



Tourism Development Council Meeting
Wednesday, August 13th, 2025 2:02 – 4:02pm

Minutes approved 9/10/25

In person and virtual via Zoom - [Recording Link](#)

Members Present: Luke Spencer, Holly Pfortmiller, Mike Quinn, Katen Patel, Patrick Dawsey, Ryan Tigner, Tessa Koch

Staff Present: Lizzie Keenan, Jim Austin, Danae Burke Jones, Janice Nilson

Others Present: Thelma Haggenmiller, Sylecia Johnston

2:02 - 2:04pm Welcome/Call to Order/Introductions & Declaration of Conflicts - Luke Spencer, Chair

2:04 - 2:06pm Approval of Minutes for June 2025 and Joint Meeting July 2025 - Danae Burke Jones, Administrative Specialist

Katen motioned to approve minutes from June, seconded by Holly and approved unanimously.

Holly motioned to approve minutes from July, seconded by Katen and approved unanimously.

2:07 - 3:10pm Proposed Plan for Carry-Over Funds - Lizzie Keenan, Executive Director

Lizzie presented the proposed plan for carry-over funds with the background that this is proposed programming for \$3,937,000 of the \$4,048,362 of carry over funds from previous years that need to be programed into this year's budget.

Things considered while narrowing down ideas were staff capacity, return on investment, meeting strategic objectives, and leveraging timely opportunities. From there staff narrowed down to three of the five strategic priorities to focus on with these funds including: Inclusion/Accessibility, Thriving Economy and Environment.

Marketing Campaign - \$900,000

The marketing team is looking to do a big, multi-channel campaign targeting our drive and short-haul markets with messaging that is relevant to the current economic landscape. We have not done a large, fun marketing campaign since pre-Covid and would hit a few markets hard in a way we've never done before. It is expected that this campaign would be contracted out to a marketing agency and would likely launch next fall.

A TDC member asked how messaging will be decided on and how we will know if it's correct for the timing, especially if it takes a while before a marketing contract is awarded and the campaign won't start until next year? Lizzie responded that messaging would be part of what the marketing agency provides, and we don't have to have our message determined at the time we hire the agency. The selected agency can help determine target markets along with messaging at the time. The work of the campaign would start early next year and can be tweaked as we get closer to launch. The main story of our destination wouldn't be changing.

Another member asked if any marketing agency can be hired or if Clackamas County has a specific agency? Lizzie replied that there are no real restrictions, it would be a formal RFP process, and she would like to ensure whoever we choose is willing to work with, or has experience working with, other vendors we currently contract with. It will be important to have a TDC member on the RFP committee and selection process.

Members questioned if the \$900,000 is enough for a large campaign and Lizzie responded that Annie believes the amount will be plenty and anticipates having an RFP for \$700,000 with an additional \$200,000 set aside as buffer room for tweaks or additions as needed.

Office of Economic Development | Tourism Grant Pilot Programs \$1,100,000

Work with the Clackamas County Office of Economic Development to develop two grant programs that would allow grant money to be awarded to for-profit businesses. The budget would be split between two grant programs with \$500,000 going towards a Tourism Small Business & Entrepreneur Acceleration Grant

and \$500,000 for a Tourism Business Technical and Professional Services Fund with the remaining \$100,000 going towards an administration fee for the program.

Questions from TDC members included asking who would make the final decision on awards and what constitutes a small business. Lizzie replied that a review committee would be put in place that would have both staff and TDC members sit on, in addition to the Economic Development team. There are parameters in place to define eligibility.

Clackamas County Fairgrounds Bleachers - \$750,000

This investment would replace the old wooden bleachers with new elevated aluminum seating which would add 540 seats and double the fairgrounds ADA seat capacity. Benefits include more accessibility, increased ticket pricing because of better experience and more event and concert hosting opportunities. This would be completed by summer 2026 and this amount would cover the full cost of the project. Expected return on investment (back into community impact) would be met within 2.5 years.

Members had the following questions to be asked of the fairgrounds:

- Any potential negative impacts to Canby by adding 540 additional seats?
- Proposed ticket cost increase?
- Parking considerations including;
 - Has the project been approved by the city and is it ready to move forward?
 - How is the shuttle for this year working?
 - Does the fairgrounds own the shuttle or is that contracted?
 - How many years is that contract for?

Investments in Clackamas County Parks - \$887,000

Clackamas County Parks proposed fifteen projects they could use funding on. Staff identified nine of the projects to prioritize based on timeline, TLT impact, park revenue impact, visitor experience and improved ADA access. Lizzie went over each of the nine proposed projects at a high level and referred the TDC to the packet for additional info on each project.

A member asked if all nine projects must be approved as a whole or can the projects be approved individually? Lizzie responded that the intention was to approve as a whole, but the TDC may choose to vote individually on the nine projects if they prefer.

Accessibility Assessment and Enhancement Program - \$200,000

Continue to move this current work forward and sponsor all communities within the county with Wheel the World assessments. In addition to the three Clackamas County communities have been assessed already through Travel Oregon's program, we would add about 2-3 more communities to the map with about 20-40 more business assessments. Develop a match funding program to support enhancements that add accessibility to experiences in the county. Program would require business/organization to start with a Wheel The World assessment.

