programs for rural transit currently favor projects that improve economic efficiency and reduce inequalities and, as a result, make communities more livable. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) supports the Partnership for Sustainable Communities and is committed to improving livability in rural communities through the support of transportation agencies and public transit investments. To learn more, visit <http://www.fta.dot.gov/about/13747.html>.

The Linn Shuttle provides an invaluable service for the community of Sweet Home. The shuttle provides transportation to three stops in Linn County, as well as access to two major public transportation routes that can transfer riders to Corvallis, Lebanon, Eugene, and other cities. Through an agreement between Linn-Benton Community college and the Linn Shuttle, students and staff of the college ride free of charge. In addition to students, bus ridership tends to include a large number of senior citizens and disabled veterans accessing medical services.

The service provided by the Linn Shuttle is critical as it provides a way for residents who do not own a vehicle to access the services they need. The Assessment Team recommends capitalizing on and leveraging opportunities to ensure the shuttle service is sustained and to expand it to meet demand in Sweet Home.

### Recommendations:

- **Build awareness of public transit among recreation users.** Public transit in Linn County is an effective and well-used service. Expanding its capacity and service may help to improve regional connections to amenities within Sweet Home as well as beyond. Sweet Home should explore opportunities to provide residents and visitors with a safe and convenient means to access federal lands to enjoy outdoor recreation. Many visitors to the national forest who are travelling by camper may take advantage of an opportunity to take public transit into town for dinner or shopping. Cyclists similarly may appreciate a shuttle that could pick them up at a neighboring town after a long bike ride

and transport them back to their hotel in Sweet Home with their bikes. Sweet Home should investigate the market for and feasibility of the following opportunities:

- “Support and gear” (SAG) wagon service for bicyclists in and around Sweet Home with connections to trails in the national forest and other public lands.
- Shuttle service between Sweet Home and Cascadia or Sunnyside campgrounds and others and/or a dial-up service (public or private) for campers looking to come to town.
- Partnerships with USACE and USFS on special events and tours that use public transportation to reach the public lands or opening weekend service.
- Shuttle service providing access to popular trailheads for hiking or for overnight camping.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FOR RECREATION USERS: Cascades East Transit in Bend, Oregon

Cascades East Transit has partnered with Bend, Oregon’s Parks and Recreation department to offer the “Ride the River” shuttle. This shuttle provides river enthusiasts with an opportunity to “float the Deschutes” river by giving them a ride back to their cars. For more information, see

[http://www.bendparksandrec.org/Parks\\_Trails/Float\\_the\\_River/](http://www.bendparksandrec.org/Parks_Trails/Float_the_River/) and <http://www.cascadeseasttransit.com/bend-bus-schedule/bend-schedule.html>.

- **Enhance regional partnerships for rural public transit.** The existing rural public transportation network is outstanding for connecting areas in Linn County with neighboring counties and schools. With over 80,000 rides in 2012, ridership nearly doubled in just three years. Public transportation relies on the support of the city of Sweet Home, the Sweet Home Community Center, Linn County, and ODOT Public Transit. These partnerships are essential for transit funding. During the assessment, however, transportation stakeholders acknowledged the need for better coordination of transit programs in the region to create a more convenient transit network with more frequent service. The OCWCOG, Sweet Home, and other regional partners should engage the Federal Transit Administration for assistance in expanding capacity and discussing funding opportunities (See Resources & Case Studies for more information on funding opportunities).

The following advice from AARP may be useful to decision makers in Sweet Home:

- **Explore a mix of funding options.** Rural public transit, more than other settings, is assembled through a mix of funding resources. As public transportation expands in the region, so should the sources of funding expand to include more partners.
- **State and local funding is critical.** Although federal funding is available, many funding opportunities require a local match. It is critical for rural public transportation networks to leverage funds at the city, county, and state levels to meet these funding requirements.
- **Endorse the use of human services funding.** Rural public transportation is particularly important for human service clientele and destinations operated by social service agencies (as evident in the Linn County transit system's ridership). It is critical for a regional transit network to tap into funding sources from human services agencies. In many states, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Medicaid, Title XIX of the Social Security Act, is a major funding source for nonemergency medical transportation. Although rules of its use vary widely, in some states, transportation benefits accrue to the public transit provider on a trip-by-trip basis.
- **Promote support for public transit as part of rural investment.** In considering other rural investments related to roads, land use, and other infrastructure issues, be sure to include support for public transit, including various transportation options (dial-a-ride, car-sharing, etc.).
- **Encourage local transit providers to compete for discretionary funding.** Since significant rural transit funding is available through competitive opportunities, it is important that rural transit providers are encouraged and supported in submitting grants for special funds.
- **Promote capacity building/training for rural transit providers.** Rural transit providers have limited staff who wear many hats. Training, conferences, workshops, and other capacity-building opportunities are very valuable to small operators.<sup>5</sup>

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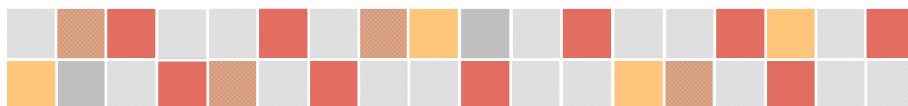
<sup>5</sup> AARP. *Meeting Older Adult's Mobility Needs: Funding Rural Public Transit*, 2012.  
<http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/act/transportation/funding-rural-public-transit-aarp.pdf>.



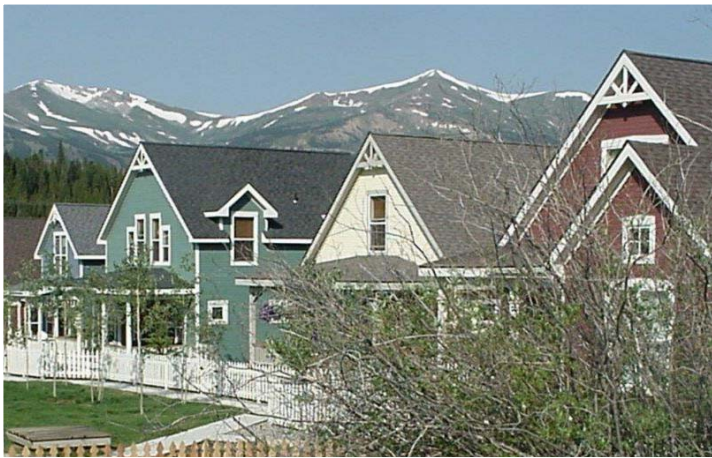
- **Explore additional transit alternatives.** Programs such as Cascades West Rideshare (<http://www.cwride.org/Page.asp?NavID=88>) and Drive less-Connect (<http://www.drivelessconnect.com/>) are cost-saving alternatives to single vehicle transportation. These programs and other more informal networks in a community are valuable parts of a transit network. Formal and informal car sharing, ridesharing, and vehicle pools should be considered in an assessment of the need to expand the capacity of the public transit system.

### RESOURCE: Oregon Department of Energy

The Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) has an extensive collection of transportation resources to help reduce single occupant trips, provide more accessible transportation modes that are cost-saving alternatives, and lessen air and water pollution, energy consumption, and highway maintenance costs. ODOE has resources to connect communities with other networks in Oregon that are providing public transit, commuter pool vehicles, car sharing, and rideshare-matching services. For more information, see <http://www.oregon.gov/energy/trans/Pages/transhm.aspx>.



LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE 2:  
PROMOTE EQUITABLE,  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING &  
LODGING CHOICES THAT  
MEET THE NEEDS OF  
RESIDENTS, WORKERS, &  
VISITORS



# PROMOTE EQUITABLE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING & LODGING CHOICES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS, WORKERS, & VISITORS

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## KEY OBSERVATIONS: HOUSING & LODGING

- It is estimated that 10 to 20 percent of Sweet Home's school-aged students lack a permanent, safe home; 65 percent of students in the Sweet Home School District are eligible for free or reduced lunches for the 2013-2014 school year according to the Oregon Department of Education.
- The Linn-Benton Housing Authority serves over 2,600 families in Linn and Benton counties and pays over \$14 million annually in rental subsidies. The housing authority currently does not have any affordable housing projects in Sweet Home. The Linn-Benton Housing Authority directs HUD housing projects, which currently have a 2.5-year wait for available rentals.
- Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services (WNHS) is an active private, nonprofit community development corporation assisting Sweet Home families with homeownership, affordable housing, and home improvement. It operates five affordable rental projects in Sweet Home and currently is providing \$500,000 for 20 home renovations in the area.
- The Community Services Consortium (CSC) provides Benton, Lincoln, and Linn counties with housing assistance services related to rent, utilities, homeownership, and weatherization. More than 2,000 of the over 12,000 families served by the CSC are in Sweet Home.
- Sweet Home Emergency Ministries (SHEM) provides emergency food boxes, clothing, and financial assistance to an estimated 14,000 people annually, with steady increases each year. As a Manna meal site, SHEM served 12,571 hot meals in 2012.
- The Wiley Creek Community provides senior housing and a 44-unit assisted-living complex.
- Sweet Home has a large veteran population, many of whom are disabled and in need of secure housing.
- There is no emergency housing or shelter available for men in Sweet Home or surrounding counties.
- Sweet Home has two motels, and several RV parks. The USFS, USACE, BLM, and Linn County Parks and Recreation manage many campgrounds in the area. Dispersed camping has become a safety issue on nearby public lands. The USACE has recently made plans to permanently close dispersed camping on their lands along Quartzville Road between Green Peter Dam and Trout Creek.

Communities that offer a wide variety of housing types—single-family homes, townhouses, duplexes, and apartments in varying price ranges—are best positioned to attract and retain residents at all phases of life. Housing situated near schools, jobs, shopping, and services reduces household transportation costs which improves livability and housing affordability. Some communities are integrating housing into existing commercial areas and/or creating new mixed-use developments by putting apartments over first-floor retail stores and offices. This not only makes housing more affordable and convenient for residents, it also provides a local consumer base for businesses.

Gateway communities often face several challenges in providing equitable options for housing. As popular destinations set close to pristine natural resources, gateway communities are often highly desirable locations for second homes. A thriving second homeowner market can often drive home prices upward and make it difficult for year-round residents to find affordable options close to jobs, schools, shops, outdoor recreation, the downtown, and other desired amenities.

A March 2014 national study by the Urban Institute documents the housing gap for extremely low-income (ELI) renter households. The study indicates that Linn County has only 14 affordable and available rental units for every 100 such households. In total, the county has 5,511 ELI renter households and provides 777 affordable and available rental units for a total gap between ELI households and affordable and available rental units of 4,735. More information is available at <http://www.urban/housingaffordability>. Single-family detached homes comprise the majority of the housing stock in Sweet Home, but a lack of employment opportunities have put many of these homes out of reach for many residents. This has contributed the rise of inefficient, unmaintained mobile home communities, overcrowding, homelessness, and transient camping. These are serious housing issues that require attention. Vision will be needed to provide better housing alternatives for all Sweet Home residents and a high quality of life and livability for residents.

New and renovated housing and lodging should reflect the unique character of the gateway community. Such visible design reinforces the sense of place and local pride among residents while also contributing to the overall positive experience of visitors.

### RESOURCE: HUD's Office of Economic Resilience

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) supports the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The mission of its Office of Economic Resilience is to create diverse, prosperous, resilient economies by enhancing quality of place; advancing effective job creation strategies; reducing housing, transportation, and energy consumption costs; promoting clean energy solutions; and creating economic opportunities for all. For more information see [portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/economic\\_resilience](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/economic_resilience).



Lodging for visitors is essential for gateway communities. Hotels, inns, bed-and-breakfasts, and other lodging choices should provide experiences that meet the needs of a wide range of travelers and that complement the character of the destination.

The following section provides recommendations based on observations recorded during the Livability Assessment for steps toward improving and expanding housing and lodging choices in Sweet Home.

## COORDINATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

During the assessment visit, stakeholders noted the need for a coordinated inventory of all services available to residents in the county. The United Way currently provides a free hotline (2-1-1) that provides public service resource information to callers that is starting to gain a foothold in the Sweet Home area. However, the success of the hotline will depend on whether agencies and organizations keep their information current and correct. To date, the information provided is general, and meant to be a starting point, but not all community service organizations participate and many service providers are not aware of the system. Addressing the critical need to share and leverage resources is recommended.

### Recommendations

- **Inventory services.** During the assessment, participants noted that housing and social service resources and contacts are constantly changing. As a result, many frontline assistance providers do not have up-to-date information. The city of Sweet Home—in partnership with housing and social service providers, the United Way, and other stakeholders—should create an inventory of available services and set up a protocol for updates, coordination, and communication among service providers. Qualitative and quantitative data should be captured from each service provider and analyzed to get a comprehensive understanding of the reach of services and to identify gaps in the services offered and/or target populations. These data are particularly helpful when leveraging resources and working with potential funders.
- **Continue to support housing education and engagement.** Local housing and social service providers have wonderful programs aimed at addressing hardships and helping residents find secure housing, employment, and education. Organizations such as the Community Service Consortium provide workshops, resources, and assistance regarding healthy food and nutrition, housing, education, employment, and other related topics. It is important that the city of Sweet Home continue to support these programs, assist as possible with marketing and advertising, and coordinate and align priorities among organizations to meet housing affordability goals.
- **Consider a communications network and campaign.** During the assessment, participants noted that many residents do not access the services they need. Among the



underlying reasons mentioned were lack of education, pride, and the effects of generational poverty. The city of Sweet Home and housing and social service providers should coordinate a communications network and public communication campaign to market and advertise services and should take specific, targeted approaches to overcome barriers to access. The Sweet Home community may also want to consider raising the level of awareness of housing affordability needs among key audiences, such as businesses, policymakers, and developers.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING: Wellington Neighborhood, Breckenridge, Colorado

In the historic resort town of Breckenridge, Colorado, where the median price for a single-family home is \$725,000, local workers were being squeezed out of the area. Meanwhile, an 85-acre site in French Gulch on the town's outskirts sat amid hundreds of acres spoiled by mining. This presented a unique opportunity for affordable housing. Breckenridge reclaimed 22 acres of this brownfield site to develop the Wellington Neighborhood, a compact community built in the style of traditional neighborhoods with attractive and affordable homes.

The resulting development has 122 approved home sites and 20 acres preserved as open space or community parks. The Breckenridge Planning Department encouraged Wellington's traditional neighborhood design through flexible zoning for housing setbacks (closer to the street), road widths (narrower), and lot sizes (smaller). Housing affordability for future generations is ensured through covenants. Streamlined purchaser qualification standards facilitate transactions and reduce administrative requirements. The project was funded in part with public sector incentives worth more than \$1 million, as well as a U.S. EPA and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment "Prospective Purchaser Agreement" that partially funded the clean-up and wetland reclamation.

In addition to providing homes for people who need them, the Wellington Neighborhood provides a free transit shuttle to the nearby downtown. Clustering housing in groups of ten helps the region avoid "mountain sprawl." For more information, access the case study at [http://www.epa.gov/dced/awards\\_2002.htm#breckenridge](http://www.epa.gov/dced/awards_2002.htm#breckenridge).



*Wellington Neighborhood, Breckenridge, Colorado*

## BROWNFIELD TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING: Mill Pond Village, Astoria, Oregon

The city of Astoria overcame the high cost of cleaning up the former Clatsop Mill by contacting the state environmental agency early in the process, engaging the developer in discussions with the state environmental agency, and keeping the community involved in the decision-making process. The project's extensive cleanup effort paved the way for the completion of the Mill Pond Village—a mixed-use redevelopment that includes a public promenade, shops, a credit union, and residential housing.

Mill Pond Village is an excellent example of development that utilizes smart-development principles. The compact design, smaller lot sizes, and redevelopment of the brownfield site demonstrates an efficient use of land and resources. The site is located in an area with full urban service just minutes away from downtown Astoria. Bike paths, sidewalks, trolley, and a shared-use greenway called the RiverTrail encourage alternative transportation. The developments' fishing style cottages reflect detailed, locally appropriate design that has preserved the aesthetics of the city's fishing-village heritage. Some houses are even built on pilings and all have a view of the Columbia River. For more information, see <http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/TGM/docs/casestudies/millpond.pdf>.



*Mill Pond Village, Astoria, Oregon*

## LESSONS LEARNED FOR ENGAGING IN SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS: Gallatin County, Montana

The Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) IX in Montana has provides a broad range of community services, including food and nutrition assistance, child and youth development, senior empowerment, affordable housing, transportation, and energy assistance. HRDC IX has been particularly successful in rural communities like Gallatin County by taking the following steps:

- De-stigmatizing social services: HRDC IX focuses on breaking down barriers to social services by creating programs that serve members of all social classes and that allow opportunities for people from different backgrounds to mingle. In Gallatin this is accomplished through mixed-income housing developments, a county bus system, and a restaurant-style community kitchen. HRDC IX also makes it a priority to preserve the dignity of its clients, as with its grocery-store-style food pantry.
- Creating community buy-in: HRDC IX is responsive to community needs and respectful of creating only programs that the community will support. The organization directly involves the entire community in all phases of the problem-solving process: identifying the need, seeking alternatives and identifying the appropriate solution for each community, identifying ways to monitor and evaluate the program, leveraging volunteers and other community resources, and collaboratively sharing outcomes with the community.
- Bridging silos: The umbrella agency of HRDC IX provides many programs, enabling case workers to make sure their clients never encounter a "wrong door" and allowing residents to sign up for all of the federal, state, and local programs they need and are eligible for. The close relationship between HRDC IX and the Gallatin County Human Services Agency enables them to do informal referrals and to support one another.
- Taking an entrepreneurial approach to community development and One of the things that makes HRDC IX stand out from other organizations is its spirit of innovation and determination. Many new projects have evolved organically from what the staff learned through conducting needs assessments. The HRDC IX also has focused on strategically branding the organization, which contributes to community buy-in as community members know HRDC IX as a brand they can trust. Encounters with successful HRDC IX programs make community members and other partners more likely to support new initiatives.
- Building on existing assets: HRDC IX focuses on using assets that already exist in the community, whether it is by creating a community kitchen in an empty restaurant or partnering with the nearby university on a wide range of projects.

For more information, see

<http://www.hrsa.gov/advisorycommittees/rural/publications/ruralpoverty.pdf>

## RESOURCE: Housing Communities Action Network (CAN) Initiative

Housing CAN is a unique regional communications campaign focused on raising the visibility of the need for housing and affordability among businesses, decision makers, and implementers to help develop new and effective ways to ensure that there is enough housing that is affordable in the Washington, D.C. region. The Housing CAN communications campaign puts housing affordability in front of nontraditional organizations to spark interest in supporting housing opportunities for people of all incomes. The Housing CAN initiative uses its campaign to market five regional benefits of housing affordability:

1. Housing affordability provides stability for families and creates diverse vibrant communities that support people of all ages and all stages of life.
2. Today's affordable housing should be well built, well maintained and designed to fit into the fabric of existing communities.
3. Developing all types and price points of housing within our communities facilitates shorter commutes and decreases traffic congestion.
4. Employers enjoy greater success recruiting and retaining employees when housing opportunities are affordable and located near employment centers.
5. An increasing percentage of the workforce needs housing that is affordable. Public-sector employees; entry-level workers in retail, hospitality, and financial services sectors; hospital and healthcare workers; and daycare providers are among the workers who are essential to the health and vitality of a regional economy.

For more information, see <http://www.caninitiative.org>.

## SET PRIORITIES FOR YOUTH HOUSING SUPPORT

During the assessment visit, youth advocate and service providers noted that there are limited resources available to children. The school district estimates that up to 20 percent of school-aged youth are displaced from permanent housing with their families or part of housing insecure households. The closest youth shelter is 35 miles from Sweet Home, and many resource programs struggle to secure funding to provide housing or other services to youth. Sweet Home and the county should consider opportunities to leverage programs to target youth.

### Recommendations

- **Assess the feasibility for a shelter and service center serving youths in Sweet Home who are homeless or lack secure housing.** During the assessment, housing and school professionals noted that many school children in Sweet Home do not have secure housing and that almost half of students in the Sweet Home School District (45.5 percent) are eligible for free or reduced lunch. It is recommended that the city—in partnership with the county, schools, and housing service providers—consider the feasibility of creating a youth shelter and expanding existing services.
- **Look for opportunities to leverage resources among agencies and organizations for at-risk youth support and services.** Housing and service



providers in the area should identify ways to target youth and engage them in accessing services, attaining education, and finding employment. Workshops, job and housing fairs, and improving coordination among agency priorities and shared services can all be means to this end. In addition, federal land managers may also be involved, perhaps by sponsoring a Youth Conservation Corp for at-risk youth. (See <http://www.oyccweb.com>).

### **RESOURCE: Basic Center Grant Program**

The Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB), part of the Administration for Children and Families' Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), will award funding for the Basic Center Program (BCP). The purpose of the BCP is to provide an alternative for runaway and homeless youth who might otherwise end up with law enforcement or in the child welfare, mental health, or juvenile justice system.

The BCP works to establish or strengthen community-based programs that meet the immediate needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families. The programs provide youth up to age 18 with emergency shelter, food, clothing, counseling, and referrals for health care. Most basic centers can provide 21 days of shelter for up to 20 youth at a time. (There are exceptions for jurisdictions that have different standards for licensing.) Basic centers seek to reunite young people with their families whenever possible, or to locate appropriate alternative placements.

BCP services include street-based services; home-based services for families with youth at risk of separation from the family; drug abuse education and prevention services; and at the request of runaway and homeless youth, testing for sexually transmitted diseases. For more information, see <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/index.cfm?switch=foa&fon=HHS-2014-ACF-ACYF-CY-0792>.

## **SUPPORT HOUSING REHABILITATION AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

During the assessment visit, stakeholders shared concerns that many of Sweet Home's mobile home parks have inefficient and potentially unsafe housing conditions. Given the range of efficiency and structural integrity of housing and business infrastructure, it is recommended that housing rehabilitation and energy retrofits be a priority for Sweet Home. As infrastructure ages, the costs incurred to home and business owners to heat, cool, light, and provide water and sewage can impact affordability. Energy efficiency and sustainable design challenge local officials, planners, developers, and architects to examine the connections between their buildings, the environment, and communities. By promoting energy efficiency, the city of Sweet Home can help reduce energy consumption, thereby saving money for owners and renters and, in the process, minimizing the impacts on natural resources. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities has compiled resources, funding opportunities, and technical assistance programs

for local governments and others to promote energy efficiency at <http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/toolsKeyResources.html>.

## Recommendations

- **Prioritize rehabilitation priorities.** Organizations such as the Community Service Consortium and Willamette Neighborhood Housing Service work directly with the community to facilitate rehabilitation projects, provide job skill training on housing construction and weatherization, and offer outreach and assistance on home renting and purchasing. It is recommended that the city develop targeted housing rehabilitation and efficiency priorities to assist and align with the efforts of these organizations.
- **Consider rehabilitation incentives for property owners.** Many counties and cities have initiated neighborhood revitalization plans as a way to target investment to areas that will help improve neighborhoods and quality of life for residents, spur new housing development or redevelopment, support growth of existing businesses, and/or attract new businesses. Neighborhood revitalization plans often use many tools to incentivize property owners and developers to rehabilitate existing infrastructure to be more structurally sound, energy efficient, and aesthetically pleasing. The city of Sweet Home and Linn County should consider neighborhood revitalization plans and potential rehabilitation incentives and tools, including:
  - Tax rebate programs: These programs reward owners for property improvements that focus on rehabilitation and/or energy efficiency alterations by providing a rebate for a set percentage of the owner's property taxes.
  - Grants: Grant programs can offer incentives for property owners to make specific improvements, from exterior improvements to weatherization updates to community park updates. Some neighborhood grants require a match, but the match sometimes may include a homeowner's sweat equity.
  - Technical assistance: Innovative communities have set up technical assistance programs for homeowners to work together as a neighborhood to beautify landscapes and support street tree health. In Medford, Oregon, for instance, the city's arborist helps neighborhoods assess tree stability and the need for planting or removal of trees.
  - Code enforcement: Codes can be used to maintain the integrity of buildings and ensure that they meet specific standards.
- **Look to private, as well as public, funding opportunities.** Access to affordable housing is a major focus for many private entities across the country. Sweet Home, in partnership with housing and public service organizations, should investigate opportunities with private charitable entities and demonstrate their partnership as a

priority for improving housing conditions and quality of life for a wide range of residents. (See Case Studies and Resources for additional resources.)

### **RESOURCE: Bank of America Charitable Foundation**

Access to affordable, stable housing continues to be a struggle for many families in communities large and small across the country. Yet, stable housing equals better family health, better educational outcomes, and economic progress and financial stability for families.

To this end, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation funds programs focused on creating and preserving affordable housing and homeownership opportunities, foreclosure counseling and mitigation, real-estate owned (REO) disposition, and programs that help individuals and families create better money habits and become more financially capable. In recognition of the fact that art, culture, and hospitals often serve as economic drivers, provide employment, and contribute to the overall vitality of the community, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation also funds these types of institutions to help enrich the community and advance overall community revitalization.

For more information, see <http://about.bankofamerica.com/en-us/global-impact/charitable-foundation-funding.html#fbid=Mw1tdCTLm2>.

### **RESOURCES: Housing, Lodging, and Energy Efficiency**

#### **The Partnership for Sustainable Communities**

(<http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/toolsKeyResources.html>)

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities has compiled resources, funding opportunities, and technical assistance programs for local governments and others to promote energy efficiency.

#### **EnergyStar**

([http://www.energystar.gov/buildings/facility-owners-and-managers/small-biz?c=small\\_business.sb\\_index](http://www.energystar.gov/buildings/facility-owners-and-managers/small-biz?c=small_business.sb_index))

Hotels and other lodging facilities benefit from energy efficiency. EnergyStar provides resources for small businesses, specifically for the hospitality industry.

#### **Small Business Administration**

(<http://www.sba.gov/content/energy-efficiency-lodging>)

The Small Business Administration provides additional ideas and links to resources for lodging and energy efficiency.

#### **DSIRE: The Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency**

(<http://www.dsireusa.org/incentives/index.cfm?re=0&ee=0&spv=0&st=0&srp=1&state=OR>)

The DSIRE database provides state-based listings of resources, policies, incentives, and programs for energy efficiency.

## DOWNTOWN AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

### Arcata, California

Located on the coast of California's Arcata Bay, Arcata is home to Humboldt State University, progressive politics, and a lively downtown. The center of downtown Arcata—the "Plaza"—is known for its local festivals, a farmers' market, and popular local businesses. However, the ability of all residents to enjoy the vitality of the Plaza was hampered by the lack of nearby affordable housing.

To remedy this situation, the city of Arcata stated in its Economic Development Strategic Plan a desire to develop affordable housing downtown. The city then worked with affordable housing developer Danco Communities to identify a solution. The result was the collaborative development of a new, affordable senior-citizen apartment complex next to the Plaza.

The community embraced the idea of creating a more walkable and sustainable neighborhood by adding a green, multi-use residential and commercial downtown development. The city first committed a \$2.3 million loan to Danco for the project. Additional financing was sought through Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). The California tax credit application process is highly competitive, and Danco was not granted the tax credits the first time they applied. Danco applied for, and was granted, a \$1-million USDA Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Direct Loan, which was used for the rental housing portion of the development.

The multi-use building, known as Plaza Point, was completed in the summer of 2012. The three-story building has 29 apartments for seniors who earn 50 percent or below the area's median income. The first floor has commercial space, as well as a manager's unit, community room, and community kitchen. Cooks from a nearby food co-op use the Plaza Point community kitchen to teach cooking classes, which Plaza Point residents can attend free of charge. The building also has a fitness center and garden plots for residents. The building is within walking distance of a grocery store, pharmacy, hospital, bus line, and rental car business.

Plaza Point is a model for energy efficiency and green building practices. It has LEED Platinum certification and is equipped with a photovoltaic (PV) system to convert sunlight into energy. The ideal location, cost savings, and amenities of Plaza Point make it a great addition to the Arcata downtown area and provide seniors with affordable housing and access to needed amenities. For more information, see <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/SustainableRuralCommunities.html>.

## ATTRACT LODGING INVESTORS

During the site visit, the Assessment Team observed the lack of lodging opportunities in Sweet Home. There are many camping opportunities, but only two motels. Alternative lodging options would help the community attract more visitors and extend their average length of stay.

### Recommendations

- **Conduct an inventory of existing unique and/or historic buildings that could potentially be developed as one-of-a-kind overnight destinations.** Underutilized historic buildings or farms might be able to be repurposed for lodging. The city, SHEDG, or chamber-of-commerce leaders should collect relevant information on potential properties to market to prospective developers.
- **Host a community workshop or panel discussion on alternative lodging trends and opportunities.** The programs could be sponsored by the OCWCOG, city of Sweet Home, Linn County, SHEDG, and/or the local chamber of commerce. The goal of such a workshop would be to provide insight on what developers look for and how to organize to attract local or out-of-town lodging investors for alternative lodging options, such as luxury camping (or “glamping”), boutique hotels, and lodges, as well as treehouses, cabins, yurts, or other more rustic accommodations. Additionally, the city and/or its partners should convene an industry roundtable or workshop event with private developers of desired lodging types and state, county, and local economic and planning staff to discuss potential partnerships and address barriers to development proposals.
- **Create a “development toolbox.”** The toolbox should include local and state incentives, financial and technical assistance, and community attributes for developing new lodging in Sweet Home. Include contact information for learning more about these programs. Focus on a variety of lodging types—including farm stays, glamping, and other alternative lodging opportunities. Address issues, such as the permitting process and regulatory issues that business owners may perceive as potential hurdles. Information on the estimated lodging demand, Sweet Home amenities, and future economic development plans should be included in written materials. The city and/or economic development partners should research sustainable, ecotourism-related lodging developers and use these packages as marketing collateral for Sweet Home.





LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE 3:  
ENHANCE ECONOMIC  
COMPETITIVENESS BY  
VALUING THE PUBLIC LANDS  
& NATURAL, CULTURAL,  
RECREATIONAL, &  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE  
GATEWAY COMMUNITY



# ENHANCE ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS BY VALUING THE PUBLIC LANDS & NATURAL, CULTURAL, RECREATIONAL, & ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GATEWAY COMMUNITY

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## KEY OBSERVATIONS: ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

- Sweet Home has a history as a timber harvesting community. At the height of the logging industry, nine sawmills operated in the Sweet Home area; today, Weyerhaeuser is the only sawmill in operation.
- USFS's Sweet Home Ranger District used to employ more than 100 full-time employees; today, there are only 30 permanent employees.
- Linn County received a \$350,000 grant from EPA for a brownfield environmental assessment of a former Willamette Industries mill site along US Highway 20, an additional property that could be redeveloped for mixed-used and recreational purposes.
- The Western States Property, a former mill site, is a 360-acre brownfield site that is being cleaned up for redevelopment. As this area could allow expanded parking and camping, it is being considered for a new trailhead for the Sweet Home Community Forest Trail and the Oregon Jamboree.
- The Oregon Jamboree, held annually in Sweet Home, bolsters the local economy each summer. This three-day music festival is led by the Sweet Home Economic Development Group, which is currently looking at new sites, such as the Western States property, to expand the festival's capacity.
- BLM and USFS continue to support local economies with timber sales as part of sustainable land management strategies.

