

## Meet the Technology Services and Operations Director

By C. Clark

While 2020 has been a turbulent year for everyone, John Haytas rose to the challenge in the midst of the pandemic and tackled the task of upgrading OCWCOG's technical services as the new Technical Services and Operations Director. Joining the team on April 27, 2020, John hit the ground running to meet the needs and challenges of telework.



First, John rebuilt and bolstered the IT team's morale and capacity. Then he and the IT team focused on repairing and modernizing the IT systems, including replacing the virtual private network (VPN) which improved security, reliability, and simplified work done using remote network connections. This was critical for everyone who was adjusting to telework and was a much needed upgrade for the organization. Over the past year, John has reinforced the Technical Services team, improved network infrastructure, removed and recycled nearly a literal ton of legacy analog phone cabling, and through replacing agency legacy firewalls, he has increased network security, reliability, and capacity at all three OCWCOG offices (Albany, Corvallis, and Toledo).

John is a U.S. Navy Veteran and joined OCWCOG after working with the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs. John and his family has an adorable Weimaraner-Chocolate Lab mix, named Dusty, who was a rescue from Safe Haven and is considered the family's "fur baby". His daughter also has a Gecko named Bean, who is significantly less fuzzy but is just as a welcome part of the family.

John is now helping OCWCOG invest in modern hardware and software solutions to support Senior and Disability Services, Community Economic Development partnerships, and support our local government members. This will increase security and capabilities of daily tasks across the organization.

*"In a nutshell, I am grateful for the opportunity and experience 2020 has provided through the trials of the year, and by personally bringing me closer to my chosen profession and community."*

Looking forward, John wishes to continue to align technology services with OCWCOG's program-area mission and goals. Through integration of new technologies and systems to enhance service delivery, and investment in the people and infrastructure that utilize OCWCOG's services, the entire OCWCOG team can enable affordable and efficient methods to achieve its goals.

Thank you for joining the team John Haytas. We're glad you're here with us!

# Program Updates

## Community Economic Development, By Jenny Glass



The Community and Economic Development (CED) Department starts calendar year 2021 by bringing on a new CED Director, Jenny Glass. Jenny joins the OCWCOG team from Portland, where she led community economic development efforts through her leadership with The Rosewood Initiative. The CED Department weathered a lot of transition through 2020 and staff are looking forward to strengthening the team's foundation to both deepen the impact of current programs and projects, as well as seek new opportunities to support communities across the Cascades West region.

Here are a few updates from our team regarding activities in Linn, Benton and Lincoln Counties:

### Transportation

- Transportation Options: Creating packets for area DMV's to provide transportation options for seniors/others who may be losing driving privileges
- Seamless Transit progress to provide a website ([cwide.org](http://cwide.org)) that integrates all regional agency information, including bus routes, agency fares, bus locational data, predications on bus arrival times, and purchasing tickets online. Smart phones will have accessibility to use the website, and additional apps for the bus data and purchasing tickets.
- Completed the Highway 99W Transit Feasibility Study, with collaboration with the University of Oregon, researched the demand along Highway 99W between Junction City and McMinnville. Key findings found variances between the population demographics and frequency of transportation needs.
- Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) is working with Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to update the Corvallis Albany Lebanon Model (CALM), the region's travel demand model.
- Joint AAMPO/CAMPO meeting in March
- Continuing work on Albany Area MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- Co-managing Jefferson Transportation System Plan (TSP) update, beginning talks with Tangent to update their TSP.
- Helping with Cherriot's [Salem to Albany Corridor Feasibility Study Project](#)
- Since the start of the pandemic, Ride Line was still providing Non-Emergent Medical Transport and have provided over 60,000 physical rides to over 4,000 unique individuals, these numbers are from April 2020 – December 2020. This does not include mileage reimbursement. For mileage, we have reimbursed over 22,000 trips to over 550 unique individuals.
- Our NEMT Drivers were eligible for the COVID Vaccine in Phase 1a. There were in Group 3.
- Ride Line has been providing transport to COVID testing sites and has started providing transport to COVID Vaccine sites.
- Albany Transit System (ATS) has a Transit Development Plan from 2018 that provided a general outline for transit improvements over short, medium, and long term scenarios.
- The Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) provided funding for Albany to move forward with the medium term scenario. ATS requested funding to implement this scenario through the Linn Co STIF plan, which Commissioners recently approved.
- This project develops a more detailed implementation strategy, finalizing routes, stops, and schedules. COG is handling project management and public outreach, and is working with consultants Nelson\Nygaard who are providing technical support.