Discussion and concerns were expressed regarding potential legal issues that could stem from Wheel the World assessments specifically for lodging partners and opening themselves up to liability. Lizzie clarified that it would be an optional program and that consumers are provided with measurements done at a business, but the assessment reports are not shared publicly. The business does get a list of suggestions and identified areas for improvement as well as training for front line staff.

A question was asked if we would be funding the assessments themselves or funding suggested improvements post-assessment? Lizzie responded that we would pay for assessments and could consider offering matching grants for ADA improvement with any leftover funds.

3:10 – 3:42pm Discussion and Approval of Carry-Over Funds Plan - Lizzie Keenan, Executive Director

A board member asked about the gap between the roughly \$4,000,000 available and the \$3,900,000 in projected programs. Lizzie responded that the additional \$100,000 hasn't been slated for programming yet and could be kept as a buffer for other opportunities that may arise.

A question was asked regarding where the \$900,000 number for the marketing program came from and a concern was expressed that the budget may be too low. Lizzie shared that marketing's yearly advertising budget is \$980,000 so the additional \$900,000 is close to an additional year of programming and Annie does feel like this budget is plenty.

A member of the public mentioned that it seems like Clackamas County Parks are doing okay, but North Clackamas Parks are struggling currently.

In discussion surrounding how to vote on the slate of projects Holly proposed putting a hold on the vote regarding County Parks projects as she believes there are opportunities in smaller parks that may be overlooked. She also suggested that the board wait to vote on the Fairground bleachers until additional questions can be answered. Tessa proposed that the board still vote on the bleachers with contingencies, if everyone is in favor of the general program to speed up the approval process later.

Board decided to individually vote on each project so that contingencies can be added.

Marketing Campaign - \$900,000

Holly motioned to approve, seconded by Katen and approved unanimously.

Upgrades to Clackamas County Fairgrounds Bleachers - \$750,000

Holly motioned to approve with contingencies awaiting answers on the above posed questions for the project regarding city approvals and project readiness. Luke seconded with the motion with contingencies.

In discussion multiple members agreed with the need for answers to the follow-up questions.

Unanimously approved pending contingencies.

Answers will be sent out to all and will be voted on again at the September meeting.

Office of Economic Development | Tourism Grant Pilot Programs \$1,100,000

Patrick motioned to approve, seconded by Luke and approved unanimously.

Investments in Clackamas County Parks - \$887,000

Luke motioned to approve, seconded by Patrick.

Discussion included wondering if North Clackamas Parks and Recreation should be looped into this conversation to see what their needs are. Multiple members expressed interest in connecting with NCPR and holding this vote at the September meeting. Vote was tabled.

Accessibility Assessment and Enhancement Program - \$200,000

Holly motioned to approve, seconded by Luke.

Members again discussed concerns shared earlier regarding the Wheel the World program and liability surrounding lodging members in particular. It was reiterated that it's optional for partners to participate in. Some members expressed interest in directing funding into other tangible accessibility options such as Mobi-mats.

Aye: Luke, Tessa, Holly Nay: Katen, Patrick, Ryan, Mike

Motion failed pending more information and ideas from Lizzie on other accessibility programs that could be implemented with the funding.

3:43 – 3:57pm Industry and Program Updates – Staff

Lizzie shared an update that a ruling surrounding agritourism was a topic at last month's joint meeting and Luke had submitted a letter of support for our agritourism businesses. Governor Kotek put a pause on moving forward with adjustments to the ruling, so the advocacy done around that was successful. Seems to be a non-issue currently, but unsure how long the hold will be for.

Marketing finished an updated version of the Things to Do map which was shared and available for members to take.

Travel Oregon is kicking off a big campaign around Wheel the World certifications in September and is running their own marketing surrounding it. Their campaign includes working with disabled influencers to show what can be done visitors come to Oregon and what accommodations are available. Wheel The World verified partners will likely have a badge on the Travel Oregon website. Lots of investment behind their storytelling and marketing of this.

Reminder that the September 10th meeting will be focused on work that marketing is currently doing, along with sharing the Q4 report.

EnChroma glasses are at Wooden Shoe Tulip farm for the summer flower festival and then will move to the Dahlia festival on September 1st.

Aaron is going to American Bus Association Road to Reno in January. Travel Portland will also be attending.

3:57 – 4:02pm TDC Updates - TDC Members

Holly – Doing good.

Luke – Season is coming towards it end. Doing good.

Katen – Doing good, hoping for a break in September.

Thelma – Governor reinstated the Oregon City locks funding.

Ryan – In the thick of the busy season, lots of turnovers and bookings.

Patrick – Same.

Tessa – TMK has a free program for young people where they can adopt an animal and learn how to feed, care for it and show it as a 4-H animal at the fair. One of the kids introduced his animal and thanked the County Commissioners and the Fair Board for the opportunity for him to be there with his animal. Very adorable.

Sylecia Johnston – is the new Administrator with Oregon City Destination Management - in charge of Oregon City Tourism, has been reading up on TDC documents and will likely schedule get to know you meeting with people soon.

4:02pm Adjourn Public Meeting