Economic competitiveness is a main tenet of livability. Investments in livability often create strong local economies. This symbiotic relationship is even stronger in rural and gateway communities where the recruitment of traditional businesses is not always the best or most appropriate economic development strategy. For many businesses today, locating near major transportation routes is less important than in the past, and new businesses are increasingly choosing to locate in communities that offer a high quality of life. An increasing number of businesses consider cultural offerings, scenic areas, and recreational opportunities as major draws for attracting and maintaining employees.

Communities that combine investments in accessible transportation, housing choices, good schools, and community gathering places will be more attractive to residents and thus to relocating or expanding businesses. Potential new businesses that may be attracted to a gateway community range from natural-resource-focused entrepreneurs who want to capitalize on the abundant nearby natural and recreational resources as part of the sustainable tourism industry to technology-based or creative companies that can locate anywhere that offers a reliable Internet connection. Gateway communities can also attract residents who seek recreational thrills, a rural second career following retirement, or a unique sense of place.

Sweet Home is in a position to prioritize investments in community livability and capitalize on the community's surrounding natural amenities, proximity to transportation connections, and relationship to other towns in Linn and Benton counties that can foster regional sustainable economic growth. Communicating these opportunities can help to attract new businesses, residents, and community partners.

While they might not think of themselves in this way, the USFS and USACE are major partners in spurring economic competitiveness and resiliency in the Sweet Home area. These agencies provide jobs and job training (internships, service learning opportunities, etc.) and serve as stewards of the natural landscape, creating an invaluable link between natural resources and economic development for the surrounding Sweet Home area. USFS and USACE should be included in discussions regarding economic development in Sweet Home and the broader region.

This section includes a set of priority recommendations to enhance economic competitiveness by promoting sustainable tourism, cultivating commercial services and entrepreneurs, fostering new businesses, and making regional connections to expand markets.

## **CREATE A STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Sweet Home Economic Development Group (SHEDG) has been working to foster economic growth in Sweet Home through support to local businesses and the annual Oregon Jamboree music festival. SHEDG's efforts have led to collaboration with new and diverse partners. For instance, in 2009, the Sweet Home Active Revitalization Effort (SHARE) developed a strategic action plan that is updated annually in cooperation with SHEDG and the city of Sweet Home. Momentum is growing, but, beyond the Oregon Jamboree, SHEDG's role in community economic development is unclear. The time is ripe for the community to develop a formal strategic economic development plan and to clarify roles and responsibilities and develop a formal strategic economic development plan.

A strategic economic development plan must include priorities, goals, measurable objectives, and concrete action for successful implementation. In *Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities*, the International County/City Management Association (ICMA) recommends the following strategies for economic development in rural areas:

- Support the rural landscape by creating an economic climate that enhances the viability of working lands and conserves natural lands.
- Help existing places to thrive by taking care of assets and investments such as downtowns, Main Streets, existing infrastructure, and places that the community values.
- Create great new places by building vibrant, enduring neighborhoods and communities that people, especially young people, don't want to leave.<sup>6</sup>,

## Recommendations

- **Define economic development leadership roles and responsibilities.** Partnership and collaboration regarding economic development are present in the community, but leadership is unclear. Planning and carrying out the Oregon Jamboree is the SHEDG's defining role, but it is unclear whether SHEDG is or should be the primary planning and support organization for all economic development efforts in Sweet Home. The city of Sweet Home, SHEDG, SHARE, the local chamber of commerce, and other stakeholders should discuss the creation of a formal economic development authority for the community.
- **Develop a strategic plan outlining priorities for economic development.** The city of Sweet Home and/or SHEDG (if appropriate) should seek collaboration with CWCOG, federal land, county, and other partners and stakeholders to develop a strategic economic development plan that aligns with priorities that seek to conserve and protect working lands and natural resources, reuse existing infrastructure, and build vibrant communities.
- **Engage federal land managers in efforts to better connect public lands to the economic resiliency of Sweet Home.** The USFS is currently looking at sustainable forest products as a possible economic generator and alternative to timber extraction. Additionally, as sustainable tourism destinations, Willamette National Forest, Quartzville Recreation Corridor, Foster Lake, and Green Peter Lake attract boaters, bicyclists, campers, and other recreational users. Strategies to encourage these visitors to spend more time (and money) in Sweet Home demand further planning and action. (See below for more information on developing sustainable tourism products.)

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<sup>6</sup> ICMA, *Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities* (Washington, DC: ICMA, 2010). [http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge\\_network/documents/kn/Document/301483/Putting\\_Smart\\_Growth\\_to\\_Work\\_in\\_Rural\\_Communities](http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/301483/Putting_Smart_Growth_to_Work_in_Rural_Communities).

- **Engage state and federal resources for economic development.** Sweet Home has been very successful in gaining support from state and federal entities to fund local economic development initiatives. Funding has ranged from federal revitalization grants in the 1990s to a recent \$350,000 grant from the EPA for brownfield environmental assessment—the first step towards redevelopment of an abandoned mill site in the center of the city. Sweet Home should continue to look for funding opportunities at the regional, state, and federal levels that align with the goals and objectives of economic development in Sweet Home. (See Case Studies and Resources for opportunities.)

### RESOURCE: U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Planning & Local Assistance Programs

**Planning Program:** The EDA assists eligible recipients in creating regional economic development plans designed to stimulate and guide the economic development efforts of a community or region. As part of this program, EDA supports Partnership Planning investments to facilitate the development, implementation, revision, or replacement of comprehensive economic development strategies (CEDS) that articulate and prioritize the strategic economic goals of recipients' respective regions. In general, EDA provides Partnership Planning grants to the designated planning organization (e.g., district organization) serving EDA-designated Economic Development Districts to enable these organizations to develop and implement relevant CEDS. The Planning Program also helps support planning organizations, including district organizations, Indian tribes, and other eligible recipients, with Short-Term and State Planning investments designed to guide the eventual creation and retention of higher-skill, higher-wage jobs, particularly for the unemployed and underemployed in the nation's most economically distressed regions.

**Local Assistance Program:** The Local Technical Assistance program strengthens the capacity of local or state organizations, institutions of higher education, and other eligible recipients to undertake and promote effective economic development programs through projects such as feasibility analyses and impact studies.

For more information, see <http://www.eda.gov/funding-opportunities/>.

## PURSUE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Sweet Home has a rich history, but there has been little attention to how to portray the city to visitors. Visitors are attracted to Sweet Home for a variety of reasons and by numerous amenities, but the community lacks a comprehensive or cohesive approach to maintaining, marketing, and providing access to its most valued amenities. The Assessment Team recommends a strategy that focuses first on improving the product and then marketing it ("product first, then promotion") to create successful sustainable tourism. The Sweet Home All-Lands Collaborative, SHEDG, and city partnerships provide an opportunity for the city to inventory and assess opportunities to develop tourism products that include outdoor



recreational activities and destinations, historic sites, and experiential tours. This assessment will be the first step in the development of a comprehensive recreational and sustainable tourism strategy. Once product development is in place, Sweet Home can implement marketing and outreach strategies to effectively promote the community within and beyond the region.

The benefit of product development of sustainable tourism and cultural heritage assets is that it provides visitors with multiple experiences, allowing individuals and groups to pursue multiple interests and shape an agenda featuring a wealth of things to do—paddling on Foster Lake one day, learning about the timber industry the next, shopping for locally made treasures downtown, and so forth. In addition, each day can be capped off with dinner at a downtown restaurant or around a campfire. Guiding principles for developing sustainable tourism and cultural heritage products and destinations follow.

### Sustainable Tourism

Tourism is an ever-changing industry and spans many experiences. Today's emphasis on sustainable tourism provides opportunities for communities to expand their tourism base by focusing on exceptional experiences in unique and authentic places while protecting the qualities that make the area special and contribute to a high quality of life for residents. Sustainable tourism encompasses many categories, including cultural heritage, nature based, community based, outdoor recreation, agritourism, and "voluntourism," or vacation-based philanthropy. In contrast to mass-market tourism, such as cruise ships and theme parks, sustainable tourism stresses quality over quantity; favors unique experiences based on a location's resources (such as distinctive destinations, unspoiled landscapes, and/or historic sites); and relies on locally owned businesses.

Preserving access to outdoor recreation protects and supports local businesses and the economy. Outdoor recreation also provides health benefits. According to the Outdoor Foundation's 2013 *Outdoor Participation Report*, the most popular outdoor activities in the United States today are running, fishing, biking, camping, and hiking.<sup>7</sup> The fastest-growing outdoor activities by participation are nontraditional (off-road) triathlons, adventure races, telemarking, freestyle skiing, and traditional triathlons. New markets also are emerging for stand-up paddling, windsurfing, kayaking, and rafting. Sweet Home and the surrounding public lands offer access to many of these activities, plus many others, positioning the town as a year-round playground for outdoor recreation.

Ecotourism development expert Ed McMahon, the founder of Scenic America and past vice president of The Conservation Fund, emphasizes the importance of authentic experiences. In *Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities*, authors Jim Howe, Ed McMahon, and Luther Propst provide a chapter for each step that successful gateway communities take to achieve this end:

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<sup>7</sup> Outdoor Foundation, *Outdoor Participation Report*, (Boulder, CO: Outdoor Foundation, 2013). <http://outdoorindustry.org/images/researchfiles/ParticipationStudy2013.pdf?193>.

- Develop a widely shared vision
- Create an inventory of local resources
- Build on local assets
- Use education, voluntary initiatives and incentives as well as regulations
- Meet the needs of both landowners and communities
- Partner with public land managers
- Recognize the role of nongovernmental organizations
- Provide opportunities for leaders to step forward
- Pay attention to aesthetics.<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, the Rural Ecotourism Assessment Project by Gail Y.B. Lash and Alison Austin lists as the three components of a community-based tourism strategy:

- Understand and meet the needs of the community
- Realistically deliver a long-term quality tourism product
- Make specific efforts to connect these products to international and local markets.<sup>9</sup>

## BUILDING THE CASE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION: Pennsylvania Wilds

The PA Wilds, a 12-county area in north-central Pennsylvania, has found that outdoor recreation can be part of bringing back the area's manufacturing and supporting long-time businesses. Following an almost decade-long deliberate initiative to build off the existing assets of the region, the Pennsylvania Wilds is now known for its outdoor recreation. A spin-off of those efforts has attracted residents to return to the area and start up new businesses, including wilderness outfitting and tours, letterpress printing, and a new local snowboard manufacturer using the PA Wilds brand. In addition, other local businesses bring visitors and prospective employees to visit the area's attractions, which include paddling on the Clarion River, viewing wildlife, and learning about elk at the Elk Country Visitor Center, which opened in 2010. See <http://www.pawildsresources.org/>.

<sup>8</sup> Jim Howe, Edward T. McMahon, and Luther Propst, *Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1997).

<sup>9</sup> Gail Y. B. Lash and Alison D. Austin. *Rural Ecotourism Assessment Program (REAP): A Guide to Community Assessment of Ecotourism as a Tool for Sustainable Development* (Burlington, VT: EplerWood International, 2003): 8.

Sustainable tourism is particularly attractive for communities interested in maintaining or enhancing their unique local character and sense of place. In addition to economic development and job creation, sustainable tourism increases the area's attractiveness to outside industries and people seeking to relocate to locales rich in natural amenities, which increases civic pride. In the end, residents have more shops, activities, and entertainment offerings than the local market alone might support.

### RESOURCE: Active Transportation Beyond Urban Centers Report—Bicycling and Walking Good for Business

A USDA Economic Research Service study indicates that rural counties that attract “creative class” businesses enjoy job-growth rates that are higher than metropolitan counties. Two qualities sought by creative-class workers are active street scenes and outdoor recreation opportunities. Bicycling and walking infrastructure and facilities contribute to these outcomes. In the words of Norman Whitaker, executive director of South Carolina’s Central Midlands Council of Governments, “The creative class is attracted to bike/ped[estrian travel] as modes of transportation and recreation.”

Investments in bicycling and walking facilities can lead to more income and jobs from increased tourism and resident choices. But bike/ped choices go beyond tourism. Places like Billings, Montana have realized that some visitors become residents and business owners. At a 2011 U.S. Congressional briefing, Billings Chamber of Commerce CEO John Brewer opined, “In Billings—and I think throughout the country—there has been a paradigm shift. Trails are no longer viewed as community amenities; they’re viewed as essential infrastructure for business recruitment. Talented people move to Billings in large part because of our trail system that creates the quality of life they are expecting. A healthy trail system is vital to a healthy community.” Brewer points out that *Fortune* magazine recently named Billings as “the number one small city in attracting business.” Brewer concluded, “Federally funded investment in our non-motorized transportation sparks private investment in trails and trail projects, which lures companies, increases residential quality of life, and retains a qualified workforce. Trails are vital to the business and the economy and jobs in Billings.” See *Active Transportation Beyond Urban Centers. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 2012,*

<http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/ourWork/reports/BeyondUrbanCentersReport.pdf>.

### Cultural Heritage Tourism

The recent economic recession has had a significant impact on the travel industry. However, studies suggest that cultural heritage travel has continued to be strong even at the height of the recession. The 2013 Cultural and Heritage Traveler Report indicates that 76 percent of U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural and/or heritage activities while traveling. This translates to 129.6 million adults each year. According to the study, 87 percent of cultural heritage

travelers say they want travel experiences that have a combination of a wide variety of activities, such as culture, shopping, nature, exercise, and dining. Additionally, 72 percent seek travel experiences where the destination, its buildings, and its surroundings have retained their character. And 66 percent want travel to be educational; these tourists make an effort to explore and learn about local arts, culture, environment, and history. Cultural heritage travelers spend more per trip than other leisure travelers (an average of \$1,319 per trip compared to \$1,198), making this a highly desirable segment of the tourism industry.<sup>10</sup>

### Principles of Successful and Sustainable Cultural Heritage Tourism

Through its work with communities across the country, the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Heritage Tourism Program has developed five principles to help guide successful and sustainable cultural heritage tourism development:

1. **Collaborate.** By its very nature, cultural heritage tourism requires effective partnerships. Much more can be accomplished by working together than by working alone.
2. **Find the fit between the community and tourism.** Cultural heritage tourism should make a community a better place to live as well as a better place to visit. Respect carrying capacity so everyone benefits.
3. **Make sites and programs come alive.** Look for ways to make visitor experiences exciting, engaging, and interactive.
4. **Focus on quality and authenticity.** Today's cultural heritage traveler is sophisticated and expects a high level of quality and an authentic experience.
5. **Preserve and protect resources.** Many of your community's cultural, historic, and natural resources are irreplaceable. Take good care of them; if they are lost you can never get them back.

For more information, visit <http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/economics-of-revitalization/heritage-tourism/#.Us7IF8RDseg>.

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<sup>10</sup> *The 2013 Cultural and Heritage Traveler Report* (Mandala Research, 2013).  
<http://mandalaresearch.com/>.

## CAPITALIZING ON BEING UNIQUE: Canadian Fall Foliage Festival, Texas

For 50 years the city of Canadian, Texas has been extending its summer tourist season into the fall by capitalizing on an unlikely asset—the vibrant changing colors of poison ivy. For an area with very few trees, the fall foliage colors rival those of Vermont. Canadian capitalizes on the beauty with a Fall Foliage Festival with craft shows, home tours, and other events.



### Recommendations

- **Capitalize on unique events, sites, and recreational opportunities not found anywhere else.** Sweet Home's low elevation and temperate climate make it an ideal location for year-round recreation, something that is not the case for many areas in Oregon. The temperate climate paired with unique events, such as the only open-water water polo tournament and the "Best of the West" triathlon, provide Sweet Home with many opportunities to set itself apart from other destinations. These events and others should be priorities for marketing and product development.
- **Expand existing recreational amenities with public safety as a priority.** During the assessment visit, it was noted that illegal camping and perceived safety issues in Willamette National Forest are having a negative impact on the use of campgrounds. Sweet Home and public land managers should work together to prioritize solutions for addressing these problems and implementing safe camping environments.
- **Expand outreach to niche user groups.** User group needs and preferences vary from activity to activity. The city, in partnership with federal land managers, should look for opportunities to cater to popular outdoor user groups as well as tap into new markets. Potential steps to take include:
  - Conduct an inventory of service providers and user groups. The goal is to inventory all the outdoor recreation resources and service providers in the area, assess needs of user groups, and identify opportunities for better aligning the services provided to the desires of user groups. Through communication with local hunt clubs, fishing tournament organizers, college and university outdoor programs, birdwatching clubs, biking and hiking groups, and other outdoor recreation enthusiasts, local officials can learn more about which groups use amenities in Sweet Home, when and how they access these amenities, what services or outfitters they use, what needs they have that are not currently being met, and the degree of interest in new types of recreation such as stand-up paddling or geocaching.



## COMMUNITY INVESTMENT: Allegheny River Cleanup

Allegheny Outfitters, a family-run canoe and kayak livery and outdoor gear store located along the National Wild & Scenic Allegheny River in Warren County, is a long-time participant of the International Coastal Cleanup. In 2009, owner Piper Van Ord founded a five-day river cleanup to remove garbage from 31 miles of the river and to highlight the Allegheny as an important recreational, ecological, and economic resource in the Pennsylvania Wilds region. The cleanup has attracted hundreds of volunteers and sponsors, who over the last four years have pulled from the river more than 34,000 pounds of metal, 1,500 tires, and hundreds of pounds of trash. Allegheny Outfitters provides free boats to encourage participation. To learn more, visit [www.alleghenyoutfitters.com](http://www.alleghenyoutfitters.com); <http://www.keppabeautiful.org/Portals/0/PDFs/beautiful/beautifulspring2013.pdf>.

- The city and public land managers should look for opportunities to invite niche outdoor recreation user groups, such as hiking clubs, birders, and cyclists, to give back to the community and protect natural resources through cleanups, trail-building days, and other volunteer events. The community can engage outdoor recreation organizations to sponsor such events, as well as to organize volunteers and/or promote the events sponsored by other organizations.
- The city and public land managers should collaborate to develop niche marketing materials such as “Top Ten” lists of where to see birds and/or other wildlife; where to find guide books; and how to access maps for biking, hiking, or running. Materials should be distributed to local, regional, state outdoor recreation organizations, and local businesses, as well as posted on relevant Internet sites.

## PROMOTE THE EDUCATION & AWARENESS OF THE ROLE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN SWEET HOME

Sustainable outdoor recreation can be an economic development strategy, but it is also a mechanism for building community stewardship and encouraging the preservation of the landscape that makes Sweet Home unique. Willamette National Forest is in a temperate climate, which makes visiting Sweet Home enjoyable all year round.

Sweet Home has several initiatives that can contribute to the expansion of sustainable tourism. The Sweet Home Community Forest Trail, brownfield redevelopment, the Oregon Jamboree, and other initiatives should be viewed as part of a movement to diversify the economy of Sweet Home and to build awareness of the benefits of sustainable

### In Oregon, outdoor recreation generates:

- \$12.8 billion in consumer spending
- 141,000 direct jobs
- \$4.0 billion in wages and salaries
- \$995 million in state and local tax revenue (Outdoor Industry Association, 2013)

tourism to shift how the community views economic resiliency in the future. To be successful, all initiatives will need community buy-in; education about the benefits of the strategies proposed will be important for successful implementation of sustainable tourism.

## Recommendations

- **Consider outdoor recreation as an economic driver.** Outdoor recreation is big business! Outdoor recreation is the third-largest economic driver in the United States (behind financial services and insurance, and outpatient health care). More than six million Americans depend on outdoor recreation for their livelihoods.<sup>11</sup> Sweet Home's residents need to understand how sustainable tourism can be an economic driver for their community while also protecting the assets they enjoy most. To this end, leaders of the city of Sweet Home, surrounding public lands, the SHALC and other similar groups, and businesses should work collaboratively to educate the community about sustainable tourism and its benefits, with a particular focus on the outdoor recreation needs and opportunities identified in an inventory and assessment. Outreach to the community can be accomplished through a range of efforts, such as workshops, speaking engagements, community events and celebrations, and working with the local media.
- **Look for opportunities to expand industry.** Outdoor recreation can open up new markets within the community and spawn businesses related to equipment and outfitting. Recreation also provides outlets to demonstrate to prospective business owners the excellent quality of life that the area offers for residents. The natural and recreational resources may help attract new businesses looking for a new location and existing businesses that want to relocate, particularly as business owners increasingly consider natural amenities a potential benefit for employees. Community leaders should communicate these benefits to residents to help them understand the connection between outdoor recreation and economic growth, as well as the community's potential for future growth.

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<sup>11</sup> Outdoor Industry Association, *The Outdoor Recreation Economy: Oregon*, 2012.  
[https://outdoorindustry.org/images/ore\\_reports/OR-oregon-outdoorrecreationeconomy-oia.pdf](https://outdoorindustry.org/images/ore_reports/OR-oregon-outdoorrecreationeconomy-oia.pdf).

## RESOURCE: Sustainable Tourism New Initiative: National Travel and Tourism Strategy

In 2012, President Obama unveiled the National Travel and Tourism Strategy (NTTS), which seeks to attract 100 million new tourists to the United States by 2021. These visitors are expected to spend \$250 billion, thus generating three million jobs in rural and urban places across America.

The NTTS calls for more public/private partnerships within the tourism community. In service to that, the federal tourism team showcased public lands at the U.S. Travel Association's IPW, America's premier international travel trade show, where a majority of international bookings to the United States are decided. The goal of the NTTS was to raise awareness of the depth and breadth of authentic experiences available in public lands and work more collaboratively across federal agencies. One key outcome of this collaboration was the joint promotion, with 30 gateway communities, of U.S. World Heritage sites.

The National Park Service (NPS) Office of Sustainable Tourism's strategic plan incorporates the NTTS goals as well as emphasizes increased engagement with gateway communities. By facilitating information exchange between the NPS and tourism communities and leveraging resources, the OST seeks to expand the communications capacity of parks and partners. See <http://www.nps.gov/tourism/nationalstrategictourismplan.html>.

- **Capture visitor data.** As the principle transportation route to Willamette National Forests and Foster and Green Peter Lakes, Sweet Home's main street is a significant transportation asset that brings thousands of visitors through the city. In 2012, Foster Lake received over 750,000 visitors and Green Peter over 288,700. Within 30 miles of the lakes, it is estimated that combined the lakes generated over \$38 million in visitor spending.<sup>12</sup> The city needs to take proactive measures to entice these visitors to eat, shop, stay, and access services in Sweet Home, bringing new money into the local economy. The city also needs to understand how visitors spend their money in the community and the multiplier effects this spending has on the local economy. As part of an overall plan to support and expand sustainable tourism, it is recommended that Sweet Home gather information about where visitors are coming from, where are they staying and for how long, and what activities and services they most appreciate.

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<sup>12</sup> U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. *Value to the Nation Fast Facts, 2012*. Lake Level Report for Green Peter Lake and Foster Lake. <http://www.corpsresults.us/recreation/fastfacts/lake.cfm?lakeID=166> & <http://www.corpsresults.us/recreation/fastfacts/lake.cfm?lakeID=149>.

## REDEFINING LOCAL ECONOMIES: Oakridge, Oregon

In 2009, Oakridge, Oregon was one of the first communities to benefit from Travel Oregon's Rural Tourism Assessment. Oakridge is a rural community that was transitioning from a resource-extraction-based economy to a more diverse economy that included sustainable tourism. An important element of this transition has been the town's "We Speak" program, which shares local knowledge with staff who routinely interact with visitors. In the "We Speak Oregon" training programs, local residents with expertise in particular areas make presentations to staff from local businesses about activities in the region. Spring trainings have covered birding, wildflowers, mountain biking, road biking, hiking and camping. Winter trainings have included such topics as skiing, snowshoeing and craft beer. In addition, the International Mountain Biking Association's Trail Solutions team developed and led a two-day bicycle tourism workshop for local businesses and federal land managers seeking to increase bicycle-based visitation in Oakridge, Oregon.

For more information, view an online video summarizing the effort at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXRJkpAAJBI> or review an assessment of the Rural Tourism initiative at <http://industry.traveloregon.com/industry-resources/destination-development/rural-tourism-studio/rural-tourism-studio-evaluation-reports/>. For more information about We Speak, visit <http://industry.traveloregon.com/industry-resources/destination-development/we-speak-program/>; for information about IMBA's involvement, visit <https://www.imba.com/trail-solutions/projects/travel-oregon-oakridge-rural-tourism-studio>.



### INCUBATE ARTS & CULTURE ACTIVITIES

Sweet Home has not only a beautiful landscape, but also a rich history stemming from its Native American heritage and its background in the logging industry. A focus on the city's heritage and natural resources can create new business opportunities for residents and represent the uniqueness of Sweet Home.

## Recommendations

- **Identify local crafts and talents for cultural heritage tourism and city history.** Local residents who make a product as a hobby may be interested in an outlet to share—and sell—their work. Locally made products could be sold at local restaurants, shops, USACE and USFS visitor centers, the city hall, library, or other public or private locations. The city also could support cottage industry by providing or coordinating free workspace at community centers or schools, hosting events that allow for local artisans and crafters to display and sell their work, or holding workshops on how to create and market their products.
- **Showcase local music, dance, and other arts-related activities.** The city, chamber of commerce, USFS, and USACE should work together to identify creative opportunities that go beyond large annual productions to include a calendar of more informal arts and music events across the city and in recreation areas. Events could include informal “jam sessions” set on porches, small parks, or restaurants. Youth jam sessions or concerts should be encouraged to engage the youngest residents of Sweet Home.
- **Capitalize on existing revitalization efforts.** The city of Sweet Home is already participating in a short-term effort to revitalize the downtown. Arts in Rural Storefronts, a public program of The Arts Center in Corvallis, builds community engagement by turning vacant storefronts into vibrant sites where residents and visitors can experience contemporary art 24/7. This organization has teamed up with Sweet Home to install an artist’s creation on Sweet Home’s Main Street. The city and the chamber of commerce should look for opportunities to build from this effort by looking for other vacant store

### ENGAGING THE ARTS: Floyd Country Store, Floyd, Virginia

In Floyd, Virginia, a weekly jamboree is held every Friday night at the Floyd Country Store. These events are worthy tributes to old-time and bluegrass music and to mountain dance. The Friday evening jam sessions begin with an hour of gospel music performed by a group of local old-timers. Then various bands take turns playing onstage. On summer nights, musicians often jam in the parking lot and the audience flows over into the street. Snacks, soft drinks, and ice cream are available at the store; local eateries also benefit from the customers lured out for a night of fun.





fronts that can be used as art displays or artisan cooperatives. Artists and artisans should be encouraged to develop work that is aligned with the community's history, focusing on a theme such as the beauty of the Willamette Valley, its Native American heritage, or the timber history.

- **Capture “drive-through” traffic in Sweet Home.** Art and cultural events are great ways to attract people who are visiting the national forest or other public lands to downtown Sweet Home. Art walks, “First Friday” events, live music, and other family-fun events can be held at minimal costs to the city or a private sponsor. The city should partner with private entities and public land managers to advertise and market new events that would attract visitors to the community and enhance the experience of visitors to the recreational facilities on public lands.

## OUR TOWN GRANT SUCCESS: City of New Haven, Connecticut

### National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant

NEA awards grants from \$25,000 to \$200,000 to organizations for the implementation of creative placemaking projects that contribute to the livability of communities and place the arts at their core. For more information about Our Town and other grants from the NEA, see <http://arts.gov/grants>.

### City of New Haven, Connecticut, Project Storefronts

In 2010, the city of New Haven, Connecticut, launched an innovative pilot program called Project Storefronts. In cooperation with business counselors and property owners, the program enables individual artists, not-for-profits, or teams of creative workers to set up 90-day businesses in vacant storefronts in New Haven's Ninth Square Historic District.

In 2011, the city was awarded a \$100,000 Our Town grant from the NEA to help expand the award-winning program to provide artists and arts organizations with financial and business counseling to help launch or expand a creative business in the retail-deprived Ninth Square. Meanwhile, artist programming and events raise the profile of the creative businesses, attract new visitors to the Ninth Square Historic District, increase food traffic in the neighborhoods, attract new residents, and help grow the local economy.



## FOSTER NEW & DIVERSE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

As Sweet Home looks to build a resilient and diverse local economy, it will need attract and nurture new and diverse businesses. Entrepreneurial and new businesses opportunities should be targeted not only to a wide range of visitors, but to residents as well. The city should think creatively about strategies that can incubate the entrepreneurial spirit, capitalize on the existing workforce, and build niche industries that are compatible with the Sweet Home's unique qualities and characteristics.

### Recommendations

- **Develop and market local products.** Sweet Home should draw on its timber and logging heritage and on its ties to natural resources to create new economic opportunities. While the community is rightly focused on the future, it should look to its past as well. New economic opportunities may accrue from the community's timber mill heritage, such as new niche wood design and manufacturing, perhaps at a smaller or more specialized scale. The city may also be able to capitalize on the machinery expertise of its residents and/or build opportunities for handicrafts or arts. Areas to explore include:
  - Secondary processing and manufacturing: Sawmills are primary processors of raw lumber, but building supplies, farm supplies, custom furnishings, landscaping, and wood energy can all result from secondary processing and manufacturing. Local, niche development of these secondary processes may offer be unique, highly sought-after products.
  - Wildcrafting: The forest provides a wide variety of flowers, herbs, and other plants that can be used for a variety of purposes. Wildcrafting is the practice of harvesting these plants from their natural or wild habitat for food or medicinal purposes. Wildcrafting involves using uncultivated plants wherever they may be found and is not necessarily limited to wilderness areas. Sweet Home should explore the possibility of using wildcrafting for the sustainable development local products that may be of interest to local residents and visitors alike.
  - Biochar: Biochar is a fine-grained charcoal made by pyrolysis, the process of heating biomass (wood, manure, crop residues, solid waste, etc.) in a specially designed furnace that captures emissions, gases, and oils for reuse as energy. The Sweet Home Wastewater Treatment Plant became a



demonstration site to test the benefits of biochar on pollution remediation. Sweet Home received funds from the USFS) State and Private Forestry grant and 2013 Hazardous Fuels Woody Biomass Utilization Grant program. Based on favorable results of the project, biochar could be a niche specialization for Sweet Home, creating green jobs in the energy industry.

- Food and beverage: Visitors often want to round out a day of hiking, recreation, or sightseeing by tasting local food and drink specialties. Sweet Home has a local vineyard producing wines. The city should encourage similar food and beverage businesses, such as a local brewery, artisan breads, cheeses, or meats that are locally grown and produced.

