



CITY OF FLORENCE OREGON'S PREMIER COASTAL COMMUNITY



City Services Delivery

Sustain and improve the delivery of cost effective and efficient services, including public safety, to the Florence community and visitors.



Livability & Quality of Life

Sustain and improve the City's livability and quality of life for Florence residents and visitors.



Economic Development

Sustain and improve the City's economic development program and efforts towards enhancing the Florence economy, including housing, business development, and increasing living wage jobs.



Financial & Organizational Sustainability

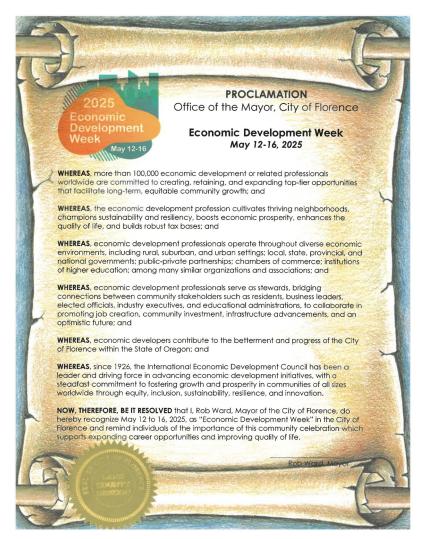
Sustain and improve the City's financial position, City-wide policies, and infrastructure to support current and future needs.



Communication & Trust

Sustain and improve the City's communication program and strengthen community trust.

www.ci.florence.or.us





City of Florence Economic Development Annual Report 2024 - 2025

conomic Development is one of five City Goals adopted and reaffirmed by the Florence City Council to meet the City's mission. The goal is to "sustain and improve the City's economic development program and efforts towards enhancing the Florence economy, including housing, business development, and increasing living wage jobs."

The City of Florence Economic Development Staff serves as a bridge between local businesses, entrepreneurs, and organizations and the resources available in Florence, Lane County, the Oregon Coast, and the State of Oregon. Many accomplishments are done in partnership with City Staff in cooperation with our greater regions and with policy guidance from the Florence City Council. This network all works together for the betterment of Florence's economy, both now and in years to come.

In recognition of Economic Development Week, which falls the first week of May, the City of Florence publishes an Annual Report that celebrates the economic development initiatives and investments that Florence has made in the economy and the business community in the last year. The Week is sponsored by the International Economic Development Council to increase awareness of local programs that create jobs, advance career development opportunities, and improve the quality of life in communities everywhere.

Florence's economic growth is an ongoing effort, and we are continuously working to improve our economic climate. All of our projects take a team of dedicated Staff, volunteers, and partner organizations. Thank you to this economic development ecosystem for positioning the City of Florence as Oregon's Premier Coastal Community.

The following categories and additional featured projects are included in this year's edition of the City of Florence Economic Development Annual Report.

- Regional Economic Development P. 4
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation P. 8
- Economic Development Finance P. 12
- Business Community & Recruitment − P. 13
- Child Care in the Siuslaw Region P. 15
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- Placemaking, Art & Economic Development P. 24

Regional Economic Development

conomic development has many components beyond the "housing, business development, and increasing living wage jobs" that are listed in the City's goals.

According to the Oregon Economic Development Association, economic development brings business and industry together with public and private sector expertise to coordinate land, infrastructure, education, workforce, and technology needs to diversify and expand Oregon's economy. Economic developers help businesses locate and expand while encouraging a balance of employment and housing. Economic development tools include business loans, tax credit/abatement programs, tourism resources, business assistance, and more.

Oregon divides the state into 12 districts, which include attention by Business Oregon and the Governor's Regional Solutions Team. The Cascades West Economic Development District (CWEDD) is designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration to work on economic development efforts in Linn, Benton, Lane, and Lincoln Counties. The CWEDD advocates for, supports, and coordinates regionally significant economic development activities in the region. The City of Florence has been part of recent efforts to update the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to guide regionally significant economic development projects and activities over the next five years.

CWEDD plans to approve the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy in September 2025, and will undergo a public comment period in summer 2025. Read more at https://bit.ly/CEDS-2025.

For 2025-2030, the Cascades West Economic Development District plans to focus on these priorities in its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy:

Priority Area 1 - Regional Collaboration and Partnerships

Priority Area 2 - Grow Economic Vitality Through Business Development

Priority Area 3 - Infrastructure Resilience

Priority Area 4 - Foundations for Economic Wellbeing

Priority Area 5 - Rural Vitality





City of Florence participates in CWEDD virtually and through in-person meetings, such as in Newport in June 2025 (left) or at Homegrown Public House in Florence in February 2025. Mayor Rob Ward and City Manager Erin Reynolds were able to contribute to the analysis of the current CEDS in September 2024.

