

Columbia Economic Team

St. Helens City Council

Semi-Annual Report

Wednesday, February 19th, 2025



COLUMBIA
ECONOMIC
TEAM



Executive Director Report

Overview: Update, Work In-Progress

- Recruitment balanced with Retention & Expansion
- Energy supply & service continues at forefront
- Robust, sustained small business activity & programming
- Nothing is constant but change



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Active & Pending Investment Projects

NXT Clean Energy

- Land use approval
- DEQ 401 water quality permit received
- EIS progressing

Project Arcadia

- Extended due diligence;
- CET connected Arcadia with State/Business Oregon; also with lenders
- Potential Brownfield candidate

Project Spice – Singular Oregon Site in North America

- Substantial state commitment
- Expected decision in Q1
- Continued follow-up - primarily energy

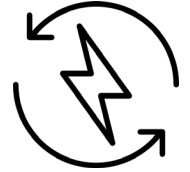
RestorCap (Armstrong Property)

- Floodplain and development plans approved
- Energy study in 3rd phase



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ENERGY



Load and Transmission Capacity

Oregon Semiconductor Infrastructure Land Readiness (SIL) Grants

- County Load & Transmission Planning, about to launch
- St. Helens Kaster substation; launched
- RestorCap Service Request/LLIR study: 3rd phase, served by same transmission as Project Spice
- **Project Spice:** Feasibility phase, preparing to move forward
- Additional CRPUD LLIRs & BPA Regional Pilot (PARS) -- underway



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Engagement & Advocacy



- PCC “CORE” CNC micro-credential program
- Columbia County Public Health Initiative
- Housing – County/Small City Infrastructure Gap Analysis
- Congressional Community initiated Projects (CIP): 5 projects expected
- Oregon Economic Development Association (OEDA) Legislative
- PROSPECT grant (Port, Beaver Dock)
- FEMA BiOp
- BRE – Stakeholder visioning
- CET Board strategic planning retreat 2/25



Small Business Resources & Updates



Small Business Resources: Highlights

CLIENTS
SERVED IN
2024



120

TOTAL
CLIENTS IN 2.5
YEARS



330

30 +
CLIENTS



5+ HRS

PART TIME
ADVISORS



4 ADDED



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AMERICA'S
SBDC
OREGON

“Munch N Learn” Educational Series



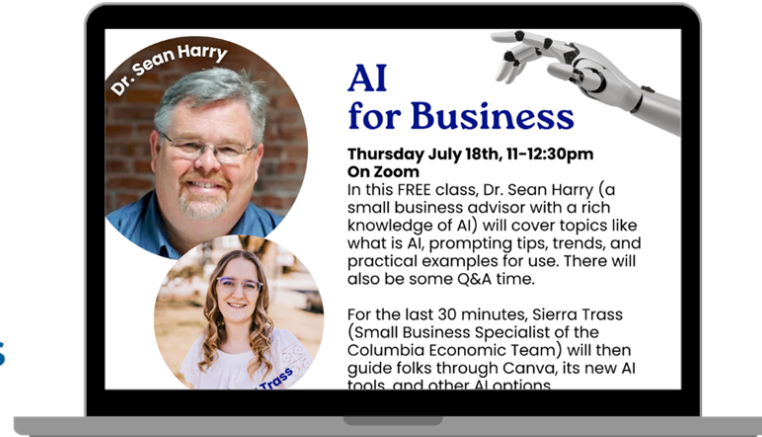
27 CLASSES ACROSS THE COUNTY



330 ATTENDEES



15 SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS



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FOR NEXT MUNCH N
LEARN CLASS



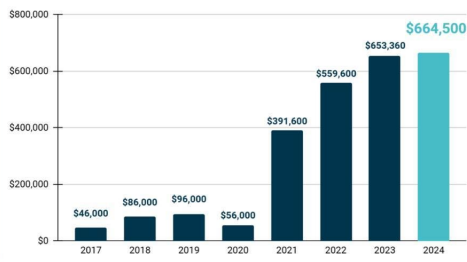


Keep It Local Columbia County

Another Record Breaking Year!

\$665,500 in local spending captured and generated!!!

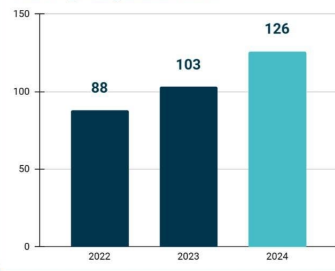
Wonderland Card Performance



More Records Broken!

126 participating locations up 18% from last year!

