

Lane County
Legislative Principles and Priorities
Recommended by the Lane County Legislative Committee, 04/08/2026

The Lane County Legislative Principles and Priorities provide a framework for the Board of Commissioners and the Lane County staff to work within. These documents serve as a reference for legislative positions and objectives while providing direction for the Board of Commissioners and staff throughout the year. The County's Legislative Principles and Priorities are the foundation of a focused advocacy strategy.

Objective

The primary objective is for the Lane County Board of Commissioners to adopt official positions on clearly stated legislative issues at the start of the legislative session and in advance of the annual United Front trip. The legislative approval process is streamlined by receiving clear direction from the Board on pertinent legislative issues at the beginning of the legislative and Congressional sessions and this is accomplished by adoption of the Principles contained in this document.

The Principles are designed to provide guidance to Intergovernmental Relations staff on policy issues that arise during the Legislature and Congress and for which insufficient time exists to fully vet the issue through a formal convening of the Legislative Committee. Priorities are specific legislative initiatives that typically involve the drafting, introduction, and advocacy involved to get a bill passed into law. Legislative Principles and Priorities shall address issues directly relevant to or impacting the provision of county services.

Federal and state legislative proposals and policies consistent with the Legislative Principles may be supported by the County. Those policies or proposals inconsistent with this agenda may be opposed by the County.

For proposed legislation consistent with the County's Legislative Principles and Priorities, the County Administrator or designee shall be authorized to prepare position letters on behalf of the Board or an individual commissioner, and affix the Board Chair's or the individual commissioner's signature to those letters as appropriate. In both instances, the County Administrator or designee will provide the Board with a copy of the signed letter. Items not addressed in the County's Legislative Principles and Priorities may require further Board direction.

County departments are encouraged to monitor and be knowledgeable of any legislative issues related to their discipline. However, any requests for the County to take positions on a legislative matter must be directed to the Intergovernmental Relations Manager. County departments may not take positions on legislative issues without the Legislative Committee's review and approval, or a clear Principle or Priority to support their work.

Goals and Strategies

Goals:

- Advocate the County's legislative interests at the Federal, State and County levels.
- Inform and provide information to our Legislators, Board of Commissioners, and Staff on the legislative process and key issues and legislation that could have a potential impact on the County.
- Serve as an active participant with other local governments, the Association of Oregon Counties, regional agencies, and local professional organizations on legislative/regulatory issues that are important to the County and our Region.
- Seek grant and funding assistance for County projects, services, and programs to enhance services for our community.
- Ensure fidelity to the most recently adopted Strategic Plan when setting Principles and Priorities.

Strategies:

- Communicate legislative positions on proposed Federal, State, and County legislation, measures, initiatives and governmental regulations.
- Seek Federal, State, and County funding through allocations, grants and other discretionary funding for County projects, services and programs.
- Work closely with the Association of Oregon Counties, our legislative advocates and other counties in advocating for the County's Federal, State and County legislative interests.
- Share information with the Board of Commissioners, County staff, and the community on legislative issues.
- Where appropriate, integrate key staff or elected officials into workgroups, task forces, advisory committees or other bodies that are developing or implementing legislation.

Draft Document Key:

Green Highlighted Text = Addition to Existing Principles and Priorities Document

Yellow Highlighted/Strikethrough Text = Remove from Document

LANE COUNTY PRIORITY BILLS (Oregon Legislature)