## Community Development

- OCWCOG staff provide planning and land use services in Yachats and Toledo.
- Helped secure a Transportation Growth Management grant in Sweet Home.
- Cascades West Regional Consortium, an independent 501c3 supported by OCWCOG, continues to meet to work on issues surrounding land development in wetland areas.
- OCWCOG continues to provide GIS mapping services to the region including:
  - Geodatabase maintenance for Philomath, Toledo, Monroe and Adair Village utilities (storm, water, sewer) and administrative data, with interactive viewers;
  - Buildable Lands Inventories

## Economic Development

- 2020-2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) adopted by Cascades West Economic Development District (CWEDD) Board on February 11, 2021
  - Click [HERE](#) for the full document.
  - See Attachment A for an overview
- Anne Whittington was hired as OCWCOG's Economic Recovery Coordinator with CARES ACT funding received in 2020

## Senior, Disability, and Community Services, By Randi Moore

### Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Helps People Navigate Vaccination Process

**N**avigating the systems put in place by County Health Departments to receive a COVID-19 vaccination can be a complicated process. Unfortunately, the community members who are most vulnerable to the COVID -19 Virus, older adults and people with disabilities, face even more barriers than their neighbors in understanding and managing the process for getting vaccinated. These barriers include a lack of computer proficiency (which is the way appointments are being scheduled), inability to leave their home to go to shot locations, and a lack of accessible transportation.

ADRC call center agents are receiving a large number of calls from at risk community members daily and are providing a much needed resource for callers seeking support and information. Additionally, callers who identify that they want to get signed up for a vaccine but don't have the ability to do it for themselves and have no friends or family to assist are routed to an agent who can help them register for and appointment time, explain the process, and schedule a time for the booster to be administered. Consumers identifying that they have a lack of transportation to vaccine clinic locations are referred to the ADRC supervisory team who are problem-solving these issues on a case by case basis.



*Photo by CDC on Unsplash*

## Adult Protective Services Numbers Continue to Increase

OCWCOG’s Adult Protective Services (APS) team investigates allegations of verbal, sexual, and physical abuse, as well as neglect and financial exploitation. Protective services are provided to those 65 and older, and people with physical disabilities over the age of 18. Preventing abuse and neglect before it happens and bringing awareness of the issue to the community has been the focus of the increased outreach the unit has done over the last four years.

Data pulled recently for the creation of OCWCOG’s 2021-2025 Area Plan highlighted how that outreach has affected the workload for the APS unit since 2017.

2017-2020 Adult Protective Services Data by County			
	Complaints	Community Investigations	Facility Investigations
Linn 2017	1062	413	248
Linn 2018	1398	431	294
Linn 2019	1656	479	343
Linn 2020	1531	428	219
Increase/decrease	<b>44%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>-12%</b>
Benton 2017	346	118	104
Benton 2018	350	68	120
Benton 2019	495	106	151
Benton 2020	698	142	182
Increase	<b>101%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Lincoln 2017	299	156	26
Lincoln 2018	328	129	21
Lincoln 2019	404	135	49
Lincoln 2020	537	180	55
Increase	<b>80%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>112%</b>

Workload for Adult Protective Services across the State is something that is being looked at this Legislative session. Fingers crossed, that advocacy efforts lead to a bump in funding that will enable us to hire more APS screeners and investigators, increasing bandwidth to support the higher call volume trends.

## Current Job Openings

- Adult Protective Services Specialist, Albany/Toledo
- Case Manager, Albany
- Case Manager, Toledo
- Program Manager

To learn more, or apply, please visit:

<http://www.ocwcog.org/careers>

## Contact Information

Seniors & Disabilities Service  
(541) 967-8630

Rideline  
(541) 924-8738

Economic Development  
(541) 924-8465

General Administration  
(541) 967-8720



ADRC  
(800) 638-0510

## Resources

### Update on Indoor Entertainment Establishments

Please view this official announcement on changes to indoor establishments. Link [HERE](#)

Note: indoor establishments are defined as: “indoor entertainment locations including but not limited to indoor aquariums, indoor theaters, indoor arenas, indoor concert halls, indoor gardens, indoor museums, indoor event spaces, and any indoor location where indoor entertainment activities occur that are open to the public.”

### Local Events

Visit Philomath's "Black in Oregon" Exhibit. Open from February 17<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>

Black in Oregon: 1840 – 1870 is an exhibition hosted at the Philomath Museum, scheduled to be available until April 17, 2021, thanks to the City of Philomath’s Inclusivity Ad Hoc Committee and generous underwriters Cecily Feudo and Janet Nishihara. Black in Oregon was originally created for display at the Oregon State Archives Building and highlights the lives of black pioneers who came to Oregon between 1840 and 1870. This incarnation of the exhibition features artifacts and photos from the Benton County Historical Society collection, some of which have never been publicly displayed.

It’s at the Benton County History Museum, at the Old College building. All residents in Benton, Linn, and Lincoln counties are invited to view the exhibit and learn about the past. Directions and hours available [HERE](#).