Participating Businesses



800+ attendees at the Small Business Saturday Bazaar

Nov. 30th at the John Gumm Building St. Helens



Keep It Local Columbia County

- **38+ Vendors** participated in the Small Business Saturday Bazaar
- Over **3,304 Buyer Cards** were submitted during the 2024 Keep It Local Holiday Campaign
- Next Up - **National Small Business Week**
- **I Dig St Helens** - underway!



Sponsored by





GRO Greater St Helens

Technical Assistance Grant Application



- 4 GRO Loans funded, all nearly at the \$50K max
- 4 applications in the queue
- Only 1 declined application



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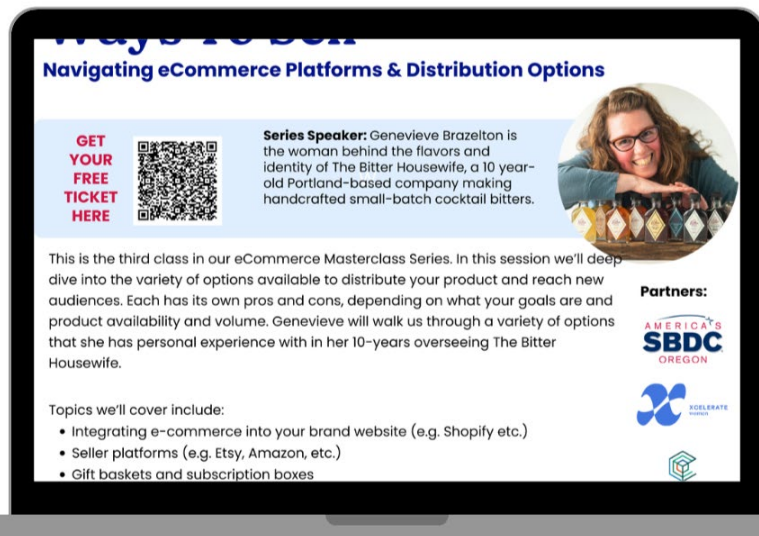




GRO Greater St Helens

- eCommerce class series started in December
- Two previous classes YouTube

Upcoming e-Commerce Class





GRO Greater St Helens

What's Next?

- Growing **local Leadership Team**
- **Conducting Ripple Effect Mapping (REM)** updating
- **Upcoming:**
 - Annual reporting, Application for Y3 (extended)
 - Coordination/collaboration with Foundry Collective, Co-Starter, CORE & Business Start-up



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Tourism



- **Travel Oregon Competitive Grants** – Brand Marketing, 2/27
- **Governor's Tourism Conference**
 - CET Guests
 - Branding workshop sponsor
 - OTLA Alumni dinner in St. Helens



Columbia Economic Team Structure



**COLUMBIA
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Columbia Economic Team (CET)

Purpose: CET's mission is to promote the creation, retention, growth, and attraction of business and industry throughout Columbia County.

Private & Public Membership Supported

- Business recruitment, retention, and expansion
- Advocacy: Investment, public funding/grants, business, organizations, policy, programming, issues, regulatory & permitting
- Collaborator, Convener, Facilitator: Business, government, non-profits, communities
- Small Business Program & Enterprise Zone Manager



Columbia County Small Business Development Center

Free, confidential, 1-on-1 business advising on:

- Business & marketing plans
- Accessing capital
- Hiring & and managing teams
- Navigating regulations
- Cash flow
- Starting up, launching, growth, and exit planning
- and much more!

The center also provides:

- Biz. service referrals
- Educational classes



Keep it Local Columbia County

Purpose: Bolster the local economy by persuading residents and visitors to shop, taste, play, and choose local first.

- Robust and FREE online directory + mobile app
- Social media & newsletter promotions
- Seasonal programs
- Paid business marketing & sponsorships opportunities (optional)



GRO Greater

Purpose: To connect entrepreneurs to the right resources at the right time. Funded by the Ford Family Foundation.

- Resource and asset mapping
- GRO Navigator connects with founders, resources, assets & opportunities
- Facilitates small business loans up to \$50k
- Coordination with CET business programs and initiatives



Tourism

Destination Management
Organization Designated by
Travel Oregon

Purpose: Promote and cultivate Columbia County as a visitor destination by leveraging and enhancing resources and assets.

- Strategic planning
- Branding & advocacy
- Destination development
- Promoting recreational and hospitality assets
- Funding advocate & facilitator
- Partnership: local, regional & state



Columbia Economic Team (CET)

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GRO Greater

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Tourism

Wela Negelspach, Director of Tourism

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Mobile App: "Columbia County, OR"

Find Local Events and Things to Do in Columbia County

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or search "Columbia County" on the Apple and Google Play stores

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Book a **FREE** SBDC Advising Session Here

**Thank you for
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