The Long Road Home!
After years of dreaming, we are finally getting closer

The thought of a new Extension Education Center in Clackamas County has been a dream since the formation of the Clackamas Extension and 4-H Service District in 2008. That is when County government officials and local Extension administrators decided it would be prudent to save as much of the District’s new property tax revenue—as quickly as possible—to someday build a new Extension office designed for the organization’s needs. Over the past 100 years of serving the citizens of Clackamas County, Extension has been housed in five locations—including the current office on Warner Milne Road in Oregon City since 1983. Looking ahead to Extension’s next 100 years, the plan has been to design a space best suited to meet the needs of tomorrow’s programs.

Now, following years of planning and dreaming, the new Extension Education Center in Oregon City is about to start taking shape.

We look forward to the journey ahead. This newsletter will help keep the community up to date with our progress to complete the final stages of planning, construction, moving in, and fundraising. Our plan is to produce this newsletter bi-monthly to keep you updated.

Behind the entire project has been Mike Bondi, long-time Oregon State University Extension Forestry Agent. Bondi has worked closely with Clackamas Extension’s faculty and staff, County officials, and the community to bring this project “home.”

Extension Education Center Timeline

2008 (Nov.): Citizens vote to create and fund Extension & 4-H Service District.

2009 (July): First Extension District budget approved including reserving $500,000 for future building fund.

2014 (Sept.): Clackamas Extension Advisory Council recommends to begin planning ahead for a new Extension building.

2015 (Nov.): Clackamas County Commissioners approve preliminary plans for new Extension Education Center with location on southeast corner of Warner Milne and Beavercreek Roads.

2016 (Sept.): Soderstrom Architects hired to lead second phase of building project.
The Board of Clackamas County Commissioners met on October 22, during a policy session to hear planning details for Extension's proposed Education Center. Included was information about the construction and design of the building, a financing proposal, the construction contract bidding process, and timelines for the project. Following presentations and discussions, the Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the project and put it on a fast track toward groundbreaking in 2020.

“Obviously, we are very excited to finally be this far,” said Mike Bondi, Clackamas County Extension Liaison. “Now, we expect the pace on the project to really speed up.”

Project Architect, Mike Shea, with Soderstrom Architects in Portland, presented design information for the building including unique aspects of the construction, energy efficiencies, and sustainability. Jeff Jorgensen, Clackamas County’s Buildings and Facilities Manager, shared plans for the public bidding process and potential construction timelines. Christa Wolfe, Chief Financial Officer for Clackamas County, described the financing plan needed to be in place for the building and the start of construction.

“A lot of people have been involved in the Extension Education Center project for a number of years, now. This approval by the Commissioners is the huge step needed to move us forward in anticipation for a groundbreaking,” Bondi said.

One of the key decisions by the County Commissioners at the recent meeting was how to finance the project. The County will sell bonds on behalf of the Extension Service District. Extension will pay the debt service.

Even though Extension has been saving money each year from their budget since the formation of the District in 2008, escalating building costs means that only about ½ of the total project will be saved. Private fundraising has been planned from the beginning as a way to reduce the debt and minimize impact on Extension’s annual budget.

Extension’s goal for the Education Center project is to raise $3 million in financial gifts and material donations for the project.

Inviting front lobby will serve as the front door for Oregon State University in Clackamas County, our services, our office and program staff, and our facilities.

Timeline continued

2017 (April): Advanced technology, all-wood, and Net Zero building design emerges for Extension Education Center.

2017 (May-Sept.): Private fund-raising community assessment undertaken with Extension stakeholders.

2017 (Dec.): Clackamas Chapter of the OSU Master Gardeners makes first donation to the Extension Education Center ($5,000)—and before fundraising officially begins!

2018 (May): Land Use Approval process initiated with City of Oregon City.

2019 (July): City of Oregon City grants Land Use approval for new Clackamas Extension Education Center. This triggers final planning for construction to begin!

State-of-the-art Teaching Kitchen will be used for food preservation and cooking classes, sample preparation, and demonstrations designed to address the needs of youth, adults, and underserved community members.
Final construction documents and details will be turned into the County for their review and the preparations needed for the public bid process. We hope to have the bidding open by the end of November. It is expected that bidding will be open through the middle of January. Contractor selection will occur in February. Ground breaking is anticipated for March or April. Move-in could be by the end of 2020 or early 2021.

Between now and the end of the year, work is being done to secure wood product commitments for the Extension Education Center. “We put the word out to local woodland owners in September about possibly needing logs for the building,” said Bondi. “We have been pleasantly surprised to have about 8 landowners—right away—that offered logs. Now, we need to organize the harvesting, debarking, and turning.” The Center’s design includes Cascadian-style architecture features Douglas-fir and western redcedar logs for the entry facades, trellises, and roof top screening for heating and cooling above the kitchen.

Watch a 360 degree view of the interior and exterior of Extension Education Center here: https://youtu.be/njf4yhg77Ek

Main meeting/conference room with seating capacity of 150. Eight additional smaller meeting spaces provide capacity for another 66 attendees.

OSU’s Master Gardener clinic, library and diagnostic lab will provide improved resources for the community and our volunteers who serve the public.

Next Steps…