### RESOURCE: Shop Local, Save Land: A Guide to Wood Products, Professionals, and Resources

The Upper Delaware River Watershed provides water to over 15 million people. That water is filtered by the healthy forests that thrive there. The Delaware Highlands Conservancy works with landowners and communities of the Upper Delaware River to protect the land and water of this special region. The conservancy and its partners understand that to protect the water, they need to assure that forestlands remain forested. The Delaware Highlands Conservancy partners with organizations such as the Common Waters Fund, which is dedicated to working with private landowners to help them manage and conserve their forestlands. It also promotes the support of local forest economies through its award-winning Shop Local Save Land initiative. As part of that initiative, the Delaware Highlands Conservancy has created a guide to buying local and supporting local wood product businesses, services, and artisans. For more information, see the guide at [http://www.delawarehighlands.org/files/vkenedy/2012\\_Wood\\_Guide\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.delawarehighlands.org/files/vkenedy/2012_Wood_Guide_FINAL.pdf).

- **Cultivate opportunities for the existing workforce.** Sweet Home's logging industry has resulted in a workforce of skilled laborers who have experience with manufacturing equipment, large machines and vehicles, and natural resource extraction, stewardship, and restoration. Sweet Home should look for opportunities to "repurpose" these skills for other expanding markets, such as niche wood-product development, watershed restoration, recreational outfitting, auto and machine repair, and so forth.

### RESOURCE: The Ecosystem Workforce Program

The Ecosystem Workforce Program, part of the University of Oregon's Institute for a Sustainable Environment, is built on the fundamental belief that ecology, economy, and governance are intimately interconnected. The program serves rural forest communities and other people that face limited economic opportunity, political exclusion, and/or degraded landscapes. They have fostered forest-based sustainable rural development in forest communities by developing restoration workforce training curriculum and supporting local quality jobs programs. The program has supported community-based forestry programs through applied research projects, that cultivate understanding of the distribution of benefits from federal forest management and the working conditions of forest workers. It also supports community-based forestry by working collaboratively with forest communities to educate national policy makers about the impacts of forest policy on forest communities and landscapes. For more information, see <http://ewp.uoregon.edu/about/intro>.

## DIVERSIFYING ECONOMIES: Miner County, South Dakota

Miner County, South Dakota, created a clear vision that has helped direct the community's approach to development. Instead of spending limited resources trying to attract a major corporation to locate a plant or a store in Miner County or to attract new residents, citizens concentrated on building upon their town's existing assets to build a "rural learning center" which is now known as the Maroney Commons, a mixed-use, LEED-platinum-certified complex with hotel, conference center, and offices that help rural residents learn about green jobs and technology, located in the heart of the downtown.

Renewing the economy has been about more than jobs; the county focused on creating an economic system that works for real people. A wind turbine gearbox remanufacturing plant, a modern organic beef processing facility, and a wind-blade repair and production facility have helped add more than 150 living-wage jobs (with benefits) to the local economy. In addition, there are more affordable housing opportunities for families, thanks to the purchase and renovation of old apartment buildings by the Rural Learning Center. Occupancy in the apartments and homes increased from 13 percent to 90 percent in less than one year. Essential services and businesses are returning to the area, and a growing healthcare industry provides career opportunities for local residents and stronger economic base.

Reversing decades of decline is never easy, but Miner County's numbers speak for themselves. Miner County valuations are increasing, tax revenue is increasing, and tax levies are decreasing. These are signs of an increasingly healthy economy. The city of Howard has seen a 163 percent increase in sales tax revenue in the last ten years. The number of people living in poverty also has significantly decreased, and the exodus of young people has come to a halt. With promising industries, increasing wages and a high quality of life, Miner County is attracting more young families. For the first time in 80+ years, the population in Miner County is projected to increase in 2010 by the Governor's Office of Economic Development.

For more information, see <http://www.rurallearningcenter.org/results.html> and [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/publications/sustainable\\_rural\\_communities/page08.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/publications/sustainable_rural_communities/page08.cfm).





- Incubate recreational outfitters and associated services.** Sweet Home should seek to connect business and industry opportunities to tourism, thereby creating a stronger sustainable tourism “cluster.” Clusters, which are regional concentrations of related industries, are a striking feature of all modern economies, making regions uniquely competitive for jobs and private investment. An economic cluster approach would enable Sweet Home to capture greater local economic impact and create a more diversified economy by providing products through more economic sectors. As a result, the local economy could capture not just impacts from visitors to the natural assets of Willamette National Forest and the USACE lakes, but also by providing lodging, meals, and products that are locally manufactured and sold at the retail and wholesale levels. Services



*Confluence Watersports' Perception Kayaks production factory in Greenville, SC*

would also be an integral part of the economy, in the form of leading tours, renting equipment, and outfitting tourists. As one example, Perception Kayaks pioneered plastic kayaks in the late 1970s in South Carolina, which boosted kayaking nationwide; Perception Kayaks still serves as an economic driver in rural South Carolina and spurred an outdoor recreation cluster to become a part of a larger corporation called Confluence Watersports. Similarly, residents and visitors in the Pennsylvania Wilds take to the slopes on locally manufactured Homewood Snowboards. Sweet Home could develop a sustainable tourism cluster from its timber connections, enabling it to produce high-performance outdoor recreational wood products akin to Homewood Snowboards or other outfitting brands. (For more about the history of Homewood Snowboards, read <http://www.keystoneedge.com/features/pawildssnowboardmanufacturing0328.aspx>.)

- Support existing small business and entrepreneurs.** Entrepreneurial spirit is an important component of thriving rural communities. Local businesses such as Steelhead Fitness and White's Metal Detectors have a vested interest in seeing the community thrive. The city of Sweet Home, in partnership with Linn County, OCWCOG, and area chambers of commerce, should look for opportunities to provide technical assistance and financing to existing businesses. Additional support for existing businesses might include better signage on main roads to attract drive-through traffic or grants and loans for business expansion. Sweet Home also should seek out ways to cultivate new businesses and attract entrepreneurs. Means to this end might include holding business

development sessions or workshops at local high schools or the community college or creating small business incubators downtown. (See Case Studies & Resources for potential resources to connect to existing and potential small business owners.)

#### RESOURCE: USDA's Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)

The purpose of RMAP is to support the development and ongoing success of rural microentrepreneurs and microenterprises. Direct loans and grants are made to selected Microenterprise Development Organizations. RMAP funding may be used to provide fixed interest rate microloans for working capital, purchase of office infrastructure or real estate, debt refinancing and business acquisitions. Technical assistance-only grants are also available to provide education, guidance, or instruction to one or more rural microentrepreneurs. For more information, see [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP\\_rmap.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_rmap.html).

#### RESOURCE: Oregon Enterprise Zones

Oregon's enterprise zones offer a unique resource for Oregon communities and provide an excellent opportunity for businesses expanding or relocating in Oregon. Enterprise zones exempt businesses from local property taxes on new investments. Sponsored by municipal or tribal governments, an enterprise zone typically serves as a focal point for local development efforts. Special enterprise zones are also available such as the Long-term Rural Enterprise Zone Facilities Program. Available in most rural enterprise zones, the long-term zone program extends property tax abatement for seven to fifteen years, compared to standard three to five years. Any type of business activity is eligible, but these incentives depend on local approval and minimum levels for investment size, job creation and employee compensation. For more information, see <http://www.oregon4biz.com/The-Oregon-Advantage/Incentives/Enterprise-Zones/>.

- **Support workforce development.** Another major element for attracting new businesses is ensuring that the local workforce is able to meet the needs of potential new businesses, especially businesses that are focused on new technologies. The city of Sweet Home, in partnership with Linn County and OCWCOG, should consider hosting a workshop or job fair that introduces to Sweet Home's residents workforce development and training programs, as well as possible careers and employment opportunities at existing businesses. The city and its partners also should discuss gaps and barriers related to job training to identify opportunities to expand learning opportunities. (See Case Studies and Resources for potential resources to access for workforce development.)
- **Leverage public investment to spur private opportunities.** Companies and people are more willing to invest in communities that invest in themselves. Public investments can directly and indirectly attract private business development. This is the power of

Main Street programs and downtown beautification efforts. More deliberate examples include rebuilding town halls or relocating services into a walkable downtown. Sweet Home should integrate and leverage their public investment projects into economic development strategies and marketing to existing and potential businesses. (See Principle 4 for more information about investment into existing infrastructure and brownfield redevelopment.)

- **Treat every visitor like a prospective business owner or resident.** Visitors to Sweet Home and Willamette National Forest are prospective local business owners and residents. Thus, the city should promote to all visitors the assets of the community and the opportunities of relocating. The city should also be prepared to facilitate their move with information and encouragement to come to Sweet Home. In its recent *Outdoor Recreation Economy* report, the Outdoor Industry Association acknowledged this impact and noted that rural communities are increasingly recognizing that “outdoor recreation and open spaces are key ingredients of healthy communities, contribute to a high quality of life and, most importantly, attract and sustain businesses and families.”<sup>13</sup> The city of Sweet Home should develop a new business guide to welcome and facilitate relocation.

## REGIONAL CONNECTIONS: Traverse City, Michigan

Traverse City, Michigan discovered the power of tourists. Not only did visitors spend money and boost the local economy, but a study revealed that most leads for new businesses and relocation of talent were the result of people who visited the region and decided that that they wanted to live there. The city launched an outreach and marketing campaign to capitalize on that trend and make it easier for visitors to fulfill the dream of living in Traverse City. For more information, see <http://tcchamber.org/economic-development/relocating-your-business/>.



<sup>13</sup> Outdoor Industry Association. *The Outdoor Recreation Economy*, 2012, p 13. [http://outdoorindustry.org/pdf/OIA\\_OutdoorRecEconomyReport2012.pdf](http://outdoorindustry.org/pdf/OIA_OutdoorRecEconomyReport2012.pdf).

## FOSTER REGIONAL CONNECTIONS AND MARKETING

Regional connections forged through vision, marketing, and branding should be the backbone of sustainable tourism development. Broader regional connections lead to stronger business attraction and growth as people recognize the benefits of a regional rather than a single destination.

### Recommendations

- **Develop a coordinated regional identity.** Sweet Home, in partnership with the USFS and USACE, should collaborate with the surrounding communities of Brownsville, Albany, and Lebanon to develop a coordinated regional partnership and identity. A regional approach to sustainable tourism can showcase the best of each town and provide complementary opportunities for recreation and cultural heritage tourism activities that extend visitor stays. In the short term, regional itineraries, walking and driving tours, and visitor maps should be developed to begin connecting and promoting the region as a single destination.
- **Expand opportunities related to key travel trends that benefit from a regional approach.** Examples include:
  - Staycations: As a rural destination close to populated areas, it is possible that residents in the region have not spent much time in Sweet Home. Matt Wixon, author of *The Great American Staycation*, defines a staycation as “a vacation in which the vacationer stays at home or near home while creating the environment of a traditional vacation.”<sup>14</sup> The trend of “staycations” and “one-tank destinations” provide Sweet Home with an opportunity to capitalize on a regional market. Campaigns often use themes such as “Be a Tourist in Your Own Town” and offer special events, tours, or activities for residents in the community, region, or state.

### STAYCATION CAMPAIGN:

#### Lansing, Michigan’s Be a Tourist in Your Own Town

One of the longest running “staycation” programs in the United States, Lansing’s “Be a Tourist in Your Own Town” takes place on a single summer day, attracting 12,000–15,000 people annually. A one-dollar passport grants free admission to more than 60 local attractions and businesses. People can also take advantage of discounted bus routes to most of the attractions. <http://www.lansing.org/events/batyot/> and [www.livability.com/best-places-blog/tourist-in-your-own-town-programs-create-city-ambassadors-build-community-pride/](http://www.livability.com/best-places-blog/tourist-in-your-own-town-programs-create-city-ambassadors-build-community-pride/).

<sup>14</sup> Matt Wixon. *The Great American Staycation: How to Make a Vacation at Home Fun for the Whole Family (and Your Wallet)*. Adams Media, 2009.



- Volunteer vacations: More travelers are giving back to destinations they visit by donating time, money, talent, and repeat business to protect and positively impact the culture and environment. Websites such as [www.voluntourism.org](http://www.voluntourism.org) help travelers find volunteer opportunities that they can combine with a unique vacation experience. The diverse ecology and abundant natural resources around the Willamette National Forest and USACE lakes provide ample opportunities to build volunteer vacation programs with public land managers, conservation organizations, and outdoor recreation groups to address some of their resource management needs, such as stream and lake cleanups, trail maintenance and construction, or invasive species removal. Partnerships with the USFS and USACE and the local parks may help identify potential projects that would be well suited for volunteerism.



## VOLUNTEER VACATION: Northern Forest Canoe Trail

The mission of the nonprofit Northern Forest Canoe River Trail (NFCT), created in 2000, is to connect people to the natural environment, human heritage, and contemporary communities along the 740-mile inland paddling trail, which traces historic travel routes across New York, Vermont, Québec, New Hampshire, and Maine. To meet the mission of stewardship and offer an opportunity to visitors who want to combine a little work with their vacation, NFCT created Waterway Work Trips. NFCT selects sites along the route that are in need of work and designs three-day trips that include trail maintenance along with paddling gear. Interns prep the site and are on hand to supervise participants' work. For more information, see [www.northernforestcanoetrail.org](http://www.northernforestcanoetrail.org).

- Baby Boomer Travel: Sweet Home has the Wiley Creek Senior Community development and other retirement communities in surrounding towns that may be looking for educational, social, recreational and heritage experiences designed for an older population. With 78 million baby boomers (defined as people born between 1946 and 1964) entering retirement in the coming years, this population segment is increasingly important to the travel industry. Studies show that today's retirees seek to travel and explore new destinations and that most



take at least two trips each year. As Sweet Home expands its sustainable tourism strategies, leaders should make sure to address the needs of this demographic by providing accessibility to downtown shops, restaurants, and amenities. Forging partnerships with historical and cultural heritage destinations in nearby Brownsville, on surrounding public lands, and within Sweet Home itself will help attract visitors of all ages.

#### **RESOURCE: USDA's Stronger Economies Together (SET)**

SET represents an exciting initiative launched in 2009 by USDA Rural Development in collaboration with the four Regional Rural Development Centers and their land-grant university partners. The purpose of SET is to strengthen the capacity of communities and counties in rural America to work together in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint that strategically builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of their region. For more information, see <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/CEDP-Regionalism-SET.html>.

## REGIONAL CONNECTIONS: Southwest Virginia

The Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Commission, established in 2008 by the Virginia General Assembly, took the lead in developing a creative economy in Southwest Virginia. In 2011, the Commission became the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation, a self-sustaining community-development nonprofit. With the support of the Friends of Southwest Virginia, businesses and individuals help mobilize artists, craftspeople, localities, nonprofit organizations, and entrepreneurs.

A multifaceted plan is used to identify the cultural and natural assets of the region and to coordinate initiatives, organizations, and venues that are engaged in cultural and natural heritage to ensure efficient operations for all. The effort also develops a comprehensive strategy and capital improvements plan to maximize the impact of state investments in the restructuring effort. Key initiatives include:

- Branding and marketing Southwest Virginia as a distinct culture and destination
- Developing and sustaining Heartwood: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Gateway
- Developing and maintaining the Southwest Virginia website, integrating with the websites of the Crooked Road and 'Round The Mountain, as the overall storyboard and trip planner for the region, its communities, and its assets
- Planning and implementing downtown revitalization throughout the region to instill a high quality of life within the communities and to promote them for a broad spectrum of economic development opportunities.

By capitalizing on the region's unique qualities, the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Commission has helped to build a comprehensive, long-term, sustainable economy. In addition to trails that capitalize on the unique cultural and natural assets, heritage organizations and other interested parties have worked together to promote entrepreneurial and employment opportunities. Partners include the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Virginia Tourism Corporation, and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Resources. Funding partners include the Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission and the Appalachian Regional Commission. See [www.myswva.org](http://www.myswva.org).

## DEVELOP BRAND AND MARKETING STRATEGIES

Branding and marketing are key strategies for successfully attracting new and diverse residents, businesses, and visitors. The city has worked to create a brand identity for Sweet Home that includes logos and the slogan “Oregon at its best” to embody the vision of Sweet Home. The Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce is the only local resource that works to advertise and market Sweet Home, its attractions, and businesses. Updating organization, marketing, and distribution can effectively support the development of the Sweet Home brand identity.

### Recommendations

- **Organize the implementation of the brand identity.** The city, in partnership with residents, local businesses, the USFS, and USACE, should develop a local implementation plan for the Sweet Home brand. A brand identity offers the best way to outwardly express the vision, character, and values of a community. A logo, advertising, websites, color palettes, and signage are just a few components of a brand that should be portrayed across all visual outlets within and beyond Sweet Home. All elements should be consistent, memorable, and representative of the community and its region. Sweet Home has created its “Oregon at its best” branding campaign, but there are inconsistencies (in how brand is portrayed differently on the websites of the city versus the chamber of commerce, for instance). The city and chamber should coordinate an effort to implement cohesive implementation of the brand with marketing toolkits that include color palettes, print and web versions of logos, and font styles so that promotional materials are consistent and Sweet Home’s brand identity is instantly recognizable.
- **Invest in the promotion and marketing of local events.** Events are great opportunities not only to reach new markets of visitors with unique opportunities, but also to track the effectiveness of marketing strategies by measuring attendance over time. The city, SHEDG, and the chamber of commerce should look for unique opportunities Sweet Home has to offer, such as its outdoor water polo tournament, the “Best of the West” triathlon, and the Foster Lake Mud Run, as test cases for expanding the reach of Sweet Home’s marketing capabilities.
- **Enhance the Sweet Home web presence for better integration of available information on how to access local amenities.** The chamber of commerce website provides the most comprehensive resource for up-to-date visitor information, but it has few photos or links that give visitors instant information about how to access amenities, things to visit, where to stay, and what other services are nearby. The site also lacks cross-promotion with other marketing websites. The chamber should create a portal on its website with weblinks to all Sweet Home attractions (such as ODOT’s <http://www.tripcheck.com/pages/sboverriver.asp> or Trails to Linn County,

<http://trailstolinn.com/scenic-byways>). The chamber also should work with the city and nonprofit groups put in place ongoing communication strategies to ensure information is accurate and that it remains up to date. Additionally, the chamber should work with Oregon travel websites to populate them with more accurate information on amenities in Sweet Home. Travel Oregon's website, which offers a section on Willamette Valley, is an example of a major outlet (<http://www.traveloregon.com>) where Sweet Home currently has no presence. The city also should include on its website a "visitor information" tab or a more prominent space for the chamber of commerce. These are short-term steps that can be taken to enhance the Sweet Home's presence on the Web.

- **Dedicate resources for investments in social media.** Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, the most popular social media outlets are becoming increasingly important vehicles for travelers looking for information about their destinations. According to a 2012 research study, approximately one-fifth of leisure travelers worldwide turn to social media platforms for tips and ideas about hotels (23 percent), vacation activities (22 percent), attractions (21 [percent]), and restaurants (17 percent).<sup>15</sup> This study also revealed that Facebook was the social media platform used most by travelers. There is an art and science to creatively and effectively using social media to advance a brand, market businesses and attractions, and increase awareness of a destination. The chamber of commerce should consider investing in staff training in social media, hiring staff or interns dedicated to social media, and/or working with outside consultants who specialize in this area. The chamber should take advantage of social media and look for opportunities to support and engage local businesses and amenities through this outlet. (For tips to get started in social media, see Weblink International at <http://www.weblinkinternational.com/wace09/10-ways-chambers-can-use-social-media.pdf>.)

#### RESOURCE: Oregon Travel Philanthropy Fund Social Media & Marketing Toolkit

Travel Oregon developed the Oregon Travel Philanthropy Fund Social Media and Marketing Toolkit to help both businesses participating in the Fund and project beneficiaries easily share about the Fund and their involvement in it.

The toolkit is designed to engage the public and make each business or organization stand out. It includes a short, captivating video, an array of stunning images, and pre-crafted copy to help each business and organization maximize marketing and outreach on social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, as well as their own website. For more information, see

<http://industry.traveloregon.com/industry-resources/sustainable-tourism-development/oregon-travel-philanthropy-fund/oregon-travel-philanthropy-fund-toolkit/>.

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<sup>15</sup> Text100. *Digital Index: Travel & Tourism 2012*. <http://info.text100.com/travel-tourism-digital-index-2012/info.text100.com/travel-tourism-digital-index-2012.html> .

- **Consider creating an interactive web map.** An interactive map of Sweet Home could include all of the information to help visitors decide to spend time (and money) in the city. A map can include pictures; directions to amenities; information on stores, restaurants, lodging, and other services and amenities; markers for destinations; and information on local history and heritage. After the map is designed, it can be posted on the websites of the city of Sweet Home, local and regional chambers of commerce, travel sites, public lands, and other partners. This map should also be available via mobile web platforms and displayed at the visitor center.
- **Consider additional web-based resources.** Web and mobile trip-planning resources are popular among travelers. The chamber of commerce, in collaboration with economic development leadership should look for opportunities to create creative, accurate, and attractive visitor resources to better inform visitors of what Sweet Home has to offer and to help them plan their stay. Web-based resources could include:
  - Theme-based guides, focused specifically on hiking, local restaurants and food, timber heritage, etc. Visitors generally prefer theme-based guides to more general guides.
  - Mini-guides that offer quick trips and provide essential information on particular destinations. Mini-guides have fewer pages and smaller for easy travel. These can be created in sets available for download on the web.
  - E-Guides used as exclusive online information hubs and that provide updates via email news alerts.
  - Top-ten lists and “best of” roundups that provide shortcuts to the ultimate travel experiences.
- **Create “ask a local” features.** Engaging residents in promoting Sweet Home and the surrounding region offers an opportunity to create advocates for the community and the local tourism industry. Residents can be invited to share what they love about Sweet Home, Willamette National Forest, and the surrounding Willamette Valley. Their stories can be shared through written testimonies or video. As new stories are created, they can be promoted through social media and other venues with links directing readers to trip-planning information. As an example, the Lake Champlain’s National Scenic Byway website has a creative “Ask a Local” section that includes topics on hiking, biking, farms, wineries, winter sports, culture, architecture, and museums. Each “local favorite” feature discusses places to experience the activity and offers recommendations on how to have the best experience when visiting. (See the Lake Champlain Byway site at <http://www.lakechamplainbyway.com/>.)



## BRANDING & MARKETING: Killington, Vermont

Killington, Vermont, (population 811) has an asset-based economic development strategy. Recognizing its wealth in natural amenities and recreational opportunities, the town set out to bolster its tourism-based economy. In 2008, Killington established an Office of Economic Development and Tourism (EDT), funded by a one-percent tax on food, beverages, retail, and lodging. The goal of the EDT was to “sustain and enhance” tourism activities through events and marketing. In 2011, the town pursued an aggressive branding and marketing strategy to reflect their year-round “big-mountain fee” and a positive reputation for the town as a tourist destination.

The town formed new marketing partnerships with media outlets throughout New England and nationwide to widely promote events. These partnerships have helped the town to leverage marketing investments and expand its marketing reach to new audiences. Killington also began to invest more in online marketing, including websites and social media, because research shows that over 75 percent of travelers book at least one component of their travel online. In addition, online marketing allows ads to be tailored to the specific interests of a consumer, whether those are skiing, hiking, rafting, or something else entirely, which helps efforts to build a brand as a four-season destination. Finally, impressions from online marketing are both much easier to track, so EDT is able to see whether its marketing campaigns are having the desired effect more quickly and can redirect funds to the online marketing strategies that are proving the most effective. For more information, see <http://www.nado.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Asset-Based-Economic-Development-Part-2.pdf>.

- **Take advantage of resources available from Oregon Travel.** Oregon communities have the unique opportunity to access sophisticated resources and assistance provided by Travel Oregon, a semi-independent agency created by the state to enhance Oregonians’ quality of life by strengthening the economic impacts of the state’s 9.6-billion-dollar tourism industry. Sweet Home’s chamber of commerce, SHEDG, and other tourism and economic development partners look to match economic development priorities with potential grant and assistance programs provided by Travel Oregon. Travel Oregon has tools to assist with destination development, product development, education and training. These include:
  - Matching grants program: Oregon cities, counties, port districts, federally recognized tribes, and nonprofit entities involved with tourism promotion and development are eligible for grants from Travel Oregon’s matching grant program. Projects that contribute to the development and improvement of local economies and communities throughout Oregon by means of the enhancement, expansion, and

- promotion of the visitor industry are eligible to receive funding. For more information, see <http://industry.traveloregon.com/industry-resources/matching-grants-program/oregon-tourism-commission-matching-grants-program/>.
- Rural Tourism Studio Matching Grants Program: Graduating communities of the Rural Tourism Studio are eligible to apply for up to \$10,000 in matching grant funds. Applications may be submitted for up to two projects which must be supported by the local priorities identified in the Rural Tourism Studio program. For more information, see <http://industry.traveloregon.com/industry-resources/matching-grants-program/rural-tourism-studio-matching-grants-program/>.
  - Wine Country License Plate Grants Program: The revenues from the sale of the Wine Country license plate will be used to support culinary projects and tourism programs in Oregon. Rules and guidelines to implement this effort are being developed. The program is estimated to launch in late 2014 and open for applications in 2015. For more information and updates, see <http://industry.traveloregon.com/industry-resources/matching-grants-program/wine-license-plate-grant-program/>.
  - Oregon Travel Philanthropy Fund: The Oregon Travel Philanthropy Fund supports sustainable tourism development in Oregon by engaging businesses and travelers with projects that bolster the tourism economy, improve the natural environment, enrich the destination for future visitors, and support local culture. It is the first statewide program of its kind. The fund supports one project from each of Oregon's seven tourism regions. For more information see, <http://industry.traveloregon.com/news/archive/travel-oregon-gives-back-to-oregon-communities-with-its-innovative-travel-philanthropy-program/>.



LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE 4:  
SUPPORT EXISTING GATEWAY  
COMMUNITIES AND SUSTAIN  
THEIR UNIQUE CHARACTER





# SUPPORT EXISTING GATEWAY COMMUNITIES AND SUSTAIN THEIR UNIQUE CHARACTER

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## **KEY OBSERVATIONS: EXISTING COMMUNITY & CHARACTER**

- The Sweet Home's Main Street and surrounding downtown neighborhood parks, schools, churches, community centers, and other amenities have potential as walkable, attractive, and lively destinations.
- There is no open space requirement for development in Sweet Home. The city is currently drafting an open space plan.
- The city of Sweet Home has recently improved sidewalks as part of a \$300,000 grant.
- SHEDG provides funding assistance to support façade improvements of downtown businesses.
- Willamette National Forest, Green Peter and Foster Lakes, and the Quartzville Recreation Corridor preserve and protect biodiversity and ecosystems, as well a natural scenic views.
- Cascade Timber Company is the largest landowner in Linn County. The company manages the Hill Family timber property.

Reinvestment is an important component of livability. In gateway communities, reinvestment should be targeted to encourage more efficient use of existing infrastructure, protection of forests and open space, and neighborhood revitalization. Such investment expands transportation choices and access to amenities, preserves what makes the community unique, and ultimately improves quality of life for residents.

Set in the Pacific Northwest, Sweet Home features the iconic beauty of tall fir trees and rushing rivers and streams. The natural scenery defines Sweet Home and is highly valued by the community. Thus, development should reflect and complement the natural amenities and unique character of the place. In the 1990s, following the decline of the timber industry, Sweet Home used federal grant money and other funds to revitalize its downtown, encourage small businesses, and develop assisted living facilities. More recently, the city has worked to improve sidewalk conditions throughout the city, SHEDG has implemented a façade improvement program, and several organizations and partnerships have engaged in other community beautification projects along Main Street.

Continued investment in the existing community is important, particularly as it encourages variety in housing, transportation, employment, and recreation to meet livability goals. Priority recommendations for the protection and revitalization of the community and preservation of natural resource assets follow.



## PRIORITIZE INVESTMENT FOR REVITALIZATION OF MAIN STREET

Sweet Home has the fortune of having a downtown main street along a major transportation route, allowing for residents and visitors central access to services and retail amenities. However, as seen in Sweet Home, there are drawbacks to having a main thoroughfare through the downtown, particularly when transportation infrastructure favors vehicle traffic. The downtown often becomes a drive-through area rather than a destination for business, entertainment, and culture. To avoid this pitfall, Sweet Home should revisit its downtown revitalization efforts to find a balanced approach that will create a downtown with diverse business opportunities; entertainment for all ages; and a safe, walkable and bike-able corridor.

### Recommendations

- **Create a revitalization plan.** SHEDG, SHARE, and other organizations have in place initiatives to strengthen area businesses and revitalize Sweet Home's downtown core. The city should unite these independent efforts into one, comprehensive, vision-focused strategic revitalization plan. Creating a walkable downtown requires a comprehensive strategy that stems from a vision of how the community should look in the future. This requires defining the character of the place and its uniqueness and then identifying how to best protect these elements as the community grows. A plan should then be developed and implemented to make the vision a reality. A plan will include strategies for walkable streets and sidewalks, public transit in and around downtown destinations, structured parking, culture and entertainment outlets, increased safety and cleanliness, support for existing and new business in the downtown, and programming and marketing. One place to start is by following the twelve-step revitalization process developed by the Brookings Institution, which is outlined in *Turning Around Downtown: Twelve Steps to Revitalization*. See [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2005/3/downtownredevelopment%20leinberger/20050307\\_12steps.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2005/3/downtownredevelopment%20leinberger/20050307_12steps.pdf) for more information. (See Case Studies and Resources for more information on downtown revitalization.)
- **Work with surrounding communities on revitalization.** Brownsville, Oakridge, and other neighboring communities have had successful revitalization efforts. The city of Sweet Home should discuss revitalization efforts with these communities to learn about the lessons they have learned and discover opportunities to work together.
- **Inventory buildings.** As recommended by the 2010 Sweet Home Retail Market Analysis, the city should inventory all commercial and industry buildings in Sweet Home. This is the first step to understanding where to target investments and to forming partnership and awareness among business owners. An assessment may also help the city identify priority areas to make ready for new business and will help ensure that existing infrastructure is prioritized over new, greenfield development outside of the downtown business core. An assessment will also help the city identify key elements that define the unique community character and sense of place, which can be used to

inform revitalization plans, design guidelines, and marketing efforts.

Sweet Home also should systematically assess public buildings and landmarks to identify priority capital improvement projects that will enhance the community's overall appearance, as well as improve the function and use of the buildings and neighborhoods. A community's investments in public buildings and public space reflect the community's values.

- **Continue to pursue revitalization of brownfield properties and reuse of mill infrastructure.** Brownfields are potential areas for investment that can transform degraded sites into thriving new centers of commerce and industry; create jobs through cleanup and reuse; provide the means to leverage innovative partnerships among federal, state, and local governments and private-sector stakeholders such as developers; and secure opportunities to train residents for high-wage environmental careers. Sweet Home has already made the first steps towards improving the Western States property through the receipt of a \$350,000 EPA grant to complete an environmental site assessment. The Assessment Team recommends that Sweet Home continue to pursue brownfield cleanup and redevelopment and look for creative opportunities associated with these efforts to positively impact the local economy and quality of life through job creation, partnerships, and new businesses. For examples of successes from EPA see <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/success/index.htm>.

## BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT SUCCESS:

### Johnstown, Pennsylvania

Located in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, Dick's Automotive opened in 1949 and operated for 56 years. After it closed in 2005, the property sat empty and unused for two years. The Johnstown Redevelopment Authority used \$2,000 of a larger EPA Brownfields Assessment grant to assess contamination levels at the property. The assessment conducted in May 2006 found no contamination, which allowed redevelopment of the property to proceed.

The city and Johnstown Redevelopment Authority leveraged \$1.92 million from state and private sector sources to redevelop the property, which ultimately became a high-tech commercial business. The State of Pennsylvania provided \$720,000 for redevelopment while ITSI Bioscience Research, the property's new owner and occupant, invested \$1.2 million. The resulting biosciences research facility leveraged 27 jobs. As a result of the Brownfields Assessment Grant, the return on investment for this property is \$960 per \$1 of grant funds spent. For more information, see [http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/success/johnstown\\_pa\\_brag\\_automotive.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/success/johnstown_pa_brag_automotive.pdf).

## BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT SUCCESS:

### Five-Mile Creek Greenway in Jefferson County, Alabama

As far back as the late 1800s, Jefferson County, Alabama, became a hub of coal mining; coking (processing coal to form a condensed, nearly smoke-free fuel); and related industries that supported the region's burgeoning steel industry. In the decades after World War II, technological advances and a general decline in U.S. steel production decreased demand for these industries, however, and many of Jefferson County's coal-producing and industrial properties were abandoned. Recognizing that these idle properties—many of which were located along scenic Five-Mile Creek—could provide significant recreational value if restored, the Black Warrior-Cahaba Rivers Land Trust led a partnership emerged to transform this former industrial region into a 27-mile greenway with parks and paths.

To date, assessments funded by EPA grants have been conducted on nine properties within the project area, including a 300-acre property used heavily for coal mining, coking, and (later) strip mining. Though the site was reforested in the 1980s, approximately 20 of its original, turn-of-the-century coke ovens remain on the property and are in good condition. The partnership plans to preserve these ovens as reminders of the area's industrial history.

While it could take as long as 20 years for the entire Greenway Project's completion, many of the former industrial areas have already been cleaned up for recreational use. For more information, see

[http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/success/fultondale\\_al\\_BRAG.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/success/fultondale_al_BRAG.pdf).

- **Integrate the past into the present.** Small-town charm often comes from creative elements that incorporate the story of the town's past into today's streetscape. The city of Sweet Home, in partnership with the USFS, BLM, and USACE, should work with area historical societies to incorporate historic elements—such as old bricks, mill signs, and architectural features—into new structures, public art, pathways, and/or signs.

- **Celebrate heritage.** Sweet Home’s transition away from its timber and logging roots is quite recent, but it is important for Sweet Home to honor its heritage as a mill town. Preserving the mill buildings and/or components, restoring mill properties, creating a mill trail with interpretive signs, recording the experiences of workers, and launching an event to celebrate the city’s heritage are all important ways to honor and celebrate this important component of Sweet Home’s heritage. Similar endeavors can be made to celebrate Native American history, prehistoric features, the forest, and other heritage themes.



## TELLING THE STORY: Connellsville, Pennsylvania

Fayette County, Pennsylvania, formed a trust to develop history and art resources. As a result of this support, local artist Jody Best designed and fabricated this work of public art, titled "From Coke to Spokes." The art reflects Connellsville’s industrial and steel heritage and connects it to the county’s future of heritage tourism and the Great Allegheny Passage rail trail.

## DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION: Eloy, Arizona

Eloy, Arizona, is a former cotton-farming town located in Pinal County between Phoenix and Tucson. Eloy grew up around a rail-switching station in the early 1900s and came to anchor a vibrant cotton-producing region. With demand for cotton driven by World Wars I and II, Eloy prospered and incorporated in 1949. The city continued to experience steady growth, adjusting to post-war changes in the cotton market. In 2001, however, a major job loss resulted in a spike in unemployment, which had risen to 14.7 percent by 2010 (almost twice the national average). The devastating effect on the economy had impacts throughout the community, including vacant buildings surrounded by large, empty lots in Eloy's historic downtown.

Eloy's leaders have targeted the revitalization of its downtown as a way to attract new organizations and businesses to Eloy and to put Eloy in a position to benefit from the growth of the Sun Corridor over time. With the help of a downtown revitalization consultant, the city of Eloy developed a strategy to attract major organizations to the center of the community.

One of the first new organizations to approach the city looking for a downtown location was Sunrise Family Medicine, a nonprofit medical clinic. With a \$4.7 million Business and Industry Loan Guarantee from USDA, the Sunrise Family Medicine built a facility to house its clinic and pharmacy in downtown Eloy. Shortly thereafter, the Pinal Hispanic Council Behavioral Health Clinic located in a building adjacent to the Sunrise Family Medicine clinic. The Pinal Hispanic Council's clinic was also supported by USDA, from which it received a \$1,617,000 Business and Industry Loan with funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. In 2012, both clinics opened, attracting people from rural areas miles away from downtown Eloy.

The city's next downtown economic development goal was to provide greater support and resources to entrepreneurs in the area. The city perceived the lagging local economy, the significant fixed costs associated with starting a new business, and a lack of business training as obstacles to the successful entrance of new businesses. To help address these issues, the city partnered with the Holmes Family Trust and USDA to create a business incubator in the downtown area that would provide affordable office space for lease as well as a site for business training and counseling. The Holmes Family Trust owned of the downtown buildings and donated the old post-office building for redevelopment as a business incubator. In 2010, USDA provided a \$99,000 Rural Business Enterprise Grant to the city of Eloy to carry out the renovation; the Holmes Family Trust provided matching funds. The city hopes that the business incubator will provide entrepreneurs with the tools they need to be successful, ultimately providing the basis for local economic growth. For more information, see

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/SupportDocuments/rdAZCaseStudy.pdf>.



## ENGAGE BUSINESS OWNERS IN DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

The small businesses in Sweet Home's downtown corridor represent a front door to the community. It is important that local business owners better understand their contributions to the community character and how building codes, permitting, and safety standards help the city and its businesses thrive. Currently, several downtown buildings have absentee owners and are vacant and in disrepair. The poor appearance of some buildings has a negative impact on other businesses and on the overall economy of Sweet Home.

### Recommendations

- **Incentivize revitalization.** The city, chamber of commerce, SHEDG, SHARE, and other community partners should use both "carrots" and "sticks" to address problems with vacant buildings downtown and encourage revitalization. Options may include education of business and building owners, incentives for building improvements, and stronger enforcement of building codes and other regulations.

## FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: Evanston, Illinois

The city of Evanston, Illinois, has established a number of incentive programs to assist local existing businesses and welcome new businesses to the city. These include a façade improvement program that invites business owners to improve the appearance of the street-facing exteriors on their commercial buildings within a set standard of design to reflect community character. The Façade Improvement Program offers to fund up to 50 percent of a total qualifying project's cost to successful applicants. The first 35 linear feet of public right-of-way facing frontage (or less) is eligible for up to \$10,000 on a 50/50 cost-sharing basis. Each linear foot of frontage beyond 35 feet is eligible for an additional \$100 per foot. Improvements include awnings, canopies, doors, windows, fascia, historic restoration, lighting, metal work, tile, trim, painting, and decorative elements. See <http://www.evanstonedge.com/programs/>.

- **Assess the need for building code updates.** The city of Sweet Home should investigate the feasibility of updating the building ordinances and/or codes to employ stronger enforcement language and consequences. Special attention should be paid to enforceable standards that safeguard community character and design. Specifically, the 2013 Sweet Home Market Analysis recommends establishing a vacant building ordinance to ensure that vacant landlords provide appropriate maintenance and repair of their buildings. Additionally, the city may want to options to encourage mixed-use

development with first floor retail and second floor residential along the main street corridor to maximize building footprints and increase foot traffic in downtown.

### RESOURCE: Design Guidelines: Setting Design Expectations with Voluntary Programs

Communities can develop voluntary or mandatory design guidelines for business owners and developers to achieve complementary styles for new buildings. The Conservation Fund's *Better Models for Commercial Development* provides examples of towns that have successfully attracted prospective businesses and encouraged them to voluntarily design their buildings to respect and enhance the existing streetscape and downtown fabric. Design guides developed by rural areas and small towns include the *Pennsylvania Wilds Design Guide* and the Carroll County (Maryland) Design Expectations Manual. All are available online for free.

*Better Models for Commercial Development*: <http://www.conservationfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Better-Models-For-Commercial-Development-The-Conservation-Fund.pdf>.

*Pennsylvania Wilds Design Guidebook*: <http://www.pawildsresources.org/designguide>.

*Carroll County Design Expectations Manual*:

<http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/compplan/design/intro.pdf>.

- **Implement creative business engagement.** The city has made beautification investments in the downtown with pedestrian crossings and landscaping; an equal investment should be reflected in its downtown buildings. The city, SHEDG, and the chamber of commerce should continue to incentivize beautification and restoration projects among business owners in the downtown. In addition to the façade grant managed by SHEDG, incentives could include providing additional design assistance grants; facilitating fundraisers; organizing “blitz” events or volunteer-led community improvement projects to add public art, provide landscaping, or clean up walls; participating in design studio activities; or sponsoring design competitions.
- **Reach out to absentee building owners.** The city should engage in ongoing communication with absentee building owners to explain the investments being made in the downtown, reinforce awareness of building codes and enforcement, and provide information on opportunities to beautify the downtown. The city also should encourage all building and business owners to join in making Sweet Home a beautiful and thriving place. Owners could be tapped to sponsor window art displays, pop-up crafters, cooperative artisans, or small business incubation. The 2010 Sweet Home Market Analysis provides several additional recommendations for reach out to building owners.
- **Consider the Main Street Program.** In the long term, Sweet Home may want to pursue participation in the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street Program. Communities use the Main Street approach to revitalize and strengthen traditional commercial districts. In addition to the officially designated Main Street

program communities, there are many communities that have simply incorporated Main Street principles into their existing economic development, historic preservation, city management, or urban- and community-planning programs.

There are four main tenets adopted by the Main Street approach: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. The National Trust for Historic Preservation provides resources and examples to help communities use this approach to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort. For examples in Oregon, see the Oregon Mainstreet Annual Report at ([http://www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/SHPO/docs/2013\\_Main\\_Street\\_Annual\\_Report.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/SHPO/docs/2013_Main_Street_Annual_Report.pdf)). To learn more about the Main Street Program, see <http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street>, <http://www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/SHPO/pages/mainstreet.aspx>, or contact Oregon Main Street Coordinator Sheri Stuart at 503-986-0679 or [sheri.stuart@oregon.gov](mailto:sheri.stuart@oregon.gov).

## POP-UP INCUBATOR: Marion, Virginia

In 2012, Marion, Virginia, had a declining downtown in which 17 percent of the buildings lay vacant. The Marion Downtown Revitalization Association (MDRA) applied to the Virginia Main Street Program for an economic development grant to be used for business training for local entrepreneurs as part of its effort to attract new businesses and shops downtown. The Virginia Main Street Program awarded a \$15,000 grant to MDRA to fund a new “Pop Up Marion Small Business Boot Camp.” The 42 people at the program’s pilot workshop learned the fundamentals of operating a small business and engaged in sessions on planning for operations and cash flow, providing customer service, obtaining credit and marketing. By the end of the eight-session course, participants also had developed a business plan.

To support the transition from planning to reality, up to \$5,000 in startup grant funds are offered to help boot camp graduates offset rent or mortgage and utility expenses for six months. To qualify for the grant, applicants must complete the all course sessions, commit to being open extended hours, and meet with a business mentor regularly. Since the initial workshop, there have been four rounds of classes, totaling 103 participants and 31 graduates. As a result of the program, at least 13 new businesses have opened, providing 62 new jobs. Four buildings were sold, eight storefronts have been filled, and seven additional indirect new businesses have begun, with at least 15 additional new jobs. In all, the program has resulted in at least \$200,000 of private investment in Marion’s downtown district.

For more information, see [www.preservationnation.org/survival-toolkit](http://www.preservationnation.org/survival-toolkit).

## ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY IN REVITALIZATION OF DOWNTOWN

The leaders of Sweet Home have done an outstanding job of capitalizing on available resources and engaging in partnerships with surrounding public land managers. It is recommended that the city and its public land partners collaborate to lead the community through the revitalization process by building awareness of benefits, cultivating buy-in and new leaders, and developing ongoing opportunities.

### Recommendations

- **Look for overlapping opportunities in which investments will benefit visitors and residents.** Visitors may be looking for unique experiences, but there are amenities that both visitors and residents can appreciate, such as opportunities to shop for everyday groceries and basics, visit family restaurants, and enjoy local activities.
- **Make Main Street a destination for community events.** Events such as street cleanups, building painting or murals, art walks, street festivals, farmers' markets, and community gatherings and workshops give local residents and businesses a stake in the downtown and what happens to it. These programs and events also create a lively atmosphere that often instantly enhances pride in the community. Sweet Home's Christmas Card Event of over-sized cards placed around the city is an excellent example of focusing on the community and its assets.
- **Strengthen resident awareness of area attractions, including cultural, heritage, and historical amenities.** Some communities have special "tourist in your downtown" or hometown days in which they invite residents to visit local attractions. Not only do these events support local businesses, but they also may expose residents to new amenities and activities in the area, strengthen pride among community residents, and make residents better community advocates.
- **Develop "blitz" events that engage residents and spur visible change to the downtown streetscape.** An art blitz, for instance, could solicit local professional, amateur, and/or school-age artists to create public art on downtown walls and/or buildings in a one-day or weekend festival setting. Art sites could be selected through applications or identified by the community as priority cleanup sites. Musicians could provide entertainment along Main Street or another downtown area. The youngest residents could participate by creating chalk drawings on sidewalks or by painting on a roll of paper rolled down the closed-off street. (The city of Curitiba, Brazil, for instance, holds a weekly children's art program by unfurling a large paper roll down the pedestrian zone and providing paint and brushes for whomever would like to



Community Arts Blitz Build for Habitat for Humanity

© Des Moines Arts Festival

participate). Similarly, a garden blitz could gather local gardeners and landscapers to build and plant downtown container gardens. These are low-cost events that rely on sponsorships, sweat equity, and contributions by residents who take pride in their community.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR STRATEGIC CONSERVATION PLANNING**

The beauty of the surrounding area is a defining element of Sweet Home. It is important that the city and its residents recognize the value of the landscape not only as an amenity for those who live in Sweet Home, but also as a contributor to the local economy. Protecting the landscape is an important component of a strategy that will successfully position Sweet Home as a sustainable tourism destination and build the local economy while protecting its most cherished assets.

The protection and conservation of green or natural space, recreational assets, and green infrastructure have a number of benefits, particularly for small cities like Sweet Home. Green infrastructure can be defined as a strategically planned and managed network of natural lands, working landscapes, and other open spaces. Green infrastructure planning conserves ecosystem functions and provides benefits to people, regardless of land ownership. For communities, the protection of green infrastructure results in less flood damage to property, as floodplains are managed by the network design. The planning and protection of green infrastructure also can support working lands and tourism by creating certainty that preserved spaces are not threatened by development and remain available for recreation; increase home values due to the enhanced natural surroundings that make communities more attractive to buyers; and a better quality of life by maintaining clean air and drinking water, scenic views, and places to enjoy outdoor recreation and physical activity.



The rural and forested nature of the region and the mix of public and private land ownership make it imperative for Sweet Home and Linn County to work together to plan for the conservation of open spaces and the protection of fragile environmental linkages. One of the most important ways to do this is by directing development toward the most appropriate areas, that is, areas that will have the least effect on ecosystem processes as a result of development. Careful planning that takes into account the natural needs of the ecosystem will help ensure a thriving sustainable tourism industry because this planning also ensures the ongoing health and viability of natural recreation areas for. Sweet Home, in partnership with Linn County and OCWCOG, should consider integrating a green infrastructure network plan into current open space planning to create a visual representation of the current open space connections—including those that cross county lines—and areas at risk of possible fragmentation. A coordinated green infrastructure network approach provides a strategic way to plan for future land use that balances conservation and development in a way that enhances quality of life for residents.

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AT A SITE SCALE:

### Green Infrastructure Design for the Historic Northwest Quadrant of Beaufort, South Carolina

The pristine beauty of the Beaufort River and marsh are essential to the city of Beaufort, South Carolina's economy and livelihood. In order to ensure that future generations are able to appreciate and experience Beaufort's natural beauty, city staff and elected leaders consider the principles of preservation, growth, and sustainability in each development and infrastructure decision. This commitment to preserving natural resources for future generations has led the city to embrace the concept of green infrastructure for stormwater management. The public works and planning departments implement appropriate, low-cost green infrastructure practices to filter and clean stormwater. To do so, the city created the Block by Block Green Infrastructure (3BGI) program. The Northwest Quadrant, a residential community, was targeted as a priority to integrate a site-scale green infrastructure planning approach that seeks to preserve the historic feel of the community, enhance local amenities, and provide sustainable stormwater management. The city adopted a Neighborhood Strategic Plan with goals and objectives that encourage the use of rain barrels among residents and businesses, support community gardens, and prioritize the identification of future community pocket parks.

For more information, see

[http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/upload/Beaufort\\_Conceptual\\_Design\\_Report.pdf](http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/upload/Beaufort_Conceptual_Design_Report.pdf).

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AT A LANDSCAPE SCALE:

### Implementing Green Infrastructure Planning in Eugene, Oregon

The Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) is the largest customer-owned utility in Oregon. EWEB currently provides drinking water to more than 50,000 customers and provides electricity to nearly 87,000 consumers in Eugene and nearby areas. In 1927, EWEB shifted its drinking water source from the Willamette River to the McKenzie River, which has long been known for its excellent water quality. EWEB continues to expand its already broad set of source protection programs—from a demonstration farm and forest to acquisitions and easements—to ensure the river’s ongoing high quality.

A recent land-use and development trend analysis identified a continuing trend of residential development along the McKenzie River. The resulting increase in impervious surface, the removal of riparian vegetation, an increase in yard chemicals, and flooding or leaking of septic systems are among the issues that can negatively impact water quality. Although Lane County implemented a 50-foot riparian setback requirement in 1992, there are multiple examples of conditional use permits that have allowed development within 50 feet of the river. Additionally, development has included clearing native vegetation to enhance river views and extend the lawn to the river’s edge. Although one individual will not likely affect the watershed, the collective actions of hundreds of landowners can have detrimental consequences to downstream water quality.

Lane County officials attempted to implement a new riparian setback ordinance of 200 feet but had to drop the effort due to significant resistance from local residents. When this failed the EWEB source water program decided to pursue a voluntary, incentive-based approach that would reward landowners for good stewardship of their land and for adopting management practices that benefit water quality, flood protection, and fish and wildlife habitat. In the current political and economic climate, an incentive-based approach appeared to be more feasible and social acceptable. For more information, see the World Resource Institute’s Report *Natural Infrastructure: Investing in Forested Landscapes for Source Water Protection in the United States*.



**LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE 5:**  
**COORDINATE POLICIES &  
LEVERAGE INVESTMENTS WITHIN  
THE COMMUNITY & BETWEEN THE  
GATEWAY COMMUNITY & PUBLIC  
LANDS**



# COORDINATE POLICIES & LEVERAGE INVESTMENTS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY & BETWEEN THE GATEWAY COMMUNITY & PUBLIC LANDS

## KEY OBSERVATIONS: LEVERAGING INVESTMENTS

- Sweet Home has leveraged millions of dollars in resources for the betterment of the community, including grant funding from the FHWA's Federal Lands Access Program and EPA's Brownfield Assessment Program.
- The Sweet Home All-Lands Collaborative is a prime example of city/public land partnership that is striving for natural resource protection and economic resiliency.
- Linn County Parks and Recreation Department manages and maintains most of USACE's public-use land around Foster Lake and Green Peter Lake and serves as the USFS concessionaire who runs USFS Willamette District campgrounds.
- City, county, and federal land managers share and leverage public safety resources to respond to fire, criminal activity, and other emergencies.
- Sweet Home has partnered with University of Oregon's Resource Assistance for Rural Environments program to secure the service of an AmeriCorps volunteer to assist with grant writing, planning and policy, and partnership building in and around Sweet Home.

Communities that demonstrate vision, a sense of purpose in action, and strong diverse partnerships are more likely to receive public and private funding to take on new projects. In a competitive market, corporations, foundations, and even government agencies want to invest in ideas and initiatives with the possibility of strong returns. Through demonstrated partnerships with its nearby federal land managers, participation in the efforts of SHALC, the technical assistance of RTCA and the FHWA Federal Lands Livability Initiative, and the significant action to-date towards building economic development and improving quality of life, Sweet Home has demonstrated its commitment to livability and local economic success. Sweet Home is now poised to share its story and its proven track record with new potential funders and to leverage new partnerships and resources to continue its upward trajectory.

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities provides key information on opportunities for funding and technical assistance from the three partner federal agencies (HDU, DOT, and EPA). Among its resources is a guide *Federal Resources for Sustainable Rural Communities that* demonstrates how rural communities across the country have put its funding into action. Each

agency offers different ways of approaching infrastructure planning and construction, economic development, pollution cleanup, and other issues that interfere with creating a livable community. Coordinating and leveraging funding and assistance resources can help communities advance their overall vision and goals. Although the programs listed may change, the guide provides a valuable menu of options that rural communities and small towns can consider when planning and implementing projects. To access the guide, visit [www.epa.gov/dced/pdf/federal\\_resources\\_rural.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/dced/pdf/federal_resources_rural.pdf).

This section provides priority recommendations for coordination and leveraging of investments at the local, state, regional, and federal levels.

## LEVERAGE CURRENT INVESTMENT TO ACHIEVE ENHANCED LIVABILITY

The city of Sweet Home and its partners should be very proud of the work they have done to better their community. Successful partnerships include:

- A \$360,000 grant from ODOT to the city of Sweet Home for sidewalk repairs
- A \$350,000 grant from EPA for a Brownfield Assessment of the Western States Property
- Technical assistance provided by Oregon Solutions, the Federal Land Livability Initiative, and NPS's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA)
- Multi-constituency community organizations exemplifying partnership among federal land managers, civic leaders, and community stakeholders (such as the Sweet Home All-Lands Collaborative, Sweet Home Economic Development Group, and Sweet Home Active Revitalization Effort)
- Involvement in the Ford Family Foundation's Ford Community Fellow program, providing rural residents with grants to develop plans to implement their own community building efforts in coordination with the civic leaders where they live.
- Continued work between BLM, USFS, the state of Oregon and Linn County to preserve Cascadia Caves, one of the most significant cultural resources of the indigenous peoples of the Cascade Mountains and the Willamette Valley. Currently in private ownership, the coordinated effort of these entities is working to place these caves into public protection in perpetuity.

The city of Sweet Home and its current partners should use the momentum generated from these initiatives to leverage the investments and attract new partners. To do so, the city will need to create a clear vision for the future and establish priorities that are aligned with this vision.



## Recommendations

- **Engage the Corps Foundation.** It is recommended that Sweet Home approach the Corps Foundation (see below) to solicit assistance for priority projects that may be eligible for funding support. Sweet Home and local federal land managers should look for priority livability projects that benefit both the city of Sweet Home and USACE's Foster and Green Peter Lakes and will facilitate an enhanced partnership between USACE and the city.

### RESOURCE: The Corps Foundation

The Corps Foundation is committed to facilitating local involvement and encouraging grassroots participation in the stewardship of rivers and waterways managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Foundation also provides consulting and grant support for community groups to increase the flow of philanthropic dollars to their projects. See <http://www.corpsfoundation.org>.

- **Develop a strategic partnership with OCWCOG.** The Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) is the portal to state and federal resources for Sweet Home. Priority areas of service include community and economic development, government services and support, senior and disability services, technology services, and veteran services. The OCWCOG should be considered as a major partner in addressing Sweet Home's economic development priorities and may be a critical resource in building relationships with state and federal partners.
- **Consider crowdfunding.** Crowdfunding may be a way to raise funds for livability projects. In Sweet Home, crowdfunding might be used to support a project such as a new trail or community amphitheater.

As a community sees how its civic and governmental leadership leverages investments to improve the quality of life for residents, more citizens may seek opportunities to support the cause. Implementation of livability elements takes time and money, and crowdfunding is a way to involve the community without requiring a significant investment of time. Essentially, crowdfunding finances a project by expanding the definition of community and funding sources.

Kickstarter and IndieGoGo are a couple of the best known crowdfunding platforms, but entrepreneurs have developed similar websites devoted specifically to funding civic projects, including neighbor.ly (<http://neighbor.ly>), ioby (<http://ioby.org>), and Citizeninvestor (<http://citizinvestor.com/>). Crowdfunding platforms vary considerably: some solicit outright donations while others give donors key chains, tote bags, or some other token of appreciation for a gift. Still others offer limited or full equity investments.

Online crowdfunding campaigns typically raise small-scale amounts to complete an

artistic project, such as a music album or film. However, examples range in scope: Chickasha, Oklahoma, used Citizeninvestor to raise \$870,000 to renovate the Kids Place Playground at their Centennial Park. In Atlanta, the Chosewood Park Community Development Corporation is currently using IndieGoGo to raise \$2,800 for edible landscaping, the practical integration of food plants within an ornamental or decorative setting.

- **Engage key players at the state level and Congressional delegation.** It is important that Sweet Home continues to place itself on the radar of influential leaders of Oregon. Sweet Home should engage state elected officials and Congressional delegation in discussions regarding public safety, economic development, homelessness, and education—the most pressing priorities for improving livability in Sweet Home. Sweet Home should look for opportunities to discuss funding, coordination across agencies, and innovative demonstration projects.
- **Leverage private and corporate funding.** Sweet Home is fortunate to have several industries within the immediate area and many large corporations headquartered within the greater region. The city should take an inventory of businesses, nonprofits, community foundations, and philanthropic organizations to build a multilayered “quilt” of potential partners. Opportunities may lie with corporations looking to invest in surrounding towns, encourage environmental stewardship, or stimulate priority livability elements as part of their corporate mission or responsibility. Local, regional, and state foundations and philanthropic entities may also have funding priorities that align with the needs of the city and its surrounding region. The city also should share past successes with prospective partners to leverage funding dollars and partnerships with the USFS, BLM, and USACE and future opportunities and to further align vision and resources.

### **RESOURCE: Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation**

On January 24, 1950, the Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation, Inc. was incorporated under the provisions of the Minnesota Nonprofit Corporation Act. The Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation, Inc. is supported and governed by members of the Weyerhaeuser Family. The Foundation is not affiliated with the Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation. It supports activities in the regions in which the family's business interests originated: Idaho, Oregon, Washington, northern California, western Montana, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

As part of the initiative's mission to promote environmental sustainability and financial viability in forest communities, the Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation reviews proposals in the area of forest ecosystem services. The foundation encourages proposals that aim to include forest ecosystem costs and values in market-based pricing in order to improve ecosystem benefits or halt their degradation, thereby leading to greater forest and economic sustainability.

Projects of potential interest include the creation of local market-based jobs for in-forest activities (such as sustainable forest management, forest restoration, or sustainable silviculture); development of demand for certified wood and for products made with sustainably produced forest resources (e.g., wood, boughs, biomass, mushrooms); promoting sustainable forest management alternatives to conversion of private forested land to other uses; creating value in forests and forest communities through developing, producing, and marketing new forest products or forest ecosystem services; advancing community-wide long-term planning for monetizing the full range of forest values, including explicit valuation of and creation of markets for forest ecosystem services. For more information, see <http://www.wfamilyfoundation.org/index.html>.

## MAKE THE CASE FOR REGIONAL SUPPORT AND INVESTMENT

Regional approaches and partnerships are helpful for any community, but are particularly critical for small and/or rural communities like Sweet Home. Working together and following an “all boats rise” approach will enable the region to leverage resources and attract support. Such regional partnerships in no way negate Sweet Home-specific actions, but shared events and improved communication about resources and vision can expand opportunities for visitors and residents.

### Recommendations

- **Develop a regional vision for economic growth.** During the assessment, community leaders emphasized the desire to better align priorities at the county, region, and state levels. Sweet Home should continue working with Linn County and surrounding towns to develop a regional strategy for economic development. A vision and plan that are agreed upon by the county and towns will be more compelling for public and private funding agencies and partners than will an ad-hoc approach by one entity.
- **Look beyond the county to the surrounding region.** There may be valuable opportunities to partner with and learn from other communities, especially those along the Over the Rivers and Through the Woods Oregon Scenic Byway, Quartzville Back Country Byway and the McKenzie Pass-Santiam Pass National Scenic Byway. Ongoing training and communication with business owners, residents, and hospitality staff can ensure a network of common knowledge of the region's assets and attractions. Given the varying character of towns across the Willamette Valley, highlighting the many complementary activities and attractions can increase visitor satisfaction levels and have a greater overall economic impact for communities regionwide.
- **Work creatively with Business Oregon to identify regional economic development strategies and partnership opportunities.** The Oregon State agency, Business Oregon, is an excellent resource for guidance on funding and information about building economic resiliency. The city of Sweet Home and Linn County should prioritize regional approaches to economic development to discuss with Business Oregon. A coordinated regional approach would provide a means for the Business Oregon to invest in economic revitalization and diversified markets across a large area, not just one community.

## SET AND PRIORITIZE GOALS WITH SURROUNDING PARTNERS

In addition to the federal agencies in the formal Partnership for Sustainable Communities (HUD, DOT, and EPA), many other state and federal agencies have initiatives that align with goals for improved community livability. In Sweet Home, coordination with the surrounding federal public land managers and state partners on livability-related initiatives should be a priority.

Coordination can focus on funding the implementation of community or public land projects that contribute to livability, case studies or reports that demonstrate innovative partnerships to improve quality of life for residents and visitors, and/or demonstration or pilot projects in the Sweet Home area that align with state or national initiatives related to livability, all of which heighten the visibility of Sweet Home's investments to leverage further support. The following recommendations focus on opportunities to coordinate with federal and state partners.

### Recommendations

- **Integrate Sweet Home's priorities into countywide planning initiatives and budgets.** Sweet Home should engage in a discussion with Linn County to inform and update county economic development strategies. A shared countywide strategy with an emphasis on the strengths of each community can be used as a platform to develop regional connections and investments that benefit all across the county. For example, as Brownsville continues to pursue historic preservation and revitalization, Lebanon builds its medical services industry, and Sweet Home capitalizes on its natural resources to become an outdoor recreation destination, these independent efforts complement one another and collectively improve quality of life for the residents of the greater region. They also help to leverage limited resources for a greater return on investment.
- **Align goals with surrounding public land managers.** Although public land managers have resource-focused missions, there are many opportunities that ensure that benefits to resources are supported by surrounding communities. The city of Sweet Home and surrounding public land managers should discuss priority goals for all facets of livability on and around public lands. Where possible, efforts should align so that efforts are not duplicated and resources are leveraged to benefit all.