- Seek a revenue source to reverse the historical decline in County Assessment Function Funding Assistance.
- Establish a stable funding source for County Emergency Management and support creation of a statewide emergency management cost recovery mechanism for local governments.
- Draft, introduce, and support legislation to embed statutory Time Study formula funding within the Community Corrections Act.
- Amend elections statutes such that local measure standards align with state measure standards for mandatory language and fiscal impact, assign the cost of elections administration to jurisdictions that adopt voting methodologies that deviate from statewide norms, and seek a change to elections dates for recall races.
- Seek a dedicated source of funding for Mobile Crisis Intervention Team services
- Support legislation and ongoing advocacy that quickens pace of Stabilization Center groundbreaking and opening.
- Amend County Service District statutes to allow for non-contiguous boundaries.
- Support efforts to establish a product stewardship framework for batteries.
- **Defend against changes to** enhanced budgetary flexibility for local transient lodging tax revenue.
- Seek appropriations to support renovations of Lane County Circuit Court facilities.
- Seek additional behavioral health parity enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with federal health parity laws.
- Amend municipal utilities statutes to enhance fiscal reporting to certain tax districts.
- Support appropriate funding for youth and adult Behavioral Health Deflection services for the biennium.
- Address the outcomes and support technical fixes of the Tyler v Hennepin County reform legislation.
- Seek a dedicated funding source for maintaining historic covered bridges that are no longer eligible for state highway funding due to their off-system status.
- Support efforts to address the erosion of transportation construction, operations, and maintenance funding at the state and county levels.
- Support efforts to create new crime and punishments for threatening public officials.
- Seek a Discovery Fix for the District Attorney's office to require the payment of a reasonably calculated fee to reimburse cost for providing discovery.

LANE COUNTY FEDERAL PRIORITIES (US Congress)

- Ensure all claims tendered by a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) are accepted by the Health Resources and Services Administration and the Department of Justice.
- Support efforts to secure payment parity for mental health, behavioral health including crisis response and stabilization services, and substance use treatment.
- Follow up on funding for wastewater system assistance from the authorities granted in the Water Resources Development Act of 2022.
- Seek WRDA feasibility study for Willamette River revetment repairs.
- Support efforts to protect and enhance transportation revenue for local governments as vehicle technologies continue to evolve.
- Support efforts to enable FHA Financing for Manufactured Home mortgages.
- Ensure continued federal support for funding Federally Qualified Health Centers and the 340B program. Oppose legislation that allows further restriction on where patients can access 340B medications.
- Support efforts to ensure federal Secure Rural Schools payments.
- Oppose efforts to restrict access to gender-affirming care
- Support efforts to sustain housing, homelessness, and block grant funding (CDBG, HOME, CSBG, ESG, Section 8, LIHEAP, Weatherization).
- Protect funding for existing permanent housing programs through ESG and CoC funding to the greatest extent possible, focusing on evidence-based approaches for most vulnerable populations

Lane County 2027 Legislative Principles

General

1. Identify and oppose unfunded mandates and local pre-emptions, particularly those that inhibit opportunities for locally derived revenues.
2. Work to maintain or increase existing revenue streams to counties.
3. Work to ensure revenues exist to local governments to fund any new services.
4. Advocate maintenance of existing local authority, and support issues which provide greater authority to govern effectively, efficiently, and flexibly at the local level.
5. Advocate for county representation on all state boards, commissions and study committees which affect county government and have non-legislative members.
6. Work cooperatively with other regional coordinators, groups and associations to support efforts to improve the delivery of services at the local level.
7. Support efforts to develop increased communication and greater compatibility among levels of government and within and between agencies in all levels of government.
8. Support legislation that encourages economic growth.
9. Support legislative efforts to address the root causes of inequities.
10. Protect local control of land use decision-making and oppose legislation that would hinder or threaten local control.
11. Monitor state policies to ensure new obligations are funded and contain adequate provisions to address embedded liabilities.
12. Support efforts to mitigate exposure to future PERS liabilities.
13. Protect the quality, accuracy, and completeness of the County's index of property transfer transactions.
14. Ensure all Lane County residents have access to fast, affordable, and reliable broadband to maximize their economic, educational, health, and public safety needs.
15. Support elections integrity and the staffing and infrastructure systems necessary to ensure accurate and timely elections.
16. Elevate the importance of robust County Emergency Management functions, including the need for stable and ongoing revenue to address mitigation and preparedness activities.
17. Support funding for local governments for any mandated benefits, or other mandated laws that impact services or benefits to employees and increase administrative workload.
18. Support efforts to ensure employment related laws fully describe and address fiscal impacts to local government operations.

