

What community-initiated project recipients receiving funding in the FY25 Senate THUD bill are saying about the wins for their communities:

“On behalf of the older adults we serve, Meals on Wheels People is excited to learn about this transformational funding for our work. We are incredibly grateful to Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden for their advocacy and support of this critical project! This funding will allow us to complete our new facility on 82nd Ave in Portland, OR which will function as a Resilience Hub for the southeast Portland community. In addition to increasing our capacity to provide nutritious meals and social services for older adults, this new building will offer support during natural disasters to the entire community. This expansion will serve multiple functions and uses renewable energy and energy storage to provide these crucial services,” **said Suzanne Washington, CEO of Meals on Wheels People.**

“For decades, the tumwata village property sat abandoned and ignored. This Community-Initiated Project funding from the Senate THUD Appropriations Bill will give us essential resources to breathe life back into the land while taking another step closer to returning people to Willamette Falls. We’re grateful that Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden continue to see the importance of this project and what restoring tumwata village brings to the community,” **said Chairwoman Cheryle Kennedy, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.**

“I would like to thank Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden for their efforts to bring American made, zero-emission vehicles to RVTD’s fleet,” **said Julie Brown, RVTD General Manager.** “Each year, our Valley Lift paratransit service connects roughly 50,000 older adults and people with disabilities to essential destinations across southern Oregon. Federal funding will help us complete one of the first zero-emission paratransit projects in America by replacing our oldest gasoline vehicles. New battery-electric paratransit vans will boost service reliability and reduce emissions by an estimated 481 Metric Tons of CO2 over the next five years.”

“We are so proud that Senators Merkley and Wyden see the benefit of our investment in rural Oregon and downtown Roseburg. These funds will be used to create apartment, single room occupancy and dorm style housing in a treasured building that would otherwise stand empty. More housing supports workers and students in our community, and a vibrant and economically successful downtown supports the goals of the county as a whole. Students will live, work and learn right here and be part of a strong workforce pipeline,” **said President Rachel Pokrandt, UCC President.**

"Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center (CDDC) is joyful and honored to partner with Senators Merkley and Wyden. This generous funding will catalyze CDDC's Homelessness Navigation and Resilience Center project in Benton County. This exciting collaboration helps CDDC and our guests realize a long-time vision to create a safer, more compassionate and just community for our neighbors experiencing homelessness,” **said Allison Hobgood, Executive Director, on behalf of CDDC and our guests.**

“Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden recognize that communities can only thrive when individuals and families have the healthy food they need. This funding will help Marion Polk Food Share acquire a new highly efficient warehouse and production kitchen to serve our community for the next 30+ years,” **said Rick Gaupo, President & CEO, Marion Polk Food Share.**

"We can't thank Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden enough for taking action to help our community," **said Matt Powlison, Jefferson County Public Works Director.** "This grant is a vital investment in our community's infrastructure. The replacement of the Feather Drive Bridge will not only enhance everyday access for our residents but also ensure that our emergency responders can reach those in need without delay. This project underscores our commitment to building a stronger, safer Jefferson County."

"As the McKenzie Valley community works together to rebuild after the Holiday Farm Fire of 2020, we are grateful for this investment, allowing us to build affordable homes in the rural town of Blue River which was devastated by the wildfire," **said Brandi Ferguson, Interim Executive Director of the McKenzie Community Land Trust.**

"Senators Merkley and Wyden are working to address the far reaching impacts of living in a childcare desert. Their support for the Columbia Gorge Early Learning Center will help families gain employment because childcare needs are met with affordable, high quality care on a sliding scale based on families' ability to pay. Once completed, the center will also offer child care for 200 or more children ages 0-8, living wage jobs to more than 30 people and serve as a training site for students enrolled at the Columbia Gorge Community College. This solar-powered facility will serve as a resilience center for the west side of The Dalles in extreme weather or fire emergencies. Operations will be provided by Columbia Gorge Education Service District which will be housed in the facility. We are deeply appreciative of their support and continued interest in our community," **said Dana Pedersen, Superintendent, Columbia Gorge ESD.**

"The work we do is inherently rooted in a fundamental promise: the idea that all of us deserve to lay claim to the word "home". The Albina Vision Trust is inspired by the consistent courage, strength and unfailing leadership of Senators Wyden and Merkley, who have secured \$1.5 million in Congressionally directed funding to catalyze the most transformative housing development in the history of our state. Our incredible Senators remind us that cities can and should be built by us all, to the benefit of us all," **said Winta Yohannes, Executive Director of the Albina Vision Trust.**

“Youth and young adults on a workforce path in Central Oregon need and deserve quality training, support, and a place they can thrive. Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden’s support of Heart of Oregon Corps’ new Redmond Central Campus delivers on that promise and invests in the economic vitality of our community,” **said Laura Handy, Executive Director.**

“We are grateful for the efforts of Senator Wyden, Senator Merkley, and Congressman Blumenauer to secure funding for the redevelopment of the Clara Vista apartments in the Cully neighborhood, which will support the preservation of 108 units and culturally-specific services—as well as create new opportunities for additional affordable housing on the existing site” **said Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler.**

"We are sincerely grateful for the continued efforts of Senators Merkley and Wyden in their joint commitment to Oregon's children, families and elders," said Dr. Derenda Schubert, Executive Director, Bridge Meadows. "Their support provides essential resources for Bridge Meadows to provide more high-quality affordable housing and delivery of services for children and their families experiencing foster care, in addition to those that include the needs of our communities' elders," she added. "We recognize the Senators as two of Bridge Meadows' many champions in our mission of cultivating intergenerational communities of care throughout the State of Oregon, where families and elders can truly flourish," said **Derenda Schubert, Executive Director, Bridge Meadows.**

"Lane Transit District is thrilled with this news. This funding will allow us to upgrade our electrical vehicle charging capacity at our Glenwood office, and at our RideSource Office, which provides our paratransit service,” **said Gino Grimaldi, LTD's Board President.**

"FHDC's plan for affordable housing development addresses the City of Albany's housing affordability needs and Oregon's Statewide Housing plan with the development of 150 units of affordable housing with supportive services in one of Oregon's fastest growing cities. The development of these units will address a critical need for affordable housing in Albany, ensuring that more families have access to stable and secure living conditions. This project will not only provide much needed housing but also contribute to the economic and social vitality of the Albany community,” **said Maria Elena Guerra, Executive Director of FHDC.**

"Wallowa Resources and Working Homes extend our heartfelt gratitude to Oregon's Senators for securing essential funding for our rural community. This vital support will address the shortage of affordable housing for both our workforce and retired population. With these capital investments, we will enhance the safety, energy efficiency, and overall livability of Wallowa County's last remaining affordable open-market apartment building," **said Nils Christoffersen, Executive Director of Wallowa Resources.**

"The City of Sumpter is excited to be considered for funding. Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden understand small cities such as Sumpter have limited financial resources to repair aging infrastructure. Their support of our financial assistance request to help repair our 20th century Community Center will renew the community pride in this Sumpter landmark and provide a safe gathering space for years to come," **said Linda Wise, Mayor of Sumpter.**

“We are incredibly grateful for the support and commitment from Senator Merkley in investing in early childhood education,” **said LBCC Periwinkle Child Development Center Director Kendra Votava.** "This investment is vital for both our young learners and practicum students and ensures we can complete essential repairs, including the roof, security systems, and fire alarms."