### RESOURCE: USFS Community Forest Program

The Community Forest Program (CFP) is a grant program that authorizes the U.S. Forest Service to provide financial assistance to local governments, tribal governments, and qualified nonprofit entities to establish community forests that provide continuing and accessible community benefits. The CFP protects forests that are important for people and the places they call home. Community forests provide many benefits such as places to recreate and enjoy nature; protect habitat, water quality, and other environmental benefits; and can provide economic benefits through timber resources. For more information about the CFP, see <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/cfp.shtml>.



## ALIGNING PRIORITIES:

### Mt. Adams Resource Stewards, Washington

With the generous support of the National Forest Foundation, Mt. Adams Resource Stewards initiated in 2003 the development of a monitoring program for a stewardship contract on the Mt. Adams Ranger District of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Since then, the work of this organization has expanded to include a number of programs and activities related to the protection and support of local forests, watersheds, businesses, schools, and communities.

In 2009, Mt. Adams Resource Stewards was one of several founding members of the South Gifford Pinchot Collaborative on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest—a diverse group that includes community leaders, environmental interests, representatives from the timber industry, and American Indian tribal leaders who share a frustration with the inability of conventional processes, courts, and lawsuits to come up with a clear path forward for rural communities and the management of national forests. While the consensus-based process of collaboration is incredibly time intensive, the South Gifford Pinchot Collaborative is slowly gaining traction as participants find compromise to support land management activities that range from huckleberry field restoration to road removals and plantation thinning. For more information, see <http://www.mtadamsstewards.org/>.

## LEVERAGING FEDERAL RESOURCES:

### Enhancing Visitor Experiences through Multimodal Transportation Improvements in Grand Canyon National Park

To ensure positive experiences for the Grand Canyon National Park's five million annual visitors, the Federal Lands Highway Program has supported enhanced shuttle services within and outside the park, bike rental facilities, pedestrian facility upgrades, and other transportation improvements. In 2007, the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service conducted the South Rim Visitor Transportation Plan Environmental Assessment to address the park's pressing traffic, parking, and access issues, specifically those in Grand Canyon Village, where many visitors stay. Most of the components of the plan have been or are being implemented.

#### Projects results:

- A new shuttle route to transport visitors to the South Rim from the gateway community of Tusayan, seven miles outside the park;
- Expanded shuttle service from the visitor center to multiple South Rim destinations;
- Bike rental facilities at the Canyon View Information Plaza;
- Entrance station improvements to reduce long wait times entering the park;
- Improved shuttle stops, pedestrian improvements, roadway realignments, and new parking at the Canyon View Information Plaza;
- Intelligent Transportation Systems, which integrate communications and electronics technologies into transportation infrastructure to improve traveler information and enhance safety and mobility.

For more information, see [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/publications/sustainable\\_rural\\_communities/page08.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/publications/sustainable_rural_communities/page08.cfm).

- **Connect with area colleges.** The University of Oregon, Oregon State University, Portland State University, and other nearby colleges may have programs and courses on tourism, natural resource management, landscape architecture, or planning that could be resources for Sweet Home. As evidenced by the investment from Oregon State University and Oregon University as part of SHALC, universities may have additional resources that can support many facets of livability in the Sweet Home area. Colleges and universities often provide technical assistance and/or consulting services that help to leverage investments, provide new ideas and resources, and expand programming. These programs may be seeking projects, internships, and/or hands-on experiences for students. Relationships with universities also may entice students, faculty, and staff to visit or relocate to Sweet Home. Some university towns map nearby resources to connect students and faculty to recreational and natural resource opportunities. These partnership resources should be explored between Sweet Home, land management agencies, and nearby colleges and universities including Linn-Benton Community College and the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific-Northwest.

## RESOURCE: OSU Sustainable Rural Communities Initiative

OSU is creating a statewide interdisciplinary program involving faculty from five colleges (Liberal Arts, Science, Health and Human Sciences, Agricultural Sciences, and Forestry); the Extension Service; and new external university, government, and nonprofit partners to develop new educational opportunities, applied and basic research, and outreach addressing the needs and challenges of rural Oregon communities. The Sustainable Rural Communities (SRC) Initiative will involve place-based education, research, and outreach activities in which university faculty will work directly with communities and take OSU expertise directly to targeted rural Oregon communities.

The overall goal of the SRC Initiative is to improve environmental, economic, social, and cultural well-being in Oregon's rural communities by establishing the premier program for rural community sustainability in the Land Grant University system. This initiative would achieve this goal by pursuing four objectives:

1. Prepare a new generation of community leaders, professionals, and scholars with capacity to take on the kinds of complex, often messy situations that emerge as rural communities seek economic and social viability.
2. Generate new knowledge about the challenges facing rural communities and what policies work best in rural places for achieving sustainability.
3. Engage rural communities in learning about their strengths and opportunities and in developing place-specific strategies to support long-term development.
4. Build broader public understanding about the contributions of, and constraints faced by, rural communities and about the impacts of federal and state policy on rural communities.

The SRC Initiative will support three major activities:

1. Place-based research, teaching, and outreach community partnerships;
2. New academic programs: a rural concentration in the Masters of Public Policy degree and three options for SRC Certificates; and
3. New multidisciplinary research projects.

The Initiative will also develop externally-funded international experiences and exchanges; and new teaching, research and outreach collaborations with faculty at other Oregon University System institutions.

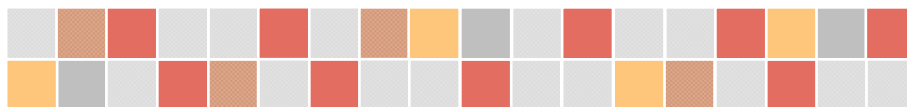
For more information, see <http://oregonstate.edu/leadership/strategic-plan/rural>.

## BUILD SOCIAL CAPACITY AND ENGAGEMENT OF CITIZENS

The city of Sweet Home has begun to capture the true intrinsic value of its neighboring public lands as recreational, economic, and quality-of-life assets. The commitment to these natural resources is demonstrated in the dedication of those serving as part of the Sweet Home All-Lands Collaborative. It is important that the city, chamber of commerce, USACE, USFS, and other public land managers and community stakeholders continue this spirit to promote connections to the natural landscape among the citizens of Sweet Home.

### Recommendations

- **Help build capacity of local organizations.** The South Santiam Watershed Council (SSWC) employs a bottom-up recovery approach that relies on grassroots involvement of local citizens for restoration and stewardship of the watershed's health. The SSWC has spurred public/private partnerships, and the local community is open and receptive of their work. It is important that the city of Sweet Home and the neighboring federal land partners explore opportunities to expand the SSWC's capacity and reach to help it build education and awareness for issues of mutual concern. The city, public land managers, and SSWC should review their goals to identify where they overlap, as well as areas where resources could be leveraged, such as building a local contracting network for watershed restoration projects that can be marketed as an economic development strategy or to foster economic development.
- **Define SHALC's role in the community and region.** SHALC's leadership on the planning and implementation of the Community Forest Corridor is a large project that has benefits on a regional level. It is important that SHALC think regionally when building leadership capacity and incorporating stakeholders. Additionally, SHALC must define its leadership role with a consistent messaging plan to build awareness of its efforts. This can be accomplished in many ways, but may be best served through informal discussions, such as by participating in meals at the senior center or roundtables at the community college.



LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE 6:  
VALUE COMMUNITIES,  
NEIGHBORHOODS, &  
LANDSCAPES & THE AREA'S  
NATURAL, CULTURAL  
HERITAGE, & RECREATIONAL  
ASSETS THAT FOSTER SOCIAL,  
ECONOMIC, & PUBLIC  
HEALTH





# VALUE COMMUNITIES, NEIGHBORHOODS, & LANDSCAPES & THE AREA'S NATURAL, CULTURAL HERITAGE, & RECREATIONAL ASSETS THAT FOSTER SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, & PUBLIC HEALTH

## KEY OBSERVATIONS: VALUING COMMUNITY ASSETS

- An estimated 10 percent of school-aged youth in the Sweet Home School District are homeless.
- Public safety issues on public lands include homelessness, weapons, and fires.
- There is estimated to be more than 10,000 veterans living in Linn County.
- United Way, a large social service provider in Sweet Home, helps support the Sweet Home Emergency Ministries, Boys & Girls Club, 211 helpline, medical clinics, and senior transportation.
- The Ford Family Foundation supports the building of leadership in Sweet Home.
- The Accessing College Today (ACT) Program at the Linn-Benton Community College has helped high school students graduate with an incentive to earn additional college credit by completing a fifth year of high school.
- The South Santiam Watershed Council is the only watershed council in Oregon with a youth education program, including a youth watershed council made up of students from Sweet Home junior and senior high schools.

The distinctive character and historic features of rural communities and small towns are often among their most important assets. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities concludes that “communities that conserve and build upon ... historic downtowns and main streets, important natural features and long-standing cultural and religious institutions will be better positioned to enhance quality of life for their residents.”<sup>16</sup> Multimodal transportation improvements, downtown economic development, and partnerships with surrounding public land managers create physical connections between downtown areas and recreational activities

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<sup>16</sup> Partnership for Sustainable Communities, *Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities*, 2011, pg. 7. [http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/Supporting\\_Sustainable\\_Rural\\_Communities\\_FINAL.PDF](http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/Supporting_Sustainable_Rural_Communities_FINAL.PDF).

for people of all ages and ability, making it easier for people to get where they need to go and get exercise while doing it! Studies show that getting people outside and connecting them with nature has physical, mental, and emotional health benefits. Stronger connections to the land also help to strengthen community pride and quality of life. By fostering connections to the land, history, and culture and by building a strong sense of community, the natural vistas, charming downtown, and local history and culture of Sweet Home will become mainstays of civic pride and stewardship for generations to come.

This section provides priority recommendations for engaging youth, cultivating volunteers and civic leaders, and sustaining a healthy lifestyle.

## **CULTIVATE STEWARDSHIP AND PRIDE IN YOUNGER GENERATIONS**

A survey conducted by the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development (a division of the National 4-H Council) showed that involving young people in decision making helps them build problem-solving skills and social competencies such as communication. Involving young people also provides a sense of identity and autonomy and an overall sense of purpose.

While youth learn valuable life skills, adults begin to view young people as valid contributors to the community. Adults also profit from a better understanding of the needs and concerns of young people. Youths often bring a fresh perspective that can help a community find new solutions to old problems. Advocates of youth/adult partnerships assert that programs often are more sustainable and effective when they actively engage young people. Young people can help bring clarity and focus to an organization's mission and forge stronger connections between the organization and local youth, which can benefit the organization over the long term. For more information, visit the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, <http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/>.

The health of the natural environment that surrounds Sweet Home and the protection of natural assets rely on the stewardship of the community. The assessment site visit included a discussion with Sweet Home's high school students during which many Sweet Home students expressed a love of the surrounding natural beauty and opportunities for outdoor recreation. This appreciation for the outdoors should be further cultivated to encourage commitment to stewardship of the landscape and natural resources.

### **Recommendations**

- **Explore opportunities for place-based learning.** Place-based learning is an effective strategy for involving and engaging schools, students, and community partners as active citizens of their community and stewards of public-land resources. Place-based learning integrates civic engagement and service learning to create an experience for students of all ages to explore and experience the unique context of the community in a broader framework. These programs tend to be project-based, are relevant to both

community and interdisciplinary education, and allow students to discover their own voices in the community. They rely on partnerships among public land managers, schools, and community members. For more resources visit the Center for Place-Based Learning and Community Engagement at [www.promiseofplace.org](http://www.promiseofplace.org) and for review of the planning manual, [www.promiseofplace.org/curriculum\\_and\\_planning/planning\\_tools](http://www.promiseofplace.org/curriculum_and_planning/planning_tools).

## PLACE-BASED EDUCATION CASE STUDY: Amherst, Massachusetts—A City of Stories

In Amherst, Massachusetts, eighty students conducted oral history interviews with local immigrants, including classmates, teachers, neighbors, and family members. Then they transformed their stories into artists' books with illustrated narratives and poems about the home countries of the immigrants, their journey to the United States, and their transition to American life. Students built architectural book structures (pop-out house books and accordion-road books) that joined together to create city blocks and filled the pages with pictures and words to create a city of stories.

This unique book arts project encourages middle school students to use personal connection and creative storytelling to explore the diversity of their local community. The project integrated language arts, social studies, visual arts, and community outreach. This project explores intersections between text and image on the page, between oral and written traditions of storytelling, between classroom and community, and between people of different cultural backgrounds. For more information, see <http://www.oneheartarts.com/cityofstories.htm>.

- **Engage partners to provide opportunities for youth.** There are many opportunities for young people in Sweet Home and Linn County to explore, learn, and gain valuable work-related skills. It is recommended that the town work with the schools, chamber of commerce, local businesses and industry, and surrounding public land managers to develop a list of existing internship opportunities. These partners also should work together to prepare a list of potential projects that could be part of a future internship program. Possibilities for internship opportunities may include:
  - Shadowing staff and/or providing project assistance to USACE to explore work in hydrology, alternative energy, water safety, and resource management at Green Peter and Foster lakes. The Portland District of USACE currently does not have an internship program, but the USACE Savannah District's student employment program could provide a potential model. For more information, see <http://www.sas.usace.army.mil/Careers/StudentEmploymentProgram.aspx>.

- Shadowing staff and/or providing project assistance to staff at Willamette National Forest, such as through the Willamette National Forest's Student Internship Program. See <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/willamette/about-forest/jobs>.
- Setting up additional AmeriCorps positions through the VISTA program, National Civilian Community Corps, or Conservation Corps, and/or working with the Student Conservation Association to assist with potential resource management or recreational development, such as trail building and maintenance, cabin and facility construction, etc. The Community Services Consortium (CSC) works in partnership with the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps, the Bureau of Land Management, and Workforce Investment Act funding to provide summer jobs for youth as part of Natural Resource Crews, to complete conservation projects in natural areas throughout Linn, Benton, and Lincoln counties. For more information, see [www.communityservices.us/education/natural-resource-youth-conservation-crews](http://www.communityservices.us/education/natural-resource-youth-conservation-crews).

### RESOURCES: Building a High Quality AmeriCorps Program

The AmeriCorps Program Start-up Guide is designed to assist non-profit organizations, institutions of higher education, state agencies, and local governments in creating and developing programs that engage with AmeriCorps to get things done. For more information, see [http://www.in.gov/ofbci/files/Program\\_Start-Up\\_Guide\(1\).pdf](http://www.in.gov/ofbci/files/Program_Start-Up_Guide(1).pdf).

- **Develop rewards program for local youth.** The city should work with schools, businesses, and community organizations to develop youth recognition awards and scholarships to recognize school-aged residents who make contributions to the community.
- **Continue to pursue natural-resource-focused youth events.** Sweet Home already provides some opportunities for outdoor and environmental education. Sweet Home students in science classes conduct local water testing, a youth watershed council learns about natural resource education, and sixth graders participate in outdoor school supported in part by the USFS. The city and public land managers should work with schools and local youth organizations to develop further opportunities to expose children to recreational and natural resource-based activities, such as kayak expeditions,

### RESOURCE: Discover the Forest

Discover the Forest is a public service campaign that aims to inspire tweens (aged 8-12) and their parents to reconnect with nature by experiencing it firsthand. The campaign brings to life the joy and excitement kids have when they discover the wonders of nature, helping to build interest in the environment and to foster a lifelong relationship with it. The Discover the Forest website features maps, games, photo galleries, and other activities aimed at helping parents and children get outdoors. For information, see the Discover the Forest website at <http://www.discovertheforest.org/> and the U.S. Department of the Interior's America's Great Outdoor's website at <http://www.doi.gov/americasgreatoutdoors/index.cfm>.

camping events, birding and wildlife viewing, etc. In addition to providing fun and healthy activities for young people in Sweet Home, these activities will instill connections to the land and strengthen future stewardship of the environment. USFS already provides many programs over the course of the year for engaging youth in the forest; the city and USFS should assess these programs for opportunities to expand or reach a larger audience of Sweet Home youth.

- **Engage youth in community planning efforts.** During the assessment visit to Sweet Home, the Assessment Team met with high school students who articulated many great ideas for how to improve their community. It is important that these ideas are captured and incorporated into the decision-making process for Sweet Home. The Assessment Team recommends that the city's planning board or city council and community organizations such as SHARE, SHEDG, and SHALC create youth ambassador positions that will allow students to provide their insights and perspectives about Sweet Home and their vision of its future. The city can also look for opportunities to create poster sessions, panel discussion, and other community engagement events for young people. The best way to involve youth is to make such events engaging and earnest but also fun. One idea is to use leadership videos that set a fun tone for a community discussion on leadership (such as the Drew Dudley video highlighted in the sidebar.)

#### RESOURCE: A Fun Way to Talk about Everyday Leadership

A community is not led only by the mayor and town staff, but also in the many people who put their shoulder to the wheel. It is important to recognize the contributions—big and small—of the many people who make their community a better place to live and work. Drew Dudley talks about this as “everyday leadership.” In his funny video, Drew shares what he calls a “lollipop moment” and speaks about how we all need to do a better job at acknowledging leadership in everyday life. See [http://www.ted.com/talks/drew\\_dudley\\_everyday\\_leadership](http://www.ted.com/talks/drew_dudley_everyday_leadership) for video.

- **Engage youth in revitalization efforts.** The city should work with local businesses and community organizations to develop opportunities for engaging youth in downtown revitalization efforts. Young people could work in coordination with SHEDG, SHARE, the Sweet Home Trails Group, the city's public works department, chamber of commerce, and others to participate in beautification projects, trail maintenance and construction, fundraising, and service learning.
- **Assess transportation needs for youth to access activities.** During the site visit, participants expressed a need for transportation to activities after school and on Fridays when school is not in session. With school out on Fridays, transportation is especially critical to provide access to community clubs and organizations that offer programs in natural resource learning, community engagement, and other invaluable learning experiences. The city and school district should assess how transportation limitations on



Fridays are limiting access to existing programs and resulting in missed opportunities for youth involvement in the future of their community.

- **Train future entrepreneurs.** The school district, county, and city should look for opportunities to train students as entrepreneurs. Lessons can be integrated into existing business classes at high school and/or community college levels. Investing in entrepreneurial training exposes young people to opportunities that would allow them to make a good living without leaving the community and demonstrates concrete ways for them to be part of positive changes taking place in their hometown.
- **Consider an “Opportunity Day.”** The city and school should consider holding an “Opportunity Day” that features internship openings, highlights the careers of local leaders, and offers field trips or site visits to nearby natural and cultural heritage sites.
- **Integrate existing youth programs into livability efforts.** Programs such as the Community Services Consortium's YouthBuild program, Natural Resource Youth Conservation Corps, school clubs, and scout groups all provide community service assistance that can benefit the livability goals of Sweet Home. The city and youth leaders should coordinate to develop a list of potential priority projects that are suitable for these youth programs. Projects could include prioritizing affordable housing and weatherization projects in Sweet Home with CSC's YouthBuild program. The city and its partners should also look for additional opportunities to expose youth to natural resources, healthy living, and leadership skill development.

## ENGAGING FUTURE ENTREPRENEURS CASE STUDY: Pennsylvania Wilds

In a recent study by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, young people in rural areas said they would stay in the state if starting a business was an opportunity open to them. In the 12-county Pennsylvania Wilds area, Ta Brant Enos, the small business ombudsman, responded by developing a video to communicate to high school students that they *can* create a business in the area. The video highlights small business owners sharing their success stories and lessons learned, providing inspiration for the younger generation. Participating entrepreneurs include three young snowboarding aficionados who started a snowboarding company, a former U.S. Navy air traffic controller who returned home to start her recreational outfitting business, two young artists who create beautiful letterpress prints for clients worldwide, and friends who used their love of bicycling and the outdoors to open their own cycling shop. Enos offers a one-hour entrepreneurial outreach program to area high school students. See <http://www.pawildsresources.org/youngentrepreneurs>.

### VETERAN ENGAGEMENT IN COMMUNITY SERVICE

Linn County has more than 10,000 veterans living in the county. Veterans often struggle to access needed medical and social services. Statistics suggest that veterans are at risk of not getting the help they need. For instance:

- Veterans are disproportionately represented among our country's homeless population.
- Unemployment rates are significantly higher for veterans than for their counterparts.
- Recent veterans are suffering from more mental health problems than are veterans of earlier conflicts.
- Reports of depression, suicide, substance abuse, and domestic violence among veterans continue to increase.
- There is a growing prevalence of veterans incarcerated for criminal activity stemming from service-related mental health and cognitive injuries.<sup>17</sup>

Linn County provides a veterans service office in Albany, with monthly office hours at the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Hall in Sweet Home. This office provides veterans with the resources to access state and federal benefits. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and its

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<sup>17</sup> Swords to Plowshares: Combat to Community website. Retrieved from <http://www.combattocommunity.org/>

partner federal agencies, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of the Interior, and Health and Human Service (HHS), are actively seeking ways to expand services, including partnerships with community-based organizations, to better serve all veterans, especially rural veterans and female veterans. Sweet Home, its community organizations, and other community service programs should look for ways to better serve veteran needs, investigate available state and federal resources, and target engagement of veterans in community service as a priority.

## Recommendations

- **Provide training to community organizations to engage veterans.** Military culture is significantly different than civilian culture, with different values, attitudes, goals, and terminology. Veteran engagement often means understanding the issues and problems typical among veterans, as well as the values, culture, and even the language of the military. Those who interact with veterans will communicate more effectively if they have military cultural competency. The National Center on Family Homelessness suggests the following options and resources:
  - Community-based organizations can hire qualified veterans and military-affiliated staff to guide and educate other staff about military culture.
  - Staff can be educated using a combination of free and fee-based training. For example, the Department of Defense website, [www.defensemilink.gov](http://www.defensemilink.gov), offers online military culture training and weblinks to other military-affiliated organizations.<sup>18</sup>
- **Look for specific opportunities to create veteran community organizations.** The Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS) is committed to engaging the talents of our veterans and military families. With service programs such as AmeriCorps and Senior Corps, CNCS supports and assists nonprofit or state entities to learn about competitive grants for setting up their own community service programs that engage veterans. The city of Sweet Home and community organizations, such as the Sweet Home Senior Center, should assess the feasibility of developing community service groups made up of veterans.

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<sup>18</sup> The National Center on Family Homelessness. Engaging Veterans and Families to Enhance Service Delivery: A Tool Kit for Community-Based Organizations. [www.nh.gov/servicelink/documents/EngagingVeteransandFamiliestoEnhanceServiceDelivery.pdf](http://www.nh.gov/servicelink/documents/EngagingVeteransandFamiliestoEnhanceServiceDelivery.pdf)

### RESOURCE: "Give an Hour"

"Give an Hour" is a nonprofit network of mental health professionals who volunteer to donate an hour of free mental health services each week for military personnel, their families, and the community. This network has incorporated Department of Defense military cultural competency training into its volunteer orientation. Mental health professionals who volunteer are encouraged to learn more about military culture through an online module and a handbook created by the National Center for PTSD. Give an Hour also offers a handbook created for military servicemen and their families about deployment; the handbook is an excellent resource for clinicians. For more information or to access these resources, see [www.giveanhour.org](http://www.giveanhour.org).

### RESOURCE: American Corporate Partners' Veteran Mentoring Program

American Corporate Partners' Veteran Mentoring Program connects Veteran Protégés with Corporate Mentors for a yearlong mentorship. Paired based on their career objectives and professional experience, Mentors and Protégés define the goals of their mentorship together. Mentors have a wide variety of professional expertise, including defense, education, finance, insurance, information technology, logistics, management, manufacturing, marketing and retail.

Over the course of the year, all matched pairs should have at least 12 significant discussions regarding the Protégé's career objectives. These discussions can focus on topics ranging from résumé building and interview skills to networking and small business development. Mentors may participate in all of the discussions personally or arrange for colleagues to meet with their Protégé. For more information, see [http://www.acp-usa.org/mentoring\\_program](http://www.acp-usa.org/mentoring_program).

## CULTIVATE VOLUNTEERS AND CIVIC LEADERS

With effective leveraging, Sweet Home's leaders have lit many sparks. Some great initiatives are already underway, and the continued support for leadership by the Ford Family Foundation suggests that many more are to come. Many community leaders with which the Livability Assessment Team spoke discussed the need to share leadership responsibilities more broadly and to cultivate new leaders and build new champions. Given that Sweet Home is a small city, it is critical to embrace partnerships and coordinate efforts and programs with other communities, individuals, and organizations. There is also a need to help community members within Sweet Home to recognize their role as stewards of the community and to encourage them to step forward. Creating new leaders often involves tapping into skills that a person may not recognize in him- or herself. It may also require fostering leadership skills among interested parties who have little leadership experience.

### Recommendations

- **Develop communication strategies to share success.** Community leaders should convene a forum to brief community members on the city's livability initiatives and invite wider participation. Underlying each meeting or communication outlet should be the following questions: What sectors of the community are missing? Who else should be part of this discussion? What is the best way to reach them?
- **Building a mentor network.** Community leaders should seek to mentor others to build leadership skills across the community. To this end, Brevard, North Carolina, created a Retiree Resource Network, a group of retired residents with private-sector experience who mentor local entrepreneurs, support new and existing businesses, and offer free consulting services. This initiative facilitates leadership, economic development, and promotes interaction between longtime residents and newcomers, enhancing quality of life for both.
- **Cultivate, nurture, and invest in local leaders.** The Ford Family Foundation has made investing in rural leadership a priority for its grants and supports fellows who engage in civic leadership in Sweet Home. The city should consider building on this program to institute its own leadership program. Community leadership programs are often facilitated by the chamber of commerce and supported by local businesses. The goal of these leadership programs is to develop local leaders and foster leadership skills and abilities among residents, with a particular focus on young people. Leadership Oregon may be a useful resource for cultivating local leaders. See <http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/LO/>.

### RESOURCE: Mobilizing the Community Skills of Local Residents

This 1997 workbook provides a good overview of how to identify the skills and knowledge of local residents and from there to connect them to wide-ranging community opportunities and initiatives. See <http://www.abcdinstitute.org/docs/CapacityInventories%281%29.pdf>.



- **Inventory community capacity and develop a volunteer database.** Sweet Home should consider conducting a community capacity inventory that identifies the knowledge and skills that exist within the community. This involves finding out the capacities of individual residents, as well as organizations. This will enable the community to tap into residents' skills as a "tool" to address problems, promote growth, and enhance the quality of local life. The inventory could lead to the creation of a volunteer database with the names, contact information, interests, and availability of residents who would like to volunteer in some capacity.
- **Recognize community volunteers.** The city and its partners should recognize and celebrate volunteers through acknowledgement on the web and/or at an annual ceremony. Volunteers could be given a certificate, pin, or badge as a visible reminder of their contributions. Ongoing "super-volunteers" could earn a plaque on a tree, a bench, or other community resource that further contributes to community well-being.
- **Facilitate the development of "friends groups".** USFS and USACE should consider expanding partnerships with the city of Sweet Home and committed stakeholders by formalizing a "Friends of Willamette Forest" or "Friends of Green Peter and Foster Lakes." Formal public engagement opportunities such as "friends of" groups can lead to larger public engagement and leveraged support for many projects and initiatives. The National Park Service has a long history of supporting "friends of" groups and has developed resources that are transferable to community organizations supporting USFS and USACE public lands in an effort to sustain continued volunteer support. See [http://www.nps.gov/partnership/friends\\_groups.htm](http://www.nps.gov/partnership/friends_groups.htm).

#### RESOURCE: National Forest Foundation (NFF) Friends of the Forest Program

To help build a growing constituency of people to support the National Forests, the NFF conducts public outreach, education, and volunteer activities. Their Friends of the Forest program helps people learn about the issues and values surrounding our National Forests through publications, a monthly electronic newsletter (tree-mail™), and hands-on stewardship events. For more information, see <http://www.nationalforests.org/>.

- **Make Sweet Home sweeter.** Sweet Home should consider using its lodging tax to invest back in the community. Most lodging taxes support promotion and marketing of tourism attractions, but some communities have realized that they need to go beyond marketing to physically protect their tourism assets or to cultivate new attractions. Savvy tourism and community leaders have worked together to ensure support for stewardship of their assets. For instance, Steamboat Springs, Colorado's Yampa Street revitalization committee solicits proposals from community partners for projects to be funded by lodging tax revenue, from acquiring vacant land for parks, creating trails to attract tourists, and downtown streetscape revitalization. Also Sweet Home can look to other

community partners that can be creatively linked to supporting tourism and livability. Examples include:

- “Give back” programs. . Tourism Cares for America is a volunteer program to help preserve, conserve and protect tourism related sites in America that need care and rejuvenation. Sweet Home should investigate the feasibility of becoming a Tourism Cares site to cultivate volunteerism and bring awareness to the benefits of tourism and livability. For more information, see <http://tourismcares.org/tourism-cares-america>.
- Redistribution of funds to one or more causes. Travel Oregon’s Travel Philanthropy program is the first statewide initiative that provides funds to support and enhance the natural and cultural assets statewide. Some corporations, such as Ben and Jerry’s Ice Cream and Patagonia Clothing, set aside a percentage of profits for good causes. Preservation Pilsner donates part of its profits to protect the natural areas of Central Indiana.
- Conservation stewardship. A few communities have set up voluntary initiatives to support conservation stewardship. The owner of a local sporting goods store in Crested Butte, Colorado, for instance, launched such an initiative because he wanted to conserve the area’s mountains and open spaces. His action created a lot of buzz—and customers! Today, more than sixty businesses—from restaurants, retail stores, and guiding companies to doctors, attorneys, an acupuncturist, realtors, newspapers, and even an animal hospital—now participate in Crested Butte’s 1% for Open Space Program, in which businesses add one percent to every customer’s bill to support conservation efforts. For more information, see [http://www.landscape.org/article/CO/1percent\\_for\\_open\\_space/1/](http://www.landscape.org/article/CO/1percent_for_open_space/1/).

### RESOURCE: Tourism Cares for America: A Resource for the Community and Young People

Tourism Cares for America is a volunteer program designed to help preserve, conserve, and protect tourism-related sites that need care and rejuvenation while simultaneously building the skills and experience of the workforce within the travel, tourism, and hospitality industries. Tourism Cares awards academic and professional development scholarships, coordinates a mentoring program that enables scholarship recipients to learn more about the industry and build their professional networks, and acts as a liaison between employers and students for internship opportunities. For more information, see [www.tourismcares.org](http://www.tourismcares.org).