Public Safety

- Support and maximize grant and contract funding for rural patrol, law enforcement training and multijurisdictional efforts to improve public safety.
- Support funding for prosecution services, services for crime victims, and efforts to reduce recidivism.
- Ensure that local resources for the Office of the District Attorney are not further eroded through Legislative policies that enable cost shifting from the state to counties, and that the law library remains sustainably operated through appropriate legislation and funding.
- Support efforts to expand mental health treatment options and jail diversion strategies for individuals with mental illness, including maintaining and defending funding for Community Corrections Act, Juvenile Crime Prevention, Specialty Courts, Justice Reinvestment, Deflection, and IMPACTS programs.

- Support adequate funding for specialty courts in both the adult and juvenile systems, and individualized services for youth offenders to remain in their home communities.
- Support Medicaid reform such that benefits may accrue to inmates.
- Support efforts which serve to advance diversity and access to services by non-English language speakers.
- Ensure the Oregon Department of Revenue’s collection unit can efficiently support local collections.
- Ensure public safety assets obtained via the US Defense Logistics Agency remain in Lane County ownership.
- Work to ensure that Lane County’s regional emergency communications and preparations systems are supported by sustainable funding frameworks.
- Support stable and enhanced funding for Family Mediation services.

Health and Human Services

- Support implementation and full funding of Public Health Modernization and strengthening local public health authorities to deliver essential public health functions.
- Ensure stable Medicaid funding and collaboration with Oregon CCOs to enhance access to medical care and community health initiatives.
- Support state Medicaid match for Nurse Family Partnership and other early intervention programs
- Support strong local mental health authority and enhanced funding for behavioral health services aimed at increasing access and improving health outcomes.
- Support funding for community health centers operations, development, and real property acquisition and improvements.
- Ensure stable funding for community-based services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including 100% of workload, along with mandatory state classification reviews for related positions.
- Foster multi-agency collaborations and objectives to decrease homelessness among veterans and elders, persons with disabilities, people with behavioral health diagnosis, families with children, and youth, such as Housing First, supportive housing, and emergency housing.
- Sustain FY26 funding for homelessness prevention and support services (ORE-DAP, ORI, LTRA, OSSP, SHAP, EHA, HSP).
- Support legislation removing the five-month time limits for birth and death certificates through local vital records programs.
- Support funding efficacy-informed prevention programs to improve health and reduce disparities, including tobacco, nicotine, inhalants, opioids, and preventable disease vaccinations.
- Support strategies to reduce the negative effects of problem/disorder gambling.
- Support funding for mental health services, detox services, and prevention services.
- Support funding for workforce development and career technical education.
- Support strategies to increase the pipeline of qualified nurses, mental health specialists, physicians, and psychiatrists to work in Oregon.
- Support multi-system efforts to address opiate overprescribing and addiction, including unifying data to more effectively track overdoses in Oregon.
- Support policies and funding which address the prevention of suicide.
- Oppose exceptions and efforts that undermine the Oregon Clean Air Act.
- Support wildfire smoke mitigation and blue green algal bloom response.
- Oppose efforts to legalize the consumption of recreational marijuana outside of the privacy of one’s home,
- Support efforts to increase Oregon’s beer and wine tax.

- Protect existing pharmaceutical pricing structures unique to FQHC's (the 340-B structure)
- Support efforts to mitigate the risk arising from restoring defendants to competency in the community in accordance with ORS 161.365 and ORS 161.370.
- Oppose simple transfer of existing BHRN administration from OHA to Alcohol & Drug Policy Commission without significant reform to the BHRN model funding and coordination processes.
- Support modeling BHRNs on the All-In model of multi-agency coordination as a continuum of care. Fundamental to this model must be the Community Mental Health Program as the BHRN anchor given the many duties and responsibilities that CMHPs carry.

