



# Columbia-Pacific Economic Development District September 2012 Newsletter

OCTOBER 25, 2013

[Bank of the West  
Provides Col-Pac  
EDDa \\$5,000 Grant  
for Local Business  
Development](#)

[North by Northwest  
Connectory  
Regional Transit  
System Featured at  
Oregon Transit  
Conference](#)

[ODOT "Enhances  
and Fix-Its" the  
Statewide  
Transportation  
Program](#)

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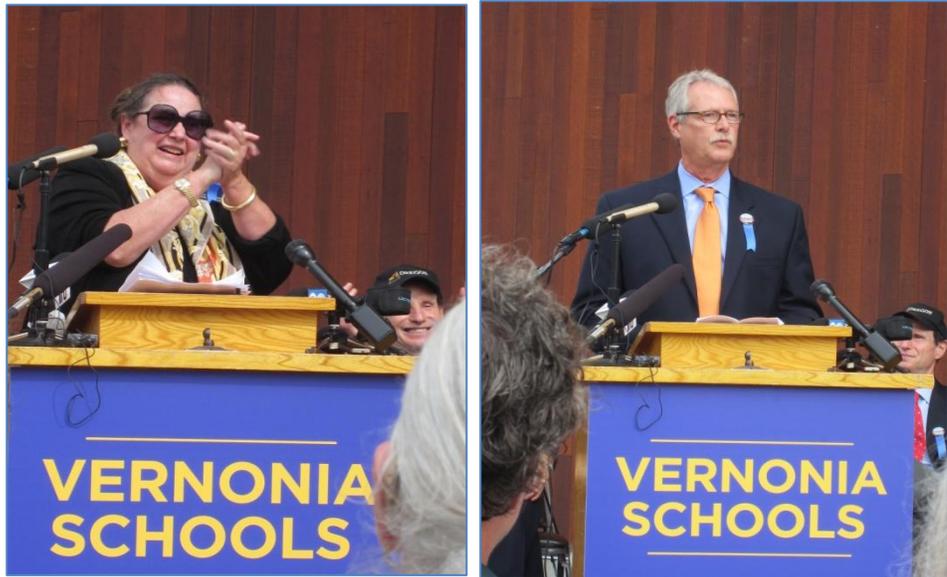
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## Vernonia Schools Dedication August 21, 2012



Just in time for the Fall school year, Vernonia's new K–12 Schools campus was opened on August 21, 2012. On hand for the grand opening were notables: Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden, Rep Suzanne Bonamici, former Governor Ted Kulongoski, Oregon's newest Chief Education Officer, Rudy Crew, State Senator Betsy Johnson, State Rep Alissa Keny-Guyer, and County Commissioner Tony Hyde.

The \$40 million project has drawn financial support from FEMA, the State, local residents through a bond measure, and significant private and non-profit contributions. More than 600 days after breaking ground, and nearly five years after two 500-year floods wiped out the town's schools, the dream of a new all-age school became a reality. The new school campus was designed to serve up to 1,000 students, in a setting allowing for natural lighting, biomass fueled heating and cooling, and wetland/bio-swale areas for treating, storing and sending water for release into the Nehalem River.

Senator Johnson, who has been a key player in bring the new educational institution to fruition noted: "This exemplifies the saying, 'Build a school, save a town.'"

## **Bank of the West Provides Col-Pac EDDa \$5,000 Grant for Local Business Development**



Col-Pac will be using the funding for start-up and expanding business technical assistance. Resources available to local businesses include regional marketing communications, NW Oregon's Small Manufacturers and Suppliers Connector, commercial and industrial site Internet database, and business planning.

Business development activities funded through the grant will occur over the next six months.

## **North by Northwest Connectory Regional Transit System Featured at Oregon Transit Conference**



Northwest Oregon's ambitious project to provide regional transit service between Benton, Clatsop, Columbia, Lincoln and Tillamook counties was a featured presentation at the Oregon Transit Association conference held September 9—12 at the Seaside Convention Center. Funded through a US DOE \$3.5 million grant, the regional system, the North by Northwest Connectory coordinates bus schedules and fares, adds new buses and weekend service, and works with local employers and visitor centers to provide service for local residents, workers and travelers to the region.

## ODOT “Enhances and Fix-Its” the Statewide Transportation Program

The Oregon Transportation Commission and ODOT are changing how the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is developed. The STIP will no longer be developed as a collection of programs tied to specific pools of funding dedicated to specific transportation modes or specialty programs. This summer the STIP was divided into two broad categories: **Fix-It** and **Enhance**.

The primary objective of this change is to enable ODOT to take care of the existing transportation assets while still providing a measure of funding to enhance the state and local transportation system in a truly multimodal way:

- **Enhance:** Activities that enhance, expand, or improve the transportation system
- **Fix-It:** Activities that fix or preserve the transportation system

At the core of this new approach is a single application process for all projects that will be funded under the **Enhance** side of the STIP. The OTC will select **Enhance** projects based on recommendations that are developed by local governments and agencies through a review and prioritization process conducted by the Area Commissions on Transportation, including NW Oregon’s ACT.

Project activities that are eligible for **Enhance** category funds include:

- Bicycle and/or Pedestrian facilities on or off the highway right-of-way
- Development STIP (D-STIP) projects (development work for projects that will not be ready for construction or implementation within the four years of the STIP)
- Projects eligible for Flex Funds (the Flexible Funds program funded Bicycle, Pedestrian, Transit and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) projects, plans, programs, and services)
- Modernization
- Protective Right-of-Way purchases
- Public Transportation (capital projects only, not operations)
- Recreational Trails
- Safe Routes to Schools
- Scenic Byways
- Transportation Enhancement
- Transportation Demand Management

ODOT has held workshops on the new process in each of NW Oregon’s counties this month. The NW Oregon Area Commission on Transportation (NWACT) may schedule a special meeting to discuss potential Enhance project ideas. **Application deadline is: November 27, 2012.**