## RESOURCE: Travel Oregon Gives Back

Travel Oregon, in partnership with Sustainable Travel International (STI), will give more than \$36,000 to projects throughout the state that improve the environment, support local culture, and enrich the destination for future visitors through the Oregon Travel Philanthropy Fund (OTPF), the first statewide program of its kind. The goal of the OTPF is to improve experiences for visitors and locals by connecting them to participating businesses that directly improve and enhance Oregon communities.

The fund supports one project from each of Oregon's seven tourism regions. Recipients of the 2012–2013 Oregon Travel Philanthropy Funds were the Deschutes Restoration Outreach Program, the Living Highways Project, Mosier Plateau Trail Project, Rogue River Corridor and Greenway, Southern Willamette Valley Beans and Grain Project, the Sustainable Seafood Initiative, and Wallowa County Agritourism Development.

The 2014–2015 OTPF recipients are the Bend Paddle Alliance, Camas County Mill Schoolhouse Project, The Fossil Educational Foundation, Hood River Area Trail Stewards, the Human Access Project, and The Nature Conservancy for its Table Rocks interpretive and Netarts Bay native oyster restoration plans. Funds will be disbursed to support these projects in February 2015 and 2016.

Travel Oregon will also award \$120,000 in matching grants to organizations throughout Oregon that contribute to the development and improvement of local communities throughout the state. These projects support Travel Oregon's mission of 'a better life for Oregonians through strong, sustainable local economies.

For more information, see <http://industry.traveloregon.com/news/archive/travel-oregon-gives-back-to-oregon-communities-with-its-innovative-travel-philanthropy-program/>.

## SUPPORTING SERVICES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH & AGING POPULATIONS

During the Livability Assessment, stakeholders identified several needs regarding the health and well-being of the community. Working in the timber industry has left many Sweet Home residents disabled and in need of medical services. The veteran population and a growing senior population also put demands on social and medical services. Additionally, homelessness and poverty among Sweet Home's youngest residents indicate a need for better outreach to youth via schools and other outlets. As people are a valuable asset for every community, the Assessment Team recommends that Sweet Home recognize changing demographics and provide services to meet the needs and demands of the community.

- **Support healthy living.** The city of Sweet Home and surrounding public land managers should support community health events and active living opportunities. Sweet Home should look to implement and expand health promotion, nutrition education, exercise, and outdoor recreation programs for citizens of all ages. Programs

and initiatives that can incorporate health and the public lands are even more beneficial, by exposing people to their natural surroundings.

- **Consider a healthy living campaign.** The city of Sweet Home should consider implementing a healthy living campaign to educate Sweet Home residents on the importance of taking responsibility for their healthcare and wellness. A communitywide campaign could help to increase physical activity as well as awareness of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle that includes exercise. Such campaigns are most successful when they (1) involve many community sectors; (2) include highly visible, broad-based strategies with multifaceted components that address social support, risk factor screening, and health education; and (3) address diet, smoking, and other disease risk factors. The Guide to Community Preventive Services is a free resource to help communities choose programs and policies to improve health and prevent disease, along with providing models for community-wide health campaigns. For more information, see <http://www.thecommunityguide.org>.

#### RESOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Healthy Communities Program

CDC's Healthy Communities Program works with local leaders and stakeholders to improve skills and bolster commitments for establishing, advancing, and maintaining effective strategies that reduce chronic disease and achieve health equity. Communities create momentum that assists people in making healthy choices where they live, learn, work, and play through sustainable changes that address the major risk factors—tobacco, physical inactivity, and unhealthy eating. Currently, 331 communities and 52 state and territorial health departments have been funded. For more information, see <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/healthycommunitiesprogram/>.

## COMMUNITY-WIDE HEALTH CAMPAIGN: Hoonah, Alaska

Under the guiding vision of a cross-sector partnership, the rural Alaskan community of Hoonah is working to address obesity by expanding access to places for physical activity and engaging the community in outreach activities. The small community of 850 full-time residents saw obesity rise to 18 percent among the student population. Moved by these statistics, a workgroup comprised of representatives from the school district, the Hoonah Indian Association, and local health clinic developed a program that would work to increase recreational activities, promote better nutrition in the school and communitywide, and increase public awareness of obesity-related issues. The group expanded outreach and formally became known as the Hoonah Fun and Fit Partnership, with members that include representatives from leaders, state and local government representatives, and nonprofit youth organizations, as well as parents and other concerned citizens.

The Hoonah Fun and Fit Partnership has implemented strategies that include:

- A community-wide campaign to promote physical activity;
- Enhanced access to places for physical activity;
- Social support interventions in community settings; and
- Enhanced school based physical education and nutrition promotion.

For more information, see <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/CG-in-Action/FunandFit-AK.pdf>.

- **Look for opportunities to attract and retain medical professionals.** The College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific-Northwest (COMP-NW) medical campus, which opened in Lebanon in 2011, offers a huge opportunity for the region to attract medical professionals to the area. The school hopes to graduate doctors who are dedicated to living and serving in rural communities. Osteopathic medical schools have a long tradition in rural communities, and physicians who are trained in osteopathic medicine are more likely to select family medicine and practice in rural areas.<sup>19</sup> In 2008, the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) provided the following recommendations for integrating graduate medical education into rural practice:

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<sup>19</sup> American Academy of Family Physicians. Rural Practice, Keeping Physicians In, 2002. <http://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/rural-practice-paper.html>



- Structure the content and context of postgraduate training to include the necessary knowledge and skills suitable for the needs of rural communities;
- The NRHA and AARP urge academic medical centers and clinical departments to financially support and fully integrate rural faculty who practice in rural and/or underserved communities. These faculty living and working in rural places are core to the mission of rural medical education and should take the leadership role in advancing training in these areas;
- Educational institutions should continue to find flexibility in the development and curricula of rural training programs that adapt to local resources;
- Rural medical hospitals, clinics, etc. should make sustained investments in health professional education. Rural practitioners should continue to support the training of students and residents in rural environments. Rural communities should support health professions education as an important driver of economic development and public health;
- The NRHA and AAFP advocate and support collaboration of rural medical faculty with family physicians and other healthcare professionals in rural practice through organizational staff support, intentional network development, funded innovation, advocacy and increased research in the area of rural training and retention in rural areas.<sup>20</sup>

The city of Sweet Home, Linn County, and OCWCOG should reach out to the school to discuss opportunities to engage students in the communities surrounding the medical campus.

- **Educate Sweet Home residents about medical career opportunities.** In addition to marketing health services to residents, Sweet Home should look for opportunities to expose students and working-age adults to the variety of options of engaging in a medical career with area health services at hospitals, clinics, schools, emergency medicine, and so forth. Sweet Home, Linn County, OCWCOG, COMP-NW, Linn-Benton Community College, and other area schools should consider holding a healthcare and medical career fair to highlight employment opportunities within the health industry.
- **Assess needs and gaps to accessing medical and social services.** In 2013, Linn County Department of Health Services and Samaritan Lebanon Community Hospital conducted a Community Health Assessment that provides an inclusive look at the health of Linn County residents, access to services, and trends (see, <http://www.samhealth.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/CommunitySupport/SLCHCHNA.pdf>)

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<sup>20</sup> National Rural Health Association and American Academy of Family Physicians. Beyond Quality to Excellence in Rural Medical Education, 2008. <http://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/rural-practice.html>

. Problems identified in this assessment include high smoking rates among adolescents and adults, high obesity rates among adults and children, high chronic disease rates, inability to access healthcare, high levels of substance abuse, inadequate policy and environmental factors to promote health, and inadequate partnerships and communication networks. The county has used this assessment to create a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) with goals and objectives to improve health and wellness for Linn County residents. It is recommended that the city of Sweet Home work with Linn County to assess specific priority areas that can address specific barriers to health and wellness in Sweet Home. Specific areas to address, as observed during the assessment site visit, may include:

- Improved transportation networks to medical and social services. Those without cars are able to take public transportation to medical facilities in nearby communities and as far as Portland; however, these trips can be full days or overnight trips due to appointment and transportation scheduling conflicts. Regional transportation entities must work to understand how to improve services and facilitate better access to such services.
- Education and buy-in among underserved and disenfranchised community members;
- An integrated services inventory of resources that provides information on assistance for mental, dental, and medical healthcare and associated outreach and education of availability to residents;
- A 24-hour health-care facility in Sweet Home, if feasible. An assessment of the feasibility of such a facility should be undertaken.

## ADDRESSING HEALTHCARE NEEDS: Clendenin, West Virginia

Nestled between the Elk River and Big Sandy Creek, the historic West Virginia town of Clendenin (pop. 1,216) fell into disrepair over the past century due to changes in the local resource-based economy centered on coal and timber. Understanding that the downtown was a key community asset, a group of concerned community members established 20545-A New Clendenin (referred to as 20545), a nonprofit organization dedicated to the revitalization of downtown Clendenin. As its first major project, 20545 decided to renovate the 1912 historic Clendenin School, a relatively large building that had been vacant for about 15 years and was adding to an image of blight in the town.

To assist with a master plan and a financing strategy, 20545 sought the involvement of a community revitalization consultant, Terrell Ellis. Ellis helped 20545 position the Clendenin School within the community economy by assessing the needs of the Clendenin population. She discovered three major trends in the community: a growing medical services industry, an aging population, and a lack of affordable housing. 20545 realized that Clendenin School's redevelopment was an opportunity to address several community needs while improving the image of downtown.

Meanwhile, Cabin Creek Health Care Systems, a major health care provider in the area, desperately needed a new facility to serve the Clendenin area. Cabin Creek recognized 20545's vision for the downtown area and agreed to partner with 20545 to renovate the Clendenin School building. Because Cabin Creek did not need the entire building, 20545 used the remaining space to address the need for affordable housing among the community's aging population. With the plan for Clendenin School in place, all that was needed was the financing. 20545 worked to leverage funds from several different federal agencies, as well as the proceeds from selling federal and state historic tax credits to generate more than \$5,000,000 to redevelop the Clendenin School.

The redevelopment of the Clendenin School, which was completed in 2011, includes 13,000 square feet of medical space for Cabin Creek, which is three times more space than its last facility and enabled the clinic to expand its services to include a pharmacy and dental clinic. For information on the financing strategy and continued economic development as a result of this project, see

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/SupportDocuments/rdWVCCaseStudy.pdf>.

## IMPROVING PUBLIC SAFETY

Green, open, and active spaces, such as parks, playgrounds, trails, and lakes, attract people to the outdoors and offer opportunities for physical activity and social interaction. Sweet Home has many amenities that can be used to get people outdoors and into the community. As improvements to sidewalks and bike lanes continue, so does the need for increased public safety by reducing traffic speeds and increasing education and awareness. Signs of blight or disrepair, inadequate lighting, and lack of safety features discourage the use of public space and increase the risk of criminal activity.

The Sweet Home police force includes just fourteen members and follows the community-oriented policing model. The fire department relies on up to fifty volunteers to serve the Sweet Home area in the case of emergencies. It is important that the city of Sweet Home, along with its emergency services and the safety officers representing the surrounding public lands, tackle short- and long-term improvements to public safety that will support livability and improved quality of life in the community.

### Recommendations

- **Address public safety issues on public lands.** As noted during the assessment, the major public safety issues on public lands are uncontrolled fires, motor vehicle accidents, littering, and long-term camping by homeless individuals. Wayfinding and safety-related signage, camper education, increased ranger or camp host presence, better lighting, and other public safety improvements could help to reduce public safety hazards. Local public-safety campaigns also should be implemented to inform residents and visitors of what to do and whom to contact to report problems, concerns, or emergencies on public lands.
- **Address lake safety education and water patrol needs.** Currently, Linn County only has one boat on patrol at Foster Lake, and there is no USACE staffing for safety at either Foster or Green Peter Lake. Sweet Home's Fire Department staff is able to assist in water accidents; however, due to the distance of emergency services from the public land resources, most serious water accidents result in recovery rather than rescue efforts.

According to the Center for Disease Control, over 3,400 people drown each year in the United States. Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental deaths for persons

## SAFETY EDUCATION & LOCAL BUSINESSES:

### Warren, Pennsylvania

Piper Lindell, the owner of Allegheny Outfitters in Warren, Pennsylvania, brought the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) to her area to provide her staff with wilderness training. She opened up the program to nearby public land partners, allowing public and private river experts to learn new skills and to sharpen existing ones. For more information about the NOLS program, see <http://www.nols.edu/>.

between 1 and 14 years of age and is the sixth leading cause for all ages. It is recommended that the city of Sweet Home partner with the local USACE and USFS districts to strengthen the engagement with USACE's National Water Safety Program, discuss needs to overcome training and enforcement, and assess opportunities to encourage safe use of recreational waters in the Sweet Home area. Each Corps Division nationwide has a representative who serves on the National Water Safety Products Advisory Committee. Kelly Thomas at the Dalles Dam, Portland District, is currently the local representative for Green Peter and Foster Lakes to assist with water safety needs. The National Water Safety Program provides many resources and guidebooks that can help residents and visitors of all ages learn water safety practices that ensure safety during recreational water activities. For more information, see <http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/contacts.htm>.

### RESOURCE: BoatUS Foundation Grassroots Grants Program

The BoatUS Foundation is looking for unique project ideas to reach recreational boaters with messages related to boat safety. The Foundation is especially interested in projects that result in behavior changes in the boating community and are not solely about passive exposure to safe and clean boating messages. Projects should be planned to get wide exposure in the local community, and be replicated by others. The maximum grant request allowed is \$10,000. For more information, see <http://www.boatus.org/grants/faq.asp>.

- **Consider diverse options for communicating emergencies to the public.** Television and radio have long been effective ways to communicate local emergencies. As technology has developed, new tools have emerged to reach the public in an emergency, especially those that may be recreating on public lands and unaware of potential safety issues. Sweet Home, in partnership with public land managers and all state and local public safety and emergency response agencies in the area, should consider the need for better emergency communications. Expanded communication relies on broadband and wireless internet to provide text alerts, mobile applications, social media and website information updates, and wireless hotspots on public lands to access Internet and data services. As such, decision makers should look at the feasibility for expanding broadband technologies to meet public safety needs.

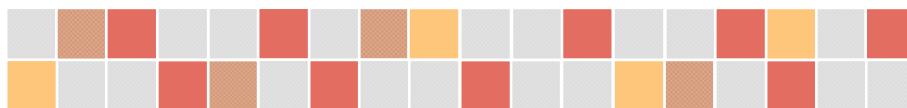


## RESOURCE: FirstNet in Oregon

When life-threatening emergencies happen in rural or wilderness areas, public safety often lacks the network connections that could enable expert medical support during transport to a hospital. FirstNet is intended to provide reliable, mobile coverage solutions in more remote locations. . FirstNet is designed to increase collaboration to help emergency responders save more lives, solve more crimes and keep communities safer. FirstNet will provide emergency responders with the first nationwide, high-speed network dedicated to public safety.

The state of Oregon received a \$2.5 million State and Local Implementation Grant Program (SLIGP) from the U.S. Department of Commerce to implement FirstNet. The state plans to utilize the existing Oregon Broadband Advisory Council (OBAC) and Oregon Public Safety Broadband Office as the primary vehicles for education and outreach to local jurisdictions. For more information, see <http://firstnetinoregon.org/firstnet/index.php>.

- **Consider leveraging local and state resources to increase law enforcement.** As Sweet Home residents and visitors increase use of the community's amenities—walking along sidewalks on Main Street, biking to the Foster Lake loop trail, enjoying community parks, etc.—it is important to ensure that public safety is a priority. To this end, the city of Sweet Home and public land managers should track traffic incidents, crimes, and public safety complaints in Sweet Home and on public lands and should routinely compile statistics into a report. This will help Sweet Home and its partners to make the case for increased investment in public safety and to identify where limited funds should be targeted to improve public safety, community health, and economic development.





## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & CASE STUDIES:

- LIVABILITY
- TRANSPORTATION
- HOUSING & LODGING
- ECONOMIC  
COMPETITIVENESS
- EXISTING COMMUNITY &  
CHARACTER
- LEVERAGING RESOURCES
- VALUING COMMUNITY  
ASSETS

# GENERAL LIVABILITY RESOURCES

## FUNDING RESOURCES

### **Federal Resources for Sustainable Rural Communities**

([http://www.epa.gov/dced/pdf/federal\\_resources\\_rural.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/dced/pdf/federal_resources_rural.pdf))

This guide to HUD, DOT, EPA, and USDA programs highlights federal resources for rural communities that can be used to promote economic competitiveness, protect healthy environments, and enhance quality of life.

### **National Funding Opportunities**

([www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/national\\_funding.htm](http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/national_funding.htm))

The EPA has developed a guide of national funding and state-specific resources to assist local and state governments, communities, and nongovernmental organization who are pursuing the varied aspects of smart growth and livability.

### **A Guide to Funding Resources**

(<http://ric.nal.usda.gov/guide-to-funding>)

USDA's National Agricultural Library provides an online guide to funding for rural communities. The guide provides information on the funding process, federal, foundation, and private funding databases, and additional guides and grant writing resources.

### **Rural Federal Funding Database**

(<http://ric.nal.usda.gov/Rural-Federal-Funding-Database>)

USDA's National Agricultural Library houses an online repository of all federal funding available to rural communities in the U.S. The database is searchable by keyword or department/agency.

### **The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA)**

(<https://www.cfda.gov>)

CFDA is an internet database containing information about all federal domestic programs including federal grants, loans, insurance, and training programs; information on eligibility, application procedures, selection criteria, and deadlines are also included.

### **Partnership for Sustainable Communities: Five Years of Learning from Communities and Coordinating Federal Investments**

([http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/partnership\\_accomplishments\\_report\\_2014\\_508\\_080414\\_low-res.pdf](http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/partnership_accomplishments_report_2014_508_080414_low-res.pdf))

This report shows how DOT, HUD, and EPA are cooperating, changing their policies, and removing barriers to help communities provide more housing choices, make transportation systems more efficient and reliable, and create vibrant neighborhoods that attract business development and jobs while protecting the environment.

### **Vibrant Rural Communities Case Studies Series**

([www.nado.org/vibrant-rural-communities-case-study-series](http://www.nado.org/vibrant-rural-communities-case-study-series))

The National Association of Development Organizations Research Foundation developed a case study series that highlights how rural regions and small towns across the country are growing local economies and creating stronger communities. The series demonstrates how small towns can leverage a wide range of tools and approaches to build on their assets, protect resources, and make investments that benefit residents and local businesses.

### **Livability Literature Review: A Synthesis of Current Practice**

([www.narc.org/wp-content/uploads/Livability-Report-FINAL.pdf](http://www.narc.org/wp-content/uploads/Livability-Report-FINAL.pdf))

This report prepared by the National Association of Regional Councils examines livability consensus concepts throughout communities and expands on reoccurring themes. The review will assist practitioners and policymakers understand how states and localities define, plan, and implement livability.

### **Building Livable Communities: Sustaining Prosperity, Improving Quality of Life, Building a Sense of Community**

(<http://www.smartgrowth.org/pdf/report2knew.pdf>)

This 2000 report describes the challenges of dealing with sprawl and celebrates a “wave of local innovation” as Americans work together to improve quality of life in their communities.

## ORGANIZATIONS & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

### **Partners for Livable Communities**

([www.livable.org](http://www.livable.org))

Partners for Livable Communities is a national nonprofit organization working to restore and renew the communities where we work and live. The organization helps solve community problems by providing information, leadership, and guidance that help communities help themselves.

### **Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC)**

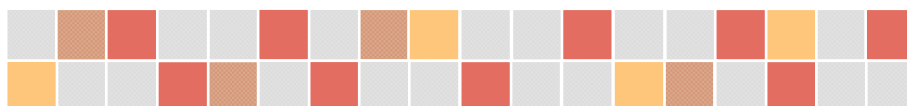
(<http://www.rcac.org>)

RCAC is a nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance; training and financing so rural communities achieve their goals and visions. RCAC serves 13 western states (including Oregon) to provide assistance for environmental infrastructure, affordable housing development, economic and leadership development and community development finance.

### **Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)**

(<http://www.lisc.org/>)

LISC connects local organizations and community leaders with resources to revitalize neighborhoods and improve quality of life. The LISC model assembles private and public resources and directs it to locally-defined priorities. The unique structure enables local organizations to access national resources and expertise and their funding partners to leverage their investment and achieve remarkable impacts.



# TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES & CASE STUDIES

## ACCESS

### **Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)**

(<http://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/flap/>)

The Federal Lands Access Program provides funds for work on public highways, roads, bridges, trails, and transit systems that are located on, are adjacent to, or provide access to federal lands. These facilities must be owned or maintained by a state, county, town, township, tribe, municipal, or local government. This program, newly created under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) law, emphasizes projects that provide access to high-use recreation sites or federal economic generators.

The Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD) works with the states under its jurisdiction to develop each state's Programming Decisions Committee (PDC). The PDC is responsible for prioritizing the slate of projects for each state's Access Program. The PDC establishes project selection criteria and administers calls for projects.

### **Federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**

([http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_alternatives/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/);  
[http://www.scdot.org/getting/community\\_BikePedFacilitySafety.aspx](http://www.scdot.org/getting/community_BikePedFacilitySafety.aspx))

The Transportation Alternatives Program combines three previously separate sources of transportation funding through the federal transportation legislation: Transportation Enhancements, the Recreational Trails Program, and Safe Routes to School. TAP is administered by the FHWA, but implemented by the states. While TAP staff selects programs annually, the calls for proposals vary by region. The majority of TAP funding has been focused on high-population areas, with a competitive selection process for the remaining rural areas. TAP typically requires a 20 percent local match. Local agencies should contact ODOT and FHWA program staff for more information about project criteria and focused priorities. ODOT has a variety of services and resources available to local, state and federal government partners and the business community. See, [http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Pages/Partner\\_Services.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Pages/Partner_Services.aspx).

### **Current Contact:**

Transportation Enhancement Program Manager  
Pat Rogers Fisher  
503-986-3528  
[Patricia.r.fisher@odot.state.or.us](mailto:Patricia.r.fisher@odot.state.or.us)



## Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grants

(<http://www.dot.gov/tiger>)

The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant program provides U.S. Department of Transportation investments in road, rail, transit, and port projects that promise to achieve critical national objectives. TIGER grants are highly competitive with tremendous applicant interest. Grants are targeted to innovative capital projects and planning projects that are multimodal, multijurisdictional, or otherwise challenging to fund through existing programs. The TIGER program employs a rigorous selection process to choose projects with exceptional benefits to make communities more livable and sustainable.

### CASE STUDY: Using TIGER Funding to Revitalize Small Town Main Streets in Colorado

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs received a TIGER II Planning Grant and a HUD Community Challenge Grant to help three small communities—Fowler, Monte Vista, and Rifle—pursue a unique joint planning initiative to revitalize their downtowns. The work will include creating construction-ready design drawings for the renovation of historic buildings and planning for development that will increase walkability, transportation choice, and energy efficiency.

## CONNECTIONS

### FHWA Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

([http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/overview/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/overview/))

The Recreational Trails Program is an assistance program of the FHWA. The RTP provides funds to states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for motorized and nonmotorized recreational trail uses. RTP funds are available to state, federal, and local government agencies or qualified private organizations. The minimum grant amount is \$10,000 with a maximum of \$100,000. Motorized projects are eligible for the maximum amount of motorized funding available.

Recreational Trails Grants (RTP) are national grants administered by OPRD for recreational trail-related projects, such as hiking, running, bicycling, off-road motorcycling, and all-terrain vehicle riding. Yearly grants are awarded based on funds voted on by the U.S. Congress. For more information, see <http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/GRANTS/Pages/trails.aspx>.

## **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA)**

([www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca))

The National Park Service's RTCA provides technical assistance to help citizens and community leaders plan and advance locally led conservation projects. Eligible applicants do not need to be located near or be associated with a national park.

## **National Trails Fund**

(<http://www.americanhiking.org/National-Trails-Fund/>)

American Hiking Society's National Trails Fund offers hiking trail improvement grants to active member organizations of its Hiking Alliance. Once a year, Alliance Members have the opportunity to apply for a grant (between \$500 and \$5,000) to improve hiking access or hiker safety on a particular trail.

## **International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA)**

(<https://www.imba.com>)

IMBA provides several grant and technical assistance programs to build trail and bike projects. See below:

*Small Grants Program:* The small grants program provides assistance to IMBA chapters and supporting organizations for trail and bike projects, see <https://www.imba.com/resources-grants/imba-small-grants-program>.

*Trail Solutions:* Trail Solutions offers trail design, construction, assessment, and education. See <https://www.imba.com/trail-solutions/service>.

*Bell Built Grants:* This grant program launched in early 2014 by Bell Helmets to provide up to \$100,000 in technical assistance grants to fund three mountain bike facility built by IMBA Trail Solutions. See <https://www.imba.com/grants/bell-built>.

## **Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Grant Programs**

(<http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/GRANTS/pages/index.aspx>)

Oregon State Parks has given grant money to nearly every city in Oregon to purchase land, and build or upgrade community parks. Their grant programs include:

- County Opportunity Grants: Awards grants to Oregon counties to buy land for campground, or to develop campgrounds.
- Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants: Through federal grant, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department helps governments acquire land and develop outdoor recreation facilities.
- Local Government Grants: Lottery-funded grants that go to local communities for developing public outdoor park and recreation areas and facilities.

- Recreational Trails Grants: Grants awarded to non-profits and governments for trail projects. This includes building new trails, improving existing trails, and helping with trail signs.
- All-Terrain Vehicle Grants: The ATV Grant Program provides funding statewide to federal, state, county, and non-profit organizations that manage lands for off-highway vehicle recreation.
- Heritage Program Grants: The Heritage Program Division offers grants for various types of historic preservation and heritage-related projects.

### **Oregon's Safe Routes to School**

(<http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/Pages/saferoutes.aspx> & <http://www.oregonsaferoutes.org/>)

ODOT's Safe Routes to School Program assists schools and communities in the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools while promoting a healthy lifestyle for children and their parents. Oregon has funded 112 local Safe Routes to School projects totaling more than \$13 million.

### **Oregon Cascades West Council of Government (OCWCOG)**

(<http://www.ocwcog.org/index.asp>)

OCWCOG provides both direct services and support to other entities to improve the transportation system within a region from the crest of the Cascade Range to the Pacific Ocean and includes all of Linn, Benton and Lincoln counties. OCWCOG also undertakes transportation studies and projects on behalf of its members.

The Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation (CWACT) is a committee of the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, is chartered by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) as a regional transportation advisory body. The CWACT provides a forum for local governments to communicate and collaborate on local, regional, and state transportation issues. Also, the CWACT is a vehicle for the OTC to communicate with the region and obtain input, advice, and recommendations to ODOT and the OTC. CWACT is also the OCWCOG transportation committee and advises the OCWCOG Board on transportation issues.

### **Oregon Scenic Byways Program**

(<http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/SCENICBYWAYS/Pages/index.aspx>)

The Oregon Scenic Byways Program was created as an opportunity for Oregon to take advantage of the national program defined in the ISTEA federal transportation act. The Program provides an "umbrella" to include various federal, state, city, and county defined scenic roads and highways.

The Oregon Scenic Byways Program crosses jurisdictional boundaries and establishes uniform criteria, consistent signage, and statewide promotion. This program also offers an opportunity to preserve and enhance Oregon's most scenic corridors while ensuring the transportation function is protected. Support and funding for Scenic Byways are now distributed through the ODOT "Enhance" process. For more information, see <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/STIP/Pages/WhatsChanged.aspx>.

### **National Scenic Byway Foundation** ([www.nsbfoundation.com](http://www.nsbfoundation.com))

The National Scenic Byway Foundation aids in the successful completion of projects that might not otherwise be accomplished by the Federal Highway Administration and/or other byway organizations. It can assist in branding, management, preservation, and enhancement of byways through cooperation between government, communities, and other stakeholders.

### **Complete Streets Local Policy Workbook** (<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/guides/complete-streets-local-policy-workbook/>)

This introductory guide serves as a starting point for transportation experts and interested local leaders to begin mapping out their own Complete Streets policies.

### **Oregon Sustainable Transportation Initiative (OSTI)** (<http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/OSTI/Pages/index.aspx>)

OSTI is an integrated statewide effort to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transportation while creating healthier, more livable communities and greater economic opportunity. The result is designed to help the state meet its 2050 goal of reducing GHG emissions by 75 percent below 1990 levels. Since the inception of OSTI in 2010, the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Department of Land Conservation and Development have worked to reduce transportation-related GHG emissions and provide rules, guidelines, and tools to support metropolitan areas and other parts of the state in similar planning efforts.

Scenario planning is the primary method recommended by the Oregon Legislature to reduce transportation-related GHG emissions. In scenario planning, multiple scenarios with differing land use and transportation assumptions are compared to a 'business as usual' future, and outcomes are measured. Through OSTI, processes have been developed and tools created to support scenario planning that moves Oregon closer to achieving its 2050 GHG reduction goal, while also considering economic and societal impacts to households and businesses. This website features information about OSTI scenario planning efforts as well as tools to support scenario planning and other work aimed at reducing transportation-related GHG emissions. See their strategy report for Complete Streets here, [http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP/docs/Toolkit/Strategy%20Reports/SR10\\_CompleteStreetsPolicy.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP/docs/Toolkit/Strategy%20Reports/SR10_CompleteStreetsPolicy.pdf).

## **Benefits of Complete Streets: Complete Streets Work in Rural Communities**

(<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/cs/factsheets/cs-rural.pdf>)

Smart Growth America and the National Complete Streets Coalition developed a fact sheet of the benefits of implementing the complete streets approach in rural areas and small towns.

## **The Best Complete Street Policies of 2012**

(<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/cs-2012-policy-analysis.pdf>)

The National Complete Streets Coalition examined and scored every policy passed in 2012 based on 10 elements of the policy language: Vision and intent; All users and modes; All projects and phases; Clear, accountable exceptions; Network; Jurisdiction; Design; Context sensitivity; Performance measures; and Implementation next steps. These elements refine a community's vision, provide clear direction and intent, complement community needs, and grant the flexibility needed to create an effective Complete Streets process and outcome.

## WAYFINDING

### **Wayshowing for Byways: A Reference Manual**

([www.bywaysresourcecenter.org/topics/visitor-experience/wayshowing](http://www.bywaysresourcecenter.org/topics/visitor-experience/wayshowing))

*Wayshowing for Byways* is a reference manual provided by the America's Byways Resource Center that offers suggestions about how to show travelers how to experience a route and for improving the navigational element of the visitor experience. A culmination of more than two years of research, development, and testing, this manual addresses the concerns of a different audience in each chapter.

## TRANSIT

### **Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**

([http://www.fta.dot.gov/13747\\_11003.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/13747_11003.html))

FTA provides financial assistance to states, municipalities, transit agencies, and other public bodies for the provision and delivery of public transportation services, capital investments in transit systems and facilities, as well for maintenance and repair of public transit systems. FTA supports the Livable Communities Initiative and is committed to improving livability in rural communities through the support of transportation agencies to make public transit investments. Their programs offer unique opportunities for rural communities.