Human Resources

- Support efforts to treat, evaluate and consider each collectively bargained employee group independently and separately from non-represented employees and other collectively bargained groups for purposes of pay equity under Federal, State, and local government laws.
- Reduce opportunities for leave stacking and promote intermittent leave options; simplify leave banks and align federal and state laws to facilitate employer tools.
- Support benefit programs aimed at reducing work absences, increasing worker productivity, and enabling family and medical leave protections that prevent job loss, benefits, or seniority erosion.
- Support efforts to strengthen employer rights in enforcing call-in procedures, requiring medical certification, address the charging of fees for completion of forms by providers including potential prohibition or standardization of fees and service level guarantees prohibit, and promote greater flexibility in communication between leave administrators and healthcare providers.
- Allow employers to auto-enroll employees into deferred compensation programs with clear opt-out options.
- Provide tax-advantaged savings tools for childcare. Support alternate funding models for childcare similar to models such as the Michigan Tri-Share program (<https://www.michigan.gov/mileap/early-childhood-education/mi-tri-share-child-care>)
- Expand access for low-wage workers to programs like the Oregon Health Plan,
- Oppose efforts that create inequities in benefits between temporary and permanent employees.
- Support efforts to define impairment in the workplace under situations where medically sanctioned drug use is allowed.
- Support clarity in laws and administrative rules regarding applicability of prevailing wages on public improvement projects, and the removal of any provisions that make counties the enforcement agent for these laws.
- Support efforts to maintain current equity laws, and allow training and programs on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging topics without fear of violating discrimination laws.
- Support laws that ensure employer oversight of AI use in automated systems such as applicant tracking systems and other critical automated decision systems.

Housing

- Support regional housing analysis, changes to land use policy, and funding to increase supply of housing across housing continuum throughout the County, including affordable housing.
- Support enhanced funding for emergency shelter and homelessness prevention programs.
- Support permanent Emergency Rental Assistance Programs for low-income households facing unexpected economic shocks and/or evictions.
- Support the establishment of low-cost housing options, including manufactured home parks, within rural unincorporated communities.

Public Works

- Support policies that require producers of materials sold or distributed in Oregon to share disposal and recycling costs through environmentally sound stewardship programs that minimize the unintended consequences of materials across their entire life cycle.
- Seek funding for and support efforts which incentivize public and commercial fleets to transition towards cleaner burning or renewable fuels.
- Oppose efforts to implement expedited replacements of diesel engines unless fully funded and evidence of increased public health impacts are documented.
- Provide opportunities for healthy activities through parks, open spaces, alternative travel choices and event center activities, including re-investing in existing public works infrastructure to avoid higher deferred maintenance costs.
- Work with non-profits to identify tax foreclosed properties that can be added to available affordable housing.
- Support our regional partners to provide sustainable animal services to the community.
- Promote changes in state land use laws to facilitate economic development and community growth countywide and in unincorporated communities, including extending the deadline created by HB 3197 to mitigate the potential risk of costly appeals, allow for farm to table operations on agricultural lands, and to eliminate the 2-acre minimum lot size for a county to allow rural accessory dwelling units.
- Support cost recovery efforts within the Land Management Division.
- Support Oregon Fairs Association legislative requests for additional funding to county fairs.
- Maintain the Firewise Communities Wildfire protection project.
- Support efforts to minimize methane generation from solid waste during collection and landfilling, and efforts to reduce Lane County's environmental footprint through efficient waste management practices.
- Seek additional funding and policies which address Lane County's high rate of roadway fatalities.
- Seek necessary changes to County Service District statutes to enable future special district transfers when circumstances demand them.
- Seek additional funding and resources for counties to carry out mandated long range planning work.
- Support the creation of a fee on new RVs that would fund the disposal of old RVs.

Infrastructure

- Support safe infrastructure, roads, bridges, parks and buildings.
- Support efforts to ensure greatest possible flexibility for use of funds to meet local needs.
- Support policies which clarify county development and ownership authority over fiber networks.
- Support funding of a statewide stormwater permitting infrastructure enhancement and maintenance program.

Economic Development

- Support existing traded sector business recruitment, retention and expansion that complement Lane County's unique natural environment and intellectual capital.
- Support agri-business industries such as food and beverage, and advanced wood products manufacturing.
- Support workforce development efforts including career technical education.
- Support the development of brownfields.
- Support development of critical infrastructure such as high-speed fiber in rural Lane County.
- Support the existing allocation process of county video lottery dollars for economic development or establish a periodic true up procedure if allocations are based on a discreet biennial

appropriation.

Emergency Management

- Support legislation requiring backup power and broadband for liquid fuel dispensing stations.

Technology Services

- Support funding for cyber defense services.