### **Bus Livability Discretionary Grants**

([http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13094\\_3557.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13094_3557.html))

The Bus Livability Discretionary Grants program provides unallocated Section 5309 Bus and Bus Facilities money to projects that fulfill the six livability principles of the interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The goal of the program is to invest in projects that increase transportation options, provide access to jobs and affordable housing, encourage economic development, and improve accessibility to transportation for the public. The program funds capital expenses for a wide range of projects, such as intermodal facilities, sustainably oriented buses, bicycle infrastructure, and more.

### **Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities**

([http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13093\\_3556.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13093_3556.html))

This program provides formula funding to states for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. Funds are apportioned based on each state's share of population for these groups of people.

### **Rural Areas Formula Program**

([http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13093\\_3555.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13093_3555.html))

This program provides funding to States for the purpose of supporting public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000.

### **Job Access and Reverse Commute Program**

([http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13093\\_3550.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13093_3550.html))

The program is to address transportation challenges faced by welfare recipients and low-income persons seeking to obtain and maintain employment.

### **New Freedom Program**

([http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13093\\_3549.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13093_3549.html))

This program provides additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with disabilities seeking integration into the work force and society.

### **Rural Transit Assistance Program**

([www.webbuilder.nationalrtap.org](http://www.webbuilder.nationalrtap.org))

This program provides training, technical assistance, research, and related support services in rural areas.

### **Intercity Bus Program**

([http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation\\_law/12349\\_6519.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/12349_6519.html))

The Intercity Bus Program under FTA's nonurbanized area formula grant program supports the connection between nonurbanized areas and the larger regional or national system of intercity



bus service. The program provides critical transit access to residents in nonurbanized areas to employment, health, educational, and other important “human” services and opportunities.

### **Major Capital Investments (New Starts/Small Starts)**

([http://www.fta.dot.gov/12304\\_3559.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/12304_3559.html))

These discretionary programs are the federal government’s primary financial resources for supporting the planning, development, and construction of major transit capital projects.

## MULTIPLE MODES

### **FHWA Bicycle & Pedestrian Program**

([http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian))

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Program, part of the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Human Environment, promotes bicycle and pedestrian transportation use, safety, and accessibility. Definitions for priority bicycle facilities include:

Bicycle facilities: Defined as shared roadways, signed shared roadways, bike lanes, and shared-use paths. Providing adequate bike facilities that are clearly marked can mean easier, safer, and more frequent trips made by bicyclists.

Bike shops and rental outfitters: Which offer important amenities for traveling cyclists and residents. Bicycle retailers provide the goods and services associated with bicycling, act as information resources about bicycling for visitors and new riders, and can often attract and cultivate biking enthusiasts in communities.

Bike parking and bicycle racks: Which are often simple and inexpensive ways to make an area more accessible for bicyclists. Having these amenities allows bikers to explore downtowns, shop, eat, and feel safe knowing that there is a secure place to leave a bike.

Bike hostels: These can take many shapes and forms, from the formal to the informal, all providing the necessary amenities for long-distance travelers or the bicyclist on a budget.

### **National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project (NBPD)**

(<http://bikepeddocumentation.org/>)

The National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project (NBPD) is a collaboration between Alta Planning + Design and the Institute of Transportation Engineers’ Pedestrian and Bicycle Council to provide information on forecasting and counting, how counts influence bike and pedestrian programs, and adjustment factors to help extrapolate counts to annual figures.

### **ODOT’s Pedestrian & Bicycle Program**

(<http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/BIKEPED/Pages/index.aspx>)

The Oregon Pedestrian and Bicycle Program provides direction to ODOT in support of walking/ bicycling. It also provides support to local governments, governmental and non-governmental organizations and private citizens, in planning, designing and constructing pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects can be applied for under ODOT's Enhance program.

### **People For Bikes**

(<http://www.peopleforbikes.org/>)

Formerly the Bikes Belong Coalition, People for Bikes provides funding for important and influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the United States. These projects include bike paths and rail trails, as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives.

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center**

([http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/funding\\_government.cfm](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/planning/funding_government.cfm))

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center serves as a website with resources for planning and design, training, government funding, and other programs related to pedestrian and bicycle projects. See their case study compendium for examples of pedestrian and bicycle project implementation at

[http://katana.hsrb.unc.edu/cms/downloads/pbic\\_case\\_study\\_compendium.pdf](http://katana.hsrb.unc.edu/cms/downloads/pbic_case_study_compendium.pdf).

### **The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

(<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/index.html>)

The Land and Water Conservation Fund program provides matching grants to state and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities (as well as funding for shared federal land acquisition and conservation strategies).

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Direct Loans**

([http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-CF\\_Direct\\_Loans.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HAD-CF_Direct_Loans.html))

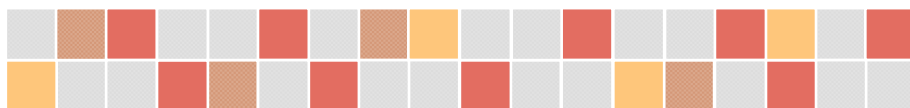
Rural communities can receive loan funds to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and public services. This can include costs to acquire land needed for a facility, pay necessary professional fees, and purchase equipment required for the operation of the facility.

### **Metropolitan and Rural Transportation Planning: Case Studies and Checklists for Regional Collaboration**

(<http://www.nado.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/rpompo.pdf>)

## OTHERS

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation and Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO), with funding support from FHWA, developed this guide to facilitate improved collaboration, communication, and partnerships among the nation's metropolitan planning organizations, rural transportation planning organizations, state departments of transportation, and other entities.



# HOUSING & LODGING RESOURCES & CASE STUDIES

US DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

## **Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants**

([http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/sustainable\\_housing\\_communities/sustainable\\_communities\\_regional\\_planning\\_grants](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/sustainable_communities_regional_planning_grants))

This program provides grants to help improve regional planning efforts that integrate housing and transportation decisions, and increase state, regional, and local capacity to incorporate livability, sustainability, and social equity values into land use plans and zoning.

## **Community Challenge Grants**

([http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/sustainable\\_housing\\_communities/HUD-DOT\\_Community\\_Challenge\\_Grants](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/HUD-DOT_Community_Challenge_Grants))

This program provides grants to enable communities in fostering reform and reducing barriers to achieving affordable, economically vital, and sustainable communities. Such efforts may include amending or replacing local master plans, zoning codes, and building codes. This program also supports the development of affordable housing through the development and adoption of inclusionary zoning ordinances and other activities such as acquisition of land for affordable housing projects.

## **Capacity Building for Sustainable Communities**

([http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/sustainable\\_housing\\_communities/capacity-building](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/capacity-building))

This program, jointly funded by HUD and EPA, will identify intermediaries to provide additional assistance to the recipients of the two grant programs above.

## **Housing Choice and Project-Based Voucher Programs**

(<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/hcv/about/index.cfm>)

Housing Choice and Project-Based Voucher Programs provide rental subsidy funding to local public housing agencies for units that are chosen by the tenant in the private market (housing choice vouchers) or for use in specific developments or units (project-based vouchers). Housing choice vouchers allow tenants more flexibility in deciding the location of their residence, often enabling residents to live closer to work, family, amenities, or services.

### **HOME Investment Partnership**

(<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/programs/home>)

The HOME Program provides formula funding directly to larger cities and counties, to consortia of local governments, and to state governments. The HOME program is designed to create affordable housing for low-income households and can take the form of direct assistance or loan guarantees. Funds can be used for most kinds of housing development, including acquisition and rehabilitation in the creation of low-income housing. Additionally, HOME program funds can be used for homebuyer assistance and for tenant-based rental assistance.

### **Green Refinance Program Plus**

([http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press\\_releases\\_media\\_advisories/2011/HUDNO.11-106](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2011/HUDNO.11-106))

Green Refinance Plus is an enhancement of the Fannie Mae/FHA Risk-Share program, which provides funding for the refinance, preservation, and energy-efficient retrofits of older affordable multifamily housing properties, including those that are currently in Fannie Mae's or FHA's portfolio. This program allows for lower debt service coverage and higher loan-to-value ratios, to generate extra loan proceeds for property rehab and energy-efficient retrofits.

### **Mortgage Insurance for Rental Housing**

(<http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/progdesc/renturbanhsg220.cfm>)

Several FHA mortgage insurance programs can be used to facilitate the new construction and substantial rehabilitation of multifamily rental projects. Some FHA programs can be used to refinance and acquire existing multifamily projects not requiring substantial rehabilitation.

## US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE RESOURCES

### **USDA's Housing and Community Assistance Programs**

([http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/LP\\_Subject\\_HousingAndCommunityAssistance.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/LP_Subject_HousingAndCommunityAssistance.html))

USDA provides loans and grants to rural communities and individuals for housing and community facilities including the purchase, repairs, energy efficiency, and rural rental housing.

## OREGON HOUSING RESOURCES

### **Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS)**

(<http://www.oregon.gov/OHCS/pages/index.aspx>)

OHCS provides financial and program support to create and preserve opportunities for quality, affordable housing and supportive services for moderate, low, and very-low income Oregonians. Agency programs include community capacity building, energy-saving and weatherization, foreclosure and homelessness prevention, grant, loans, and tax credits.

### **Manufactured Communities Resource Center (MCRC)**

([http://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/Pages/MDP\\_Manufactured\\_Dwelling\\_Park\\_Services\\_Oregon.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/Pages/MDP_Manufactured_Dwelling_Park_Services_Oregon.aspx))

The MCRC provides services and information to residents and landlords of manufactured dwelling parks to promote cooperative community relationships and positive alternatives to the court system. Their confidential, neutral, and voluntary services provide assistance in resolving disputes by promoting open communication and a positive environment.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### **Urban Land Institute Ten Principles for Developing Affordable Housing**

([http://www.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/TP\\_AffordableHousing.ashx\\_.pdf](http://www.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/TP_AffordableHousing.ashx_.pdf))

This publication summarizes the knowledge and experience of experts in the affordable housing industry and ways to encourage the development of more affordable housing choices as part of localities' efforts to achieve balanced, healthy, and sustainable communities.

### **Affordable Housing Design Advisor**

([www.designadvisor.org](http://www.designadvisor.org))

The Affordable Housing Design Advisor brings together experience and ideas from successful affordable housing projects all over the country and the people who developed, designed and built them. To accompany the Affordable Housing Design Advisor, a design-focused workbook was developed as a tool to help communities meet affordable housing design goals. For more information, see <http://huduser.org/Publications/PDF/finalall.pdf>.

### **National Association of Realtors' (NAR) Smart Growth Action Grants**

(<http://www.realtoractioncenter.com/for-associations/smartgrowth/smart-growth-action-grants.html>)

NAR's Smart Growth Action Grants support a wide range of land-use related activities with the primary goal of supporting more sustainable development through involvement of realtors.



### **Enterprise Affordable Housing Design Grant**

(<http://www.enterprisecommunity.com/solutions-and-innovation/design-leadership/design-grant#sthash.cHT9nR2j.dpuf>)

Enterprise’s Pre-Development Design Grant program provides funding for design exploration during the early stages of affordable housing development. Carrying the project from inception to the beginning of schematic design, these grants enable development teams to define project goals, identify challenges, and explore multiple design solutions.

### **NeighborWorks America**

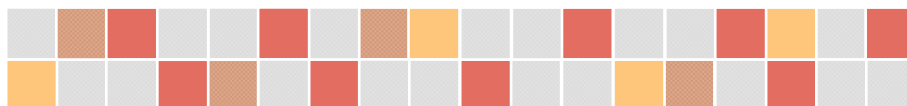
([www.nw.org](http://www.nw.org))

NeighborWorks America is one of the country’s leaders in affordable housing and community development. It works to create opportunities for lower-income people to live in affordable homes in safe, sustainable neighborhoods that are healthy places for families to grow.

### **Housing Assistance Council Affordable Green Building in Rural Communities**

(<http://www.ruralhome.org/storage/documents/greenbuildingreport.pdf>)

This exploratory report provides many examples of affordable green building in the rural context and more details of the challenges rural organizations may face incorporating green techniques in affordable housing projects.



# ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS RESOURCES & CASE STUDIES

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

### **USDA's Promoting Tourism in Rural America**

(<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/tourism.html>)

This revision of *Promoting Tourism in Rural America* covers the major issues in rural tourism including agritourism, cultural/heritage tourism, ecotourism, planning, marketing, economic impact and more.

### **National Trust for Historic Preservation Survival Toolkit**

(<http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/economics-of-revitalization/heritage-tourism/survival-toolkit/#.UwPtMsRDseg>)

The recent downturn in the economy has had a major impact on many sectors of the cultural and heritage tourism industry. The news over the past few years includes a number of losses—heritage sites and museums closing, state programs eliminated, tourism agency budgets slashed, and so forth. Despite the challenges, many communities have survived and thrived. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has collected success stories in this “Survival Toolkit” that provides a wide range of suggestions for continuing and expanding heritage tourism even during downturns in the economy.

### **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)**

(<http://arts.gov>)

The National Endowment for the Arts provides several grants to expand and enhance the role of the arts and cultural tourism products throughout the country. Potential funding opportunities for Sweet Home include:

***Challenge America Fast-Track Review Grants:*** The NEA provides up to \$10,000 in matching grants for projects in underserved communities for cultural districts, public art, and cultural tourism promotion. For more information, see <http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/challenge-america-fast-track>.

***Art Works:*** This program supports nonprofit arts activities in disciplines such as folk and traditional arts, museums, and presenters (including festivals). For more information, see <http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/art-works>.

***Our Town:*** This program supports creative place-making projects that contribute to the livability of communities and places the arts at the core.

***Citizens' Institute on Rural Design:*** The CIRD provides site and downtown design/planning workshops for small communities administered by the Project for Public Spaces. For more information, see [www.rural-design.org](http://www.rural-design.org). See their resource *Seven Secrets of Successful Communities* at <http://rural-design.org/blog/seven-secrets-successful-communities>

### **Preservation Directory Grants and Funding Sources**

(<http://www.preservationdirectory.com/PreservationGeneralResources/GrantsFundingSources.aspx>)

The Preservation Directory provides information about grants and fundraising for historic and cultural resource preservation.

### **Oregon Arts Commission Grants and Resources**

(<http://www.oregonartscommission.org/grants>)

Along with their work in arts advocacy and policy development, the Oregon Arts Commission funds arts programs and individual artistic innovation throughout Oregon. Grant programs serve as investments in the state's culture. See more at:

<http://www.oregonartscommission.org/grants#sthash.He59R9sY.dpuf>.

### **Rural Tourism Studio**

(<http://industry.traveloregon.com/industry-resources/matching-grants-program/rural-tourism-studio-matching-grants-program>)

Travel Oregon offers a Rural Tourism Studio, a robust training program designed to assist rural communities in sustainable tourism development. Travel Oregon hopes the program will increase high value, authentic experiences for travelers, thereby strengthening Oregon's position as a premiere North American tourism destination.

### **ArtPlace America**

([www.artplaceamerica.org](http://www.artplaceamerica.org))

A collaboration of 13 national and regional foundations and six of the nation's largest banks, ArtPlace America advances creative placemaking across the country, the practice of making arts and cultural projects central in place-based strategies to transform communities.

### **Outdoor Industry Association Outdoor Recreation Reports**

(<http://www.outdoorindustry.org/advocacy/recreation/resources.php>)

Sweet Home can track the trends and growth in various outdoor recreation activities—including Oregon-specific highlights—by accessing the annual studies from the Outdoor Industry Association including the Outdoor Recreation Economy Report and the Outdoor Participation Report.

## CASE STUDY: An Ethnographic Investigation of a Community's Use of Sport and Cultural Events

A recent study indicates the potential of event tourism for rural communities, acknowledging that event and festival production can be a highly effective means for publicizing a rural community's appealing features and attracting tourists who might otherwise never visit. The benefits of festivals extend well beyond generating tourism dollars and include strengthened social capital of rural communities and enriched quality of small-town life. Further, the study highlights how the social outcomes of sport events may be leveraged when the arts are used to complement sports and when commercial elements support social leverage. Such sports and arts performances can be blended to support both economic and social objectives. The report advises that communities considering event-based tourism carefully plan the economic and social objectives and ensure that they are in line with community capacity.

See Vassilios Ziakas, *An Event Portfolio in Rural Development: An Ethnographic Investigation of a Community's Use of Sport and Cultural Events*, (2007), [http://www.academia.edu/1833723/An\\_Event\\_Portfolio\\_in\\_Rural\\_Development\\_An\\_Ethnographic\\_Investigation\\_of\\_a\\_Communitys\\_Use\\_of\\_Sport\\_and\\_Cultural\\_Events](http://www.academia.edu/1833723/An_Event_Portfolio_in_Rural_Development_An_Ethnographic_Investigation_of_a_Communitys_Use_of_Sport_and_Cultural_Events).

## REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

### **University of Oregon Economic Development Center**

([http://www.eda.gov/tools/files/university-centers/48-U-of-Oregon\\_UC.pdf](http://www.eda.gov/tools/files/university-centers/48-U-of-Oregon_UC.pdf))

The University of Oregon Economic Development Center aims to link University of Oregon resources with communities for the purpose of enhancing regional sustainable economic development, especially in distressed communities throughout the state. The Center especially focuses on local job creation and entrepreneurship in the following areas: 1) agriculture and local food systems, 2) renewable and distributed energy systems, 3) sustainable infrastructure, and 4) value-added wood products.

### **Oregon Economic Development Association (OEDA)**

(<http://www.oeda.biz>)

OEDA is a statewide nonprofit organization working to support economic development professionals who are on Oregon's front line in diversifying and expanding Oregon's economy.

### **Know Your Region**

(<http://www.knowyourregion.org/about>)

Funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and managed by the NADO Research Foundation, this research project explores regional and local approaches to economic

innovation and competitiveness across the United States. The resources developed as part of the overall project curriculum, as well as the Know Your Region online clearinghouse, are intended to help local officials, economic development practitioners, community leaders, and citizens assess local and regional assets, needs, and visions in a global context, leading to long-term regional prosperity and sustainability.

### **EDA Tools for Economic Development**

(<http://www.eda.gov/tools/>)

The EDA provides resources for local economic development ranging from identifying levels of distress, developing a strategic plan, building a regional economic cluster, and identifying the competitive advantage.

### **CASE STUDY: Maryville, Tennessee Greenway Trail Attracts Major Corporations**

The neighboring cities of Maryville and Alcoa, Tennessee, are proud of their eight-mile greenway trail as a transportation system that provides residents with a healthy alternative for travel to work, school, recreation areas, shops, and restaurants. The trail has helped instill a strong sense of community pride; it also attracts an increasing number of visitors, new residents, and employers. One example is the relocation of Ruby Tuesday's Restaurant Support Center to a site adjacent to the trail. The company's Chairman and CEO Samuel E. Beall, III, stated "I was very impressed with the beauty of the park, which helps provide a sense of community to this area, as well as the many benefits it provides to our more than 300 employees." Blount Memorial Hospital, Alcoa, Inc., and other businesses have contributed more than \$300,000 of funds and easements to enhance the trail's core funding of more than \$1 million in federal Transportation Enhancements. In addition to the economic benefits, the schools use the trail system as part of their physical education programs and as a natural classroom for units on nature and ecology. More information is available from Tom Wietnauer, city of Maryville, at [tweitnau@ci.maryville.tn.us](mailto:tweitnau@ci.maryville.tn.us), or Chris Hamby, city of Alcoa, at [chamby@ci.alcoa.tn.us](mailto:chamby@ci.alcoa.tn.us).

### **CASE STUDY: Regional Visioning & Implementation: Bear Lake Valley Blueprint**

The Bear Lake Valley Blueprint in rural Utah and Idaho used scenario planning and cost/benefit analyses to clarify priorities and guide local decision making. The area's regional economy is based mainly on agriculture and tourism. The region focused on a vision for future growth in towns and villages to preserve working lands and open space. The regional plan calls for more compact and infill development, more walkable mixed-use neighborhoods, reduced water demand, and lower road construction costs. Overall, their scenario estimated \$83 million in lower local infrastructure costs. Regional leaders recognized that integrating regional infrastructure can better align resources and promote the region's competitive advantages. (NADO Research Foundation, "Regional Approaches to Sustainable Development." September 2011. [www.nado.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/NADO-Sustainable-Devt-2011.pdf](http://www.nado.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/NADO-Sustainable-Devt-2011.pdf))

## CASE STUDY: Clarion-Little Toby Creek Trail, Pennsylvania

This picturesque 18-mile trail meanders along the Wild and Scenic Clarion River and Little Toby Creek through Elk and Jefferson counties between the charming small towns of Ridgway and Brockway. Starting in 1992, it took nine years, \$1.8 million and thousands of volunteer hours to complete the trail. The trail is open year round for nonmotorized use (bicycling and walking), and in the winter becomes an excellent cross-country skiing trail.

According to local historian and former regional planner Bob Imhof the community pushed for the trail's development in order to provide a place for residents to ride bicycles, taking advantage of the existing moderate grade rail beds from the area's historic lumber heritage. Shortly after the trail's opening, residents in Ridgway were surprised by the arrival of bike tourists, who were seeking a new riding experience. An existing outfitter quickly added bicycles to its canoe livery and now the trail benefits both residents and visitors. According to the 2007 Clarion River Greenway Plan, local tourism sources report that visitors to the Clarion River corridor generate \$144 million in revenue annually, with hubs such as Ridgway critical to the local region. Much of the revenue is generated from outside of the corridor, and results in a net gain for the area.

More recently, Brockway was selected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as one of two communities in Pennsylvania to participate in a pilot healthy community program aimed at combating obesity. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has assisted by working to better integrate the trail into the community, and by helping to develop a walk-to-school program.

## NEW BUSINESS

### **USDA Rural Development**

([www.rurdev.usda.gov](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov))

USDA Rural Development supports rural regional economic prosperity by providing job training and business development opportunities for rural residents, including cooperative business development, community economic development and strategic community planning, and faith-based and self-help initiatives. If not done so already, Sweet Home should initiate a relationship with its USDA Rural Development Service Center to discuss opportunities for future partnerships. Contact the Oregon State USDA Rural Development office at 503-414-330.

### **USDA Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG)**

([http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP\\_RBOG.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_RBOG.html))

The primary objective of the RBOG program is to promote sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. Other



USDA grants are also available. More information is on the USDA website at [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/RD\\_Grants.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/RD_Grants.html)

### **USDA Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG)**

([http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/bcp\\_vapg.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/bcp_vapg.html))

The primary objective of the VAPG program is to help agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based value-added products. Generating new products, creating and expanding marketing opportunities, and increasing producer income are the end goals of this program.

### **American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA)**

(<http://www.amiba.net/>)

AMIBA is a charitable organization that helps communities start and sustain an Independent Business Alliance.

### **Economic Development Administration (EDA)**

([www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov))

U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) plays a critical role in fostering regional economic development efforts in communities across the nation.

**Economic Development Assistance Program:** <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=248297>

**Planning and Local Technical Assistance Program:** <http://www.grants.gov/view-opportunity.html?oppId=189193>

### **Small Business Administration (SBA) and SBA's Small Business Development Centers**

The U.S. Small Business Administration can help potential and existing small business owners start and grow their businesses and provides loans, grants, training, and other small-business resources. The Oregon branch can be reached at [www.sba.gov/or](http://www.sba.gov/or). The SBA's Small Business Development Centers further build, sustain, and grow small businesses as well as promote small business development and enhance local economies by creating businesses and fulfilling the SBA mission of creating jobs.

### **Made in Rural America Initiative**

In February 2014, President Obama directed his administration, working through the White House Rural Council, to lead a new "Made in Rural America" export and investment initiative. This initiative is charged with bringing together federal resources to help rural businesses and leaders take advantage of new investment opportunities and access new customers and

markets abroad. For more information, see <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/02/07/fact-sheet-opportunity-all-establishing-new-made-rural-america-export-an>.

### **Business Oregon**

(<http://www.oregon4biz.com/>)

Business Oregon works to create, retain, expand and attract businesses that provide sustainable, living-wage jobs for Oregonians through public-private partnerships, leveraged funding and support of economic opportunities for Oregon companies and entrepreneurs. Their funding programs include:

- Oregon Business Development Fund
- Oregon Capital Access Program
- Oregon Credit Enhancement Fund
- Oregon Industrial Development Bonds
- Entrepreneurial Development Loan Fund
- Business Retention Program
- Brownfields Redevelopment Fund
- Oregon New Market Tax Credit

### **Oregon Cascades West Council of Government (OCWCOG)**

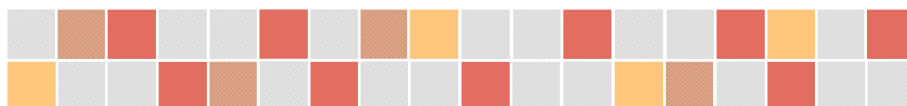
(<http://www.ocwcog.org/index.asp>)

OCWCOG provides resources, planning assistance, and advocacy for local jurisdictions to enhance community economic development. Their programmatic focus is on business lending, community facilities development, transportation, and economic development.

### **ShadeFund**

(<http://www.shadefund.org/>)

ShadeFund invests in entrepreneurs across the United States who generate economic, social, and environmental returns. Its goal is to help people build enterprises that make a difference with every board foot, kilowatt hour, paddle stroke, or bushel they produce. ShadeFund links small investors to entrepreneurs pursuing projects that build local economies and support small businesses that conserve land and water resources.



# EXISTING COMMUNITY & CHARACTER RESOURCES & CASE STUDIES

## INFILL & BROWNFIELD DEVELOPMENT

### **Managing Maryland's Growth: Models and Guidelines for Infill Development**

([http://planning.maryland.gov/pdf/ourproducts/publications/modelsguidelines/infillfinal\\_1.pdf](http://planning.maryland.gov/pdf/ourproducts/publications/modelsguidelines/infillfinal_1.pdf))

This publication is intended to help local governments, architects, builders, and developers achieve infill by offering remedies that overcome barriers; illustrating rural, suburban, and urban strategies; and identifying alternative approaches.

### **Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) of Washington: Infill Development**

(<http://www.mrsc.org/subjects/planning/infilldev.aspx#infill>)

The MRSC has created an online database of guidebooks, reports, strategies, incentives, and tools to encourage infill development in communities.

### **Brownfields Federal Programs Guide**

(<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/partners/brownfields-federal-programs-guide-2013.pdf>)

This is a guide to all federal brownfield programs and how these programs encourage economic development and sustainability as part of revitalization of brownfield sites.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES & PRESERVATION OF CHARACTER

### **Pennsylvania Wilds Design Guidelines**

(<http://www.pawildsresources.org/designguide>)

The Pennsylvania Wilds is known for its strong sense of place. The region's rural and historic character is part of what makes the area attractive to visitors and residents, and along with the commitment of local leaders to serve as stewards of that character. The PA Wilds Design Guide for Community Character Stewardship is a voluntary planning document that highlights how communities in the Pennsylvania Wilds can protect or enhance their rural character as they grow. This is a resource for developers, planners, architects, business or property owners, revitalization partners, and community leaders.

### **Carroll County, Maryland Design Expectations**

(<http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/compplan/design/>)

Carroll County, Maryland, is rich in history and rural in nature. The county welcomes new business as part of supporting its thriving community. In doing so, county staff asks the business community to treat their special place with respect by submitting plans that will architecturally and aesthetically complement their community. The county provides design expectations to developers in the earliest stages of planning and engineering processes to minimize the amount of time it takes to move through the site plan and approval process. The guide provides requests, but not requirements, for creative design.

### **Better Models for Commercial Development**

(<http://www.conservationfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Better-Models-For-Commerical-Development-The-Conservation-Fund.pdf>)

*Better Models for Commercial Development* shows how communities can improve the design and siting of new commercial development. This booklet was written for elected officials, planning commissioners, developers and interested citizens around the country. It shows how new commercial development can be made more attractive, more efficient and more profitable.

## REVITALIZATION & REUSE

### **USDA's Sustainable Rural Downtowns Case Studies**

(<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/SustainableRuralCommunities.html>)

USDA highlights nine communities that leveraged USDA funds and strengthened their local economy through sustainable development.

### **National Clearinghouse for Education Facilities (NCEF)**

(<http://www.ncef.org/rl/preservation.cfm>)

NCEF provides a host of resources on reusing educational facilities, such as school, commercial, or community facilities.

### **Restore Oregon Special Report: Revitalizing Main Street**

([http://restoreoregon.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/RestoreOregon\\_SpecialReport\\_RevitalizingMainStreet-Final.pdf](http://restoreoregon.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/RestoreOregon_SpecialReport_RevitalizingMainStreet-Final.pdf))

This special report provides an overview of how main street revitalization is being financed across the country and how the benefits—from creating jobs to charming new facades—are making an impact on local economies.

### **Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)**

(<http://www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/SHPO/Pages/index.aspx>)

The SHPO manages and administers programs for the protection of the state's historic and cultural resources. When these resources disappear communities can lose both tangible and

educational assets that contribute directly to Oregon's heritage, and also opportunities for local economic development. SHPO staff assists city planners and other officials, property owners, and preservation groups to find forward-thinking solutions to protect and preserve the past.

SHPO Programs include:

- Certified local governments: The Certified Local Government (CLG) program offers matching grants to cities and counties that have been "certified" as historic preservation partners with both the state and the federal governments.
- Heritage Grant Program: The Oregon Heritage Commission administers the Heritage Grant Program, which provides matching grants to non-profit organizations, federal recognized tribal governments and local governments for projects that conserve, develop, or interpret Oregon's heritage. Currently, \$200,000 per biennium is available.
- Diamonds in the Rough Grant: Diamonds in the Rough Grants are to restore or reconstruct the facades of buildings that have been heavily altered over the years. The purpose is to return them to their historic appearance and potentially qualify them for historic register designation (local or national). These grants are part of the SHPO's Preserving Oregon Grant Program for the 2013-15 biennium. Grants may be awarded up to \$20,000.
- Preserving Oregon Grant: The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) offers matching grants for rehabilitation work that supports the preservation of historic resources listed in the National Register of Historic Places or for significant work contributing toward identifying, preserving and/or interpreting archaeological sites. Currently, \$250,000 per biennium is available, and grant funds may be awarded for amounts up to \$20,000.
- Surveys and inventories of resources: Holds a statewide survey and inventory of historic and archaeological resources to support citizens and government agencies in identifying and protecting Oregon's cultural and heritage resources.
- Tax incentives: Provide two tax incentive programs to encourage rehabilitation and maintenance of historic properties.
- Technical and rehabilitation assistance
- Oregon Heritage Preservation Scholarships: Scholarships offered twice a year to heritage volunteers and professionals who want to expand their preservation knowledge by attending a preservation-related conference, workshop, or training.

### **Oregon Heritage All-Star Community**

([http://www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/COMM/Pages/awards.aspx#Oregon\\_Heritage\\_All-Star\\_Community](http://www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/COMM/Pages/awards.aspx#Oregon_Heritage_All-Star_Community))

The Oregon All-Star program is a way to recognize communities that make the most of their heritage resources. To receive designation the community must apply and meet 15 of the 20 criteria.

### **Oregon Main Street**

(<http://www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/SHPO/pages/mainstreet.aspx>)

Oregon Main Street works with communities to develop comprehensive, incremental revitalization strategies based on a community's unique assets, character, and heritage. Services are based on the successful Main Street Approach® developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and include training and technical assistance. The goal is to build high quality, livable, and sustainable communities that will grow Oregon's economy while maintaining a sense of place.

### **USDA's Rural Information Center: Downtown Revitalization**

(<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/downtown.html>)

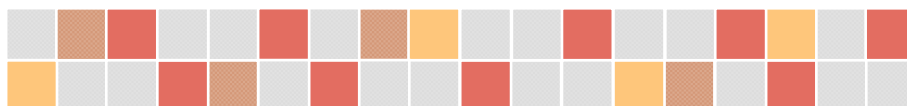
In 2005, USDA created an online guide to downtown revitalization that includes community planning resources, funding sources, best practices, and model programs.

### **CASE STUDY: Artists in Storefronts**

An ongoing project in the Whittier neighborhood of Minneapolis, Artists in Storefronts aims to work with neighborhood organizations, artists, and local businesses in an effort to promote creativity, revitalize local economies, and provide everyone with equal, open access to art. See [www.artistsinstorefronts.com](http://www.artistsinstorefronts.com).

### **CASE STUDY: Ridgway, Pennsylvania, Historic Façade Grant Program**

Ridgway, Pennsylvania (population 4,000), is well known for its award-winning Historic Façade Grant Program, which began as a partnership between the Borough of Ridgway and the Ridgway Heritage Council in 1998. The program was initially funded by a grant from the Stackpole-Hall Foundation of Elk County and the Borough of Ridgway. Current funding is provided through a state grant and is administered through the Borough of Ridgway with help from the Ridgway Main Street Program. All improvements must follow the U.S. Secretary of Interior standards of design practices for preservation; if needed the Ridgway Heritage Council Design Committee provides free consulting on project design. A business is eligible for up to \$5,000 in grant funding. Eligible applicants can be the building or business owner. The applicant must match or exceed the grant amount. Ridgway, Pennsylvania, also has a Streetscape Program that, with federal transportation funding, added entrance signs, lighting, and benches to the downtown. See <http://www.ridgwayheritagecouncil.com/faccedilade-program.html>.





# LEVERAGING RESOURCES & CASE STUDIES

## **Aligning Strategies to Maximize Impact: Case Studies on Transportation and Economic Development**

(<http://www.nwccog.org/index.php/resources/grant-opportunities/>)

This National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation report highlights case studies where transportation planning efforts are linked with economic development strategies in a regional context.

## **Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities**

([http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/Supporting\\_Sustainable\\_Rural\\_Communities\\_FIN.AL.PDF](http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/pdf/Supporting_Sustainable_Rural_Communities_FIN.AL.PDF))

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities published this guide in 2011 to share examples and outcomes from its (then) three-year old initiative. The document explains how the Partnership supports rural communities and provides case studies organized by principle.

## **Reaching Out: A USDA Forest Service Toolkit for Equal Participation**

(<http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/library/Toolkit.pdf>)

This toolkit is designed to help forest service staff liaison with landowners, community leaders, nonprofit organization, and volunteer groups that are implementing USFS goals and programs.

## **University of Oregon's Ecosystem Workforce Program**

(<http://ewp.uoregon.edu/about/intro>)

The Ecosystem Workforce Program is built on the fundamental belief that ecology, economy, and governance are intimately interconnected. The program fosters forest-based sustainable rural development in forest communities by developing restoration workforce training curricula and supporting local quality jobs programs. It supports community-based forestry programs through applied research projects, such as understanding the distribution of benefits from federal forest management and the working conditions of forest workers. It also supports community-based forestry by working collaboratively with forest communities to educate national policy makers about impacts of forest policy on forest communities and landscapes.

## **Communities Committee for Community-Owned Forests**

(<http://www.communitiescommittee.org/COFcases.html>)

The Communities Committee believes there is great merit in an increased stewardship role for communities in restoring and maintaining the integrity and biodiversity of the forested ecosystems around them. It is currently working with an Advisory Panel of experts from federal and state government, academic institutions, and concerned stakeholder groups to develop recommendations for establishing a long-term role for collaborative public involvement in the management of National Forests and other public lands. Its aim is to identify the legislative

actions and the new or revised institutional arrangements and structures needed to permanently integrate collaborative stakeholder participation into federal land management, to enable the United States to better achieve and sustain desired ecosystem and community conditions and functions. Its website provides a clearinghouse of information for the management, planning, and engagement in community-owned forests.

### **Oregon Forests**

(<https://www.oregonforests.org/content/ofri-resources>)

Oregonforests.org is a portal for information relating to the management of Oregon's forests as environmental, recreational and economic resources. OFRI works closely with the scientific and academic communities to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of the information it provides through this website and other education programs.

### **CASE STUDY: Hoke Community Forest**

Hoke Community Forest, the first community forest in the Southeastern United States, serves as an innovative model for communities struggling to balance conservation and economic goals. The 532-acre property, located north of the county seat Raeford and about a mile south of Fort Bragg, is the result of a unique public-private partnership that includes the county, state, and federal governments, community groups, and youth leaders. It is actively managed for conservation, economic, recreation, educational and community benefits.

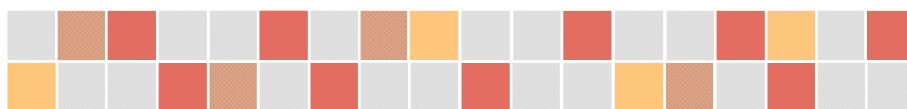
The project has been designed to provide “triple bottom line” benefits to the community, including:

**Environmental:** A water-quality easement covers about a third of the property, ensuring that two critical streams, Rockfish and Nicholson Creeks, are protected. Loblolly pine stands are being converted to native longleaf pine, creating future red-cockaded woodpecker habitat. Environmental education programming engages young residents in learning the importance of protecting natural resources and the significance of the unique Sandhills ecosystem.

**Economic:** Sustainable harvest of timber stands generate income and enable restoration of longleaf pine stands. Pine straw is sustainably harvested to generate operating revenues.

**Social:** Hoke Community Forest provides opportunities for passive recreation, environmental education as well as the first publicly-accessible horseback riding trails in the County. Boy Scouts have provided community service and earned Eagle badges building trails and other recreational infrastructure.

For more information, see <https://www.conservationfund.org/projects/hoke-community-forest/>.



# VALUING COMMUNITIES, NEIGHBORHOODS & LANDSCAPES & THE AREA'S ASSETS RESOURCES & CASE STUDIES

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## VALUING COMMUNITIES

### **Outdoor Nation and Merrell Pack Project Grants**

(<http://outdoornation.org/grants>)

Five \$2,500 grants are awarded each year to the most innovative, impactful, and sustainable projects focusing on increasing outdoor recreation while also creating significant relationships with the environment.

### **Discover Our Shared Heritage**

(<http://www.nps.gov/NR/travel/>)

The National Park Service's Discover Our Shared Heritage travel itinerary program was developed through the Heritage Education Services Program to showcase thematic tours at historic sites across the country. Itineraries offer self-guided tours focusing on significant American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. Itineraries are developed as a partnership between the local organizers and the National Park Service.

### **USDA's Arts and Humanities in Rural America**

(<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/artspub.html#cb>)

This online guide brings together full-text resources for local officials and organizations seeking information on planning arts and humanities programs in their communities.

### **Wells Fargo Foundation**

([https://www.wellsfargo.com/about/charitable/or\\_guidelines](https://www.wellsfargo.com/about/charitable/or_guidelines))

The Wells Fargo Foundation supports long-term economic growth and quality of life for everyone in communities across the country. It promotes economic development, financial education, affordable housing, and environmental responsibility.

### **Stronger Together: A Manual on the Principles and Practices of Civic Engagement**

([http://www.nps.gov/civic/resources/CE\\_Manual.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/civic/resources/CE_Manual.pdf))

This manual is intended for educators and interpreters who are engaging and developing programs with parks, schools, and neighboring communities and interacting with the public. It provides an overview of the principles and practices of civic engagement.

## **The Triple Bottom Line Tool**

(<http://www.tbltool.org/>)

The Triple Bottom Line Tool helps optimize and communicate investment alignment with economic, environmental, and social performance, what's referred to as the triple bottom line or TBL. Investors, economic development professionals, and decision makers can use this tool to configure development investments for maximum returns, consider and prioritize alternatives, and communicate investment alignment with TBL goals.

### **CASE STUDY: Blue Ridge Mountain Arts Association**

The Blue Ridge Mountains Arts Association began over 30 years ago with the mission of providing art for personal growth and to serve as an economic engine for the community. They act as a nonprofit arts council serving the mountain communities of North Georgia, East Tennessee, and Western North Carolina. Over the years, the center has grown to serve an audience of 30,000 annually with programming that includes art and music classes for youth and adults and exhibit galleries to showcase and sell local artists' work. The center hosts several popular festivals, including Arts in the Park and the Plein Air Festival (both juried arts events) and the Wildlife and Nature Art Festival and Expo which showcases wildlife and nature artists and also offers outdoor activities including hiking, fishing, camping, and boating. See <http://www.blueridgearts.net>.

### **CASE STUDY: HandMade in America—Western North Carolina**

Since its inception more than 20 years ago, HandMade in America, based in Western North Carolina, has become a national model for cultural and heritage trail development. HandMade in America was created to showcase artists and craftspeople in a 23-county region and to generate economic impact for this economically depressed area.

HandMade developed a system to guide visitors directly to the artists' studios, but to do so they needed criteria to determine which artists would be included on the trail. To be part of the HandMade in America initiative, shops and galleries must feature American-made crafts with an emphasis on those from Western North Carolina, and restaurants must feature indigenous foods as part of their standard menu. Participants are trained in how to welcome and accommodate visitors and how to think as entrepreneurs to create new partnerships and promotions. See [www.handmadeinamerica.org](http://www.handmadeinamerica.org).

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

### **The Center for Place-Based Learning and Community Engagement**

([www.promiseofplace.org](http://www.promiseofplace.org))

The Center for Place-Based Learning and Community Engagement provides information about place-based education. See their manual at [www.promiseofplace.org/curriculum\\_and\\_planning/planning\\_tools](http://www.promiseofplace.org/curriculum_and_planning/planning_tools).

### **Effective Practices to Engaging At-Risk Youth in Service**

([http://www.utahciviccoalition.org/downloads/Engaging\\_At-Risk\\_Youth\\_in\\_Service.pdf](http://www.utahciviccoalition.org/downloads/Engaging_At-Risk_Youth_in_Service.pdf))

Youth Service America designed this guide to provide an overview of the underlying theory and effective practices for engaging at-risk youth in service by examining the roles they have played and can play in serving their communities.

### **The 4-H Youth Development Program**

([www.4-h.org/youth-development-programs/citizenship-youth-engagement/community-action/rural-youth/](http://www.4-h.org/youth-development-programs/citizenship-youth-engagement/community-action/rural-youth/))

Engaging Youth, Serving Community began with a grassroots effort to recognize the 4-H Centennial in 2002. The National Conversation on Positive Youth Development in the 21st Century brought together youth and adults in local communities, at the state level, and finally in Washington, D.C., to discuss how to develop a positive future for America's youth.

The following national goals were established:

- empower rural communities to involve youth as partners in decision-making and governance
- improve the quality of afterschool programs in rural communities by increasing the competencies of providers and integrating 4-H curricula
- provide professional staff and volunteer development to increase the capacity of regions, states, and local communities to accomplish the first two goals.

The program aims to impart youth with the life skills and experience they need to emerge as effective leaders and contributing members of society.

### **CASE STUDY: The Of the Student, By the Student Service Learning Project.**

The Of the Student, By the Student, For the Student Program is a nationally recognized, award-winning service learning program that offers students a full immersion in American history and heritage. Eighth grade students find themselves onsite at the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area, bringing the stories of those who came before them to life in videos that they write, produce, shoot, and edit under the guidance of JTHG professionals. The resulting mini-movies, or Vodcasts, offer a permanent record of the students' personal experiences and interpretations.

The pilot program was created and customized by the JTHG Partnership for Harpers Ferry Middle School students in conjunction with Harpers Ferry National Historical Park and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. See <http://www.hallowedground.org/Education/Of-the-Student-By-the-Student-For-the-Student-Service-Learning-Project>.

### **CASE STUDY: Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation's Kids in Parks Program**

Endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics and receiving the Champions of Change Award from the White House, the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation's Kids in Parks Program is getting kids unplugged and outside for their health—and the health of parks. The program is being expanded throughout the nation with TRACK Trails adventures being added to the program's website as a way to earn prizes designed to make their next outdoor adventure more meaningful and fun. See [www.kidsinparks.com](http://www.kidsinparks.com).

## **VETERAN SUPPORT**

### **Walmart Foundation**

(<http://foundation.walmart.com/our-focus/special-interests/>)

Walmart is funding a program to empower military veterans with the tools they need to find employment, advance in their careers and ensure long-term financial stability for their families.

### **Prudential**

(<http://www.prudential.com/view/page/public/31279> & <http://www.prudential.com/veterans>)

Prudential is committed to helping veterans develop meaningful careers after their military service and between deployments. Because this is not always easy, especially for wounded veterans, their contributions support nonprofit organizations that provide not just professional development but also a broad mix of services veterans critically need to successfully return to civilian life.



## **Home Depot Foundation**

(<http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/page/mission>)

The Home Depot Foundation is dedicated to improving the homes of veterans and their families through financial and volunteer resources to help nonprofit organizations. Additionally, thousands of volunteers from Team Depot, the company's associate-led volunteer program commit their time and talents each year to ensure every veteran has a safe place to call home.

## **Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust**

(<http://www.cst.dav.org/Grants/Default.aspx>)

The Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust is dedicated to empowering veteran to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. To carry out this responsibility, the Trust supports a wide array of physical and psychological rehabilitation programs and continues to seek new and innovative ways to make a positive difference.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH**

### **Healthy People, Healthy Places—Building Sustainable Communities through Active Living**

(<http://www.nlc.org/Documents/Find%20City%20Solutions/Research%20Innovation/Sustainability/healthy-people-healthy-places-mag-jun11.pdf>)

The National League of Cities developed a report that details the role local leaders play in promoting health through creating the conditions—removing barriers, increasing opportunities, and providing information—for individuals to incorporate healthy option such as physical activity into their daily lives.

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Community Health**

(<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/index.htm>)

The CDC's Division of Community Health supports community health initiatives that focus on tobacco-free living, active living, and healthy eating. Four programs provide funding which supports sidewalks, trails, bicycle parking, farmers markets, community gardens, community health elements in comprehensive plans, and a variety of other activities. In addition, the REACH program is specifically focused on eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in community health.

## US Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

(<http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/index.html>)

The Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP) coordinates activities related to rural health care within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Part of HRSA, ORHP has department-wide responsibility for analyzing the possible effects of policy on residents of rural communities.

***Rural Health Care Services Outreach Grant Program:*** The purpose of the outreach program is to promote rural health care services outreach by expanding health care delivery to include new or enhanced services in rural areas. See

<http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/about/community/careservicesoutreach.html>.

***Rural Health Information Technology Network Development:*** The purpose of the RHITND Program is to enhance health care delivery in rural America by supporting rural health networks in the adoption and meaningful use of electronic health records/electronic medical records. See <http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/about/community/rhitnd.html>.

***Rural Health Network Development Program:*** The primary objective of this program is to assist health oriented networks in developing and maintaining sustainable networks with self-generating revenue streams. These grants support rural providers who work in formal networks to integrate administrative, clinical, technological, and financial functions. See

<http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/about/community/networkprogram.html>.

***Rural Health Network Development Planning Grant:*** The Network Planning program provides one-year grants to support the planning and development of a formal health-care network to improve health care delivery in rural areas. This program provides one-year grants up to \$85,000 and allows applicants to develop a business or strategic plan, conduct a needs assessment, conduct health information technology readiness, and ultimately form a network. See <http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/about/community/rhnetworkplanning.html>.

## AGING POPULATION

See **Rural Transit Assistance Program** as listed in Principle 1 Resource list:

<http://www.nationalrtap.org/State.aspx>

### AARP

(<http://www.aarp.org>)

AARP's Public Policy Institute provides a number of publications on livable communities. These include resources on funding, such as *Weaving It Together: A Tapestry of Transportation Funding for Older Adults*, which offers seven case studies, many of which feature rural transit systems. Available at [www.aarp.org/research/ppi/liv-](http://www.aarp.org/research/ppi/liv-)

[com2/policy/transportation/articles/weaving-it-together-transportation-funding-for-older-adults-AARP-ppi-liv-com/](http://com2/policy/transportation/articles/weaving-it-together-transportation-funding-for-older-adults-AARP-ppi-liv-com/).

**National Center for Mobility Management**

(<http://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/>)

This organization works with communities to help them coordinate human service/public transportation services for more efficient service delivery.

**National Center on Senior Transportation (NCST)**

(<http://ncst.madwolf.com/>)

The National Center on Senior Transportation strives to increase transportation options for older adults to support their ability to live independently in their homes and communities throughout the United States.

**Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Inc.**

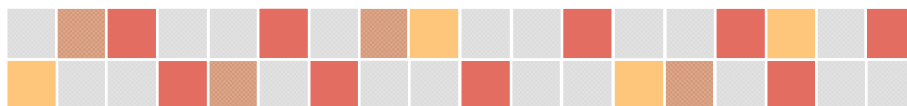
The Bank of America Charitable Foundation is one of the largest foundations in the nation that focuses on preserving neighborhoods and housing and on revitalizing communities. Applicants must be a 501(c) (3). Visit the web site for more information

[http://about.bankofamerica.com/en-us/global-impact/charitable-foundation-funding.html#fbid=fe\\_qksSw9OI](http://about.bankofamerica.com/en-us/global-impact/charitable-foundation-funding.html#fbid=fe_qksSw9OI).

**Walmart Foundation State Giving**

(<http://foundation.walmart.com/apply-for-grants/state-giving>)

The Walmart State Giving program provides grants to nonprofits that serve underserved populations and align with the Walmart Foundation’s giving focus areas. Focused Giving includes programs focused on Hunger Relief & Healthy Eating and Career Opportunity only. Examples include efforts that aim to enroll people in SNAP, healthy eating/cooking skills training, nutrition education, and career skills or job training efforts that lead to placement. Community Engagement Giving is broader and includes programs focused on the unmet needs of underserved populations that may fall outside of the focus areas listed above.





# ASSESSMENT ITINERARY

**SWEET HOME LIVABILITY INITIATIVE TENTATIVE AGENDA 11.24.13**

**Sunday 12.15.13**

**Livability Assessment Team Arrives!**

**??230 Eugene**

Time	Task	Who	Logistic needs
230pm	Pick Kendra and Katie up from the Eugene airport	X Cindy, Jon backup	Car, flight info
400	Arrive Sweet Home – check into Motel	X Reservation for K&K @ SH Inn	2 Rooms
415 - 500	Tour of Sweet Home focus on downtown and parks, discuss history and current situation	X Tim McQueary and X Craig Martin	Car
500-700	Get acquainted – enjoy good company, good food and good wine at Marks Ridge Winery	X Cindy – reserved w/MR X Jo Ann – dinner arrangements	Transport K & K

**Monday Morning 12.16 Introductions, Community Background and Community Forest at Cascade Timber Consulting**

**Time: 0800-1100**

Facilitator: Cindy Glick

**What** – General Overview of Sweet Home and Projects.

**Purpose** - to learn about “players at the table” in reference to the Community Forest and collaboration on land management and economic vitality for the Sweet Home area. Also an opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities the community faces. In addition please mention any important background information about sites, stops that will be included on the afternoon tour.

Who (in order of presenting)	Confirmed	Topic	Location
US Forest Service – Cindy Glick	X	USFS role in community, products	CTC
Linn County Parks/Western States - Brian Carroll	X	Role parks play in county	CTC
Cascade Timber Consulting – Dave Furtwangler	X	Role in community and forestry	CTC
City of Sweet Home - Craig Martin	X	Short history, current, future	CTC
S Santiam Watershed Council – Eric Hartstein	X	Water Quality, restoration, working with private/FS	CTC
Sweet Home Trails ?		Goals for trail group	CTC
Commissioner – Will Tucker		County role in Sweet Home, Cascadia	CTC
Sweet Home All Lands Collaborative – Emily Jane Davis and/or Eric White	X	How SHALC can help Sweet Home environment and economy	CTC
Community Forest /Trail – Jon Meier	X	Goals of community forest trail	CTC
Attending Not Presenting			
John Wittwer (SHEDG) ?	X		
Jo Ann McQueary	X		

Others? Council, Chamber, SHEDG for info?			
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**What – Community Forest Forum**

**Purpose** – Continue to discuss the community forest idea, what it could do for Sweet Home, what the purposes are (recreation, connection, forestry) and how Cascadia cave is a part of the forest and culture history of the area.

Who	Confirmed	Who	Confirmed
Dave Furtwangler	X	Eric White	X
Cindy Glick	X		
Brian Carroll	X	Jon Wittwer (SHEDG)?	X
Jon Meier	X	Jo Ann McQueary	X
Eric Hartstein	X		
Craig Martin	X		
Emily Jane Davis	X		

**Monday Afternoon 12.16 Quartzville and South Santiam Tours Time 1100-430**

**What** – Quartzville and South Santiam Tours

**Purpose** – Field Visit and overview along with more details of projects going on in different corridors and who is involved.

Bus A Qville	Confirmed	Topics	Stops	Logistic Needs
Kendra	X	Shea Point plans, funding History and issues Green Peter Plan FLAP funding projects Projects on BLM and FS	Shea Point	
Lewis Grimm?			Sunnyside	
Brian Carroll	X		Top of Dam	
Jon Meier	X		Bridge	
USACE – Kat, Tami			Whitcomb Creek	
BLM – Traci			Along BLM section	
Will Tucker	May have to join late/noon		At FS/BLM boundary	
Bus B S. Santiam		Topics	Stops	
Katie	X	Community Forest Campground operations Slides and access Forest Road conditions Working Forest  Doug Shank, US Forest Service Geologist, will meet at site	Shea Point	
Aung Gye	X		Riverbend Campground	
Cindy Glick	X		Cascadia State Park	
John Morrison			Trout Creek Campground	
Amy Ramsdell - ODOT	X		Slide Area – just past Sheep Creek Bridge	Arrange with Joe Squire on meeting location
Darrin Lane	X Hwy 20 Tour Only			



Jo Ann McQueary	X			
Eric Hartstein	X			
Eric White	X			
Emily Jane Davis	X			
Stef Gatchell	X	Scenic Byway		

\*\*\*Lewis Grimm and/or Aung Gye – if can't attend may be replaced by Michelle Eraut, FHWA Oregon Federal Aid Division Office

**430-530 Break**

**OPEN?**

**Tuesday Morning 12.17 Foster Lake Trail**

**0800-0915**

Jon Meier	X	Jon will pick up and transport participants in FS Vehicle	Destination, Foster Lake Trail, Lewis Creek
Bob Thayer	X	Ford Family Foundation Leadership Grad	

**Tuesday Mid-Morning 12.17 Health Discussion**

**0930-1115**

All Wednesday sessions at SH Senior Center/Jim Riggs Community Center

Health Discussion Facilitated by: Craig Martin

**What** – Roundtable discussion with local people in the health industry.

**Purpose** – Learn about the health care field and food delivery in Sweet Home, discuss trends and what future looks like and how the “livability” of Sweet Home today affects health and how it could be improved.

Contact	Affiliation	Confirmed	Time	Location	Who from team (if anyone)
Dr. Ivan Wolthuis	Wolthuis Family Dentistry		0930-1115 Roundtable discussion	Senior Center	Craig Martin Facilitate
Dr. Henry Wolthuis	Wolthuis Family Dentistry				
Frank Moore, Director	Linn County Department of Health Services - Mental Health	X			

Tim McQueary, Board Chair Sherlyn Dahl, ED	Community Health Centers of Benton and Linn Counties	X  X			
Greg Roe	United Way				
??Jana Kay Slater?	Samaritan Health				
Mike Gibson 541- 752-2348	Community Services Consortium Linn-Benton Food Share				
Dennis Muscato	Comp NW	Tentative?			
Heidi Lewis	SHSD Health Services Coordinator				

***Tuesday 12.17 Youth Conversation and Lunch at High School***

***Time TBD***

Facilitated by: Stefanie Gatchell and Kristin Adams

**What** – Lunch and discussion at High School with youth from community

**Purpose** – to find out from the youth what groups they are involved in, how they like Sweet Home, improvements they would want to see if they lived here in the future.

Who	Organization	Confirmed		Who	Organization	Confirmed
Jonathan Mattson	Boy Scouts				Youth Search and Rescue	
Rick Jones	Boy Scouts				Outdoor Club at junior high	
Mollie Kerins	BGC Greater Santiam	X				
	Campfire					
	Girl Scouts					
	Youth Watershed Council					
	Youth Advisory Board (City)					
	4H					
	Young Marines					

**Tuesday Afternoon 12.17 Business Interviews**

**1230-230**

**What** – One on one discussion with local business owners, many of which also live in Sweet Home.

**Purpose** – Learn about economic viability and what it is like owning a business in Sweet Home.

Group A	Contact	Confirmed	Time	Location	Who from team
Seamingly Creative	Lerena Ruby		open	On site with businesses	Kendra Jo Ann, Jon as back up Pick them up, take to sites, deliver to Senior Center Will need vehicle
Periwinkle Provisions	Brandi Hawkins		12:30		
White's Electronics					
Group B					Katie Craig Pick them up, take to sites, deliver to Senior Center Will need vehicle
Foster Lake Mall	Donna Menear		1:30pm		
Melcher Logging					
Bi Mart					
Steelhead Fitness	Dave/Vicki Bauer				

\*\*\*Consider including: Brad Newport, John or Greg Mahler, Dandee Sales, Thriftway, Safeway, Oregon Jamboree

**Tuesday Afternoon 12.17 Public Transportation**

**230-400**

**What** – Discuss public and other transportation options in the Sweet Home area. Talk to seniors in the community. Tour the boys and girls club and learn about programs like Girls on the Run.

**Purpose** – Learn about the current transportation system, walkability, bike ability, transportation options in Sweet Home, future projects.

Contact	Affiliation	Confirmed	Time	Location	Who from team	Logistics
Jared Cornell	Albany & Eastern Railroad		230-400			
Chuck Knoll	LC Road Dept		X			
Ken Bronson	Senior Center			Senior Center		
Joe Graybill	City					
Amy Ramsdell	ODOT, Cascades West Area Manager					
Jon Meier	SH Trails	X				

<b>Mike Adams</b>	SH Public Works					
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**Tuesday Evening 12.17 Manna Meal Site Dinner**

**5-600**

Time	What	Where	Logistic needs
5pm	Meet at Meal Site for dinner	United Methodist Church @ 6 <sup>th</sup> and Ironwood	Cindy and Jo Ann will pick them up from hotel

**Wednesday Morning 12.18 Housing Discussion**

**0800-930**

Housing Facilitator:

All Wednesday sessions @ Sweet Home Police Department

**What** – Different housing options, availability, cost.

**Purpose** – To discuss the range of housing options in the city, the amount of RV? (do you mean manufactured home) parks?, cost and support systems in place for housing assistance.

Contact	Affiliation	Confirmed	Time	Location	Who from team	Logistics
Craig Martin	City of SH	X	800-1000	City of Sweet Home Police Station		Facilitator:
Brigetta Olson Deputy Director Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services 541.752.7220 X 304 brigetta.olson@w-nhs.org	Willamette Valley Neighborhood Housing Services	X				
Ben Stiehl Rehabilitation Coordinator WNHS	WNHS	X				
Donna Holt 541-918-7314	Linn-Benton Housing Authority					
541-928-6335 ?Jo Zoeller	Terry Knoll Community Services Consortium					
Sherri Gregory	Or other realtor					
Cindy Rice	SH Emergency Ministries	X				

**Wednesday Mid-Morning 12.18****Education Discussion****930-1030**

Contact	Affiliation	Confirmed	Time	Location	Who from team	Logistics
Don Schrader	SH School District Supt.	X		SHPD		Reserve Room at Police station
Gary Price	Linn Benton Community College					
	Charter School					
Larry Horton	SH School District, Retired Supt					
Milli Horton	SH School District Food Services					
Kevin Strong	SH School District Business					
Kristin Adams	SH High School Student Activities					

**Wednesday Mid-Morning 12.18****Public Safety****1030-11:45**

Contact	Affiliation	Confirmed	Time	Location	Who from team (if anyone)
Chief Jeff Lynn	SH Police Department	X	1030-1145	SHPD	
Captain Jim Yon	Linn County Sheriff's Office	X			
Chief Mike Beaver	SH Fire and Ambulance District				
Staff Sgt. Joe Larsen	Linn County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue				
Regan Eivers	US Forest Service				
	US Army Corps of Engineers				
	OSP?				

Craig Pettinger	Oregon State Dept of Forestry				
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**Lunch and Interviews with Seniors at Senior Center**

**1120-1245**

**\*\*\*Invite Senior Center Board - Jo Ann**

**Wednesday Afternoon 12.18**

**Regional Connections**

**100-300**

Facilitator: Stefanie Gatchell

**What** –Discuss the regional connections Sweet Home has made in various efforts.

**Purpose** – Discuss how Sweet Home has used regional resources to its benefit and where gaps may lie to make better use of these resources or identify others.

Contact	Affiliation	Confirmed	Time	Location	Who from team	Logistics
Emily Jane Davis	UO EWP		100-300			
Eric White	OSU, College of Forestry					
Scott McDowell	Visit Linn Coalition, Chair					
Jimmie Lucht	Albany Visitors Association, ED and Willamette Valley Visitors Association, Chair					
Steve Bryant or Michael Mills	Oregon Solutions Team					
Cynthia Solie	Cascade West Council of Governments					
Harry Dalgaard	Travel Oregon					
Eric White can contact	Portland Branch of The Conservation Fund					
Will Tucker	Linn County Commissioner					
John Wittwer	SH Economic Development Group					
Dave Furtwangler	Cascade Timber Consulting, CEO					
Sherri Pagliari	SH Visitor Center, Coordinator	X				
Brandi Pickett	SH Chamber of Commerce, Board Chair	X				



Will Summers	Workforce Oregon, Oregon Employment Specialist					
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### ***300-430 Closing Talk***

As was suggested on the call we will use this last hour and a half to debrief the week, look at next steps and discuss the week in general.

Dinner – It would be nice to have a small, low key final dinner to continue to discuss next steps and get to know each other better.

DRAFT