The City of Florence works in collaboration with entities all across Oregon to support economic development. Our main regions are: Cascades West Economic Development **District** — Benton, Lane, Lincoln, and Linn Counties Lane Council of Governments — Lane

Economic Committee

Lane County — Policy Team and the Community & Economic Development Department

Oregon Coast Visitor's Association — Clatsop, Tillamook, Lincoln, Lane, Douglas, Coos, and Curry Counties

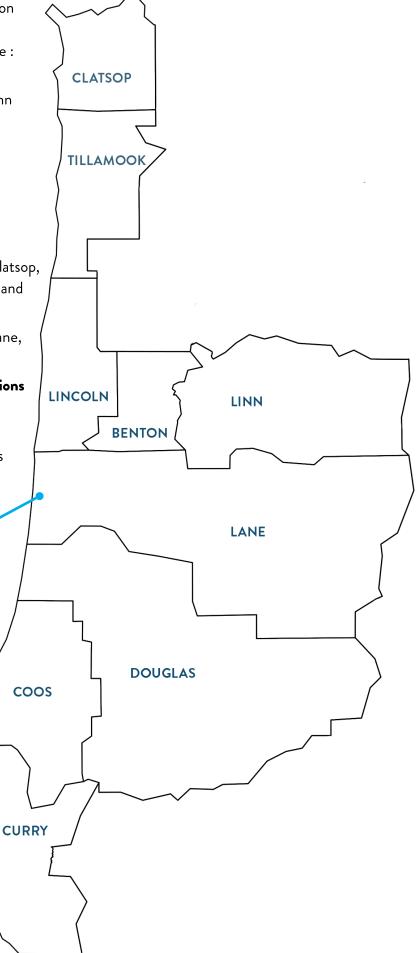
South Coast Development Council — Lane, Douglas, Coos, and Curry Counties

South Valley/Mid Coast Regional Solutions **Team** — Benton, Lane, Lincoln, and Linn Counties

 $\textbf{Travel Lane County} - \mathsf{Eugene}, \mathsf{Cascades}$ and Coast

CITY OF

FLORENCE





Employment Labor Market Information Department Quality Information, Info

Quality Information, Informed Choices QualityInfo.org

Florence Fact Sheet

Prepared by: Henry Fields, Workforce Analyst Contact: henry.l.fields@employ.oregon.gov; (541) 359-9178 Date:7/10/2025

Lane County Population Trends							
	2000	2010	2024	Change 2000-10	%	Change 2010-24	%
Coburg	969	1,040	1,419	71	7%	379	36%
Cottage Grove	8,445	9,705	10,879	1,260	15%	1,174	12%
Creswell	3,579	5,030	5,735	1,451	41%	705	14%
Dunes City	1,241	1,305	1,468	64	5%	163	12%
Eugene	137,893	156,295	177,155	18,402	13%	20,860	13%
Florence	7,263	8,465	9,598	1,202	17%	1,133	13%
Junction City	4,721	5,430	7,410	709	15%	1,980	36%
Lowell	880	1,045	1,304	165	19%	259	25%
Oakridge	3,172	3,205	3,167	33	1%	-38	-1%
Springfield	52,864	59,425	62,996	6,561	12%	3,571	6%
Veneta	2,762	4,565	5,259	1,803	65%	694	15%
Westfir	280	255	261	-25	-9%	6	2%
Unincorporated	98,908	96,245	96,120	-2,663	-3%	-125	0%
Lane County	322,977	352,010	382,771	29,033	9%	30,761	9%
Oregon	3,421,399	3,837,300	4,267,261	415,901	12%	429,961	11%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Portland State University

Inflow/Outflow Commuters in 2022 Selection Area: Florence City Limits, All Jobs



Workers Employed in Selection Area	4,108		
Employed in Selection Area but Living Outside	2,808	68%	
Employed and Living in Selection Area	1,300	32%	
Workers Living in Selection Area	3,125		
Living in Selection Area but Employed Outside	1,825	58%	
Living and Employed in Selection Area	1,300	42%	

Source: OnTheMap, LEHD Census



More Information:

https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US4126050-florence-or/

Demographics	Florence	Lane County	Oregon	us	
Total population	9,483	382,628	4,238,714	332,387,540	
Under 18 years	14%	18%	20%	22%	
18-24 years	5%	13%	9%	9%	
25-54 years	25%	37%	40%	39%	
55-64 years	14%	13%	13%	13%	
65+ years	43%	21%	19%	17%	
Median age	59.7	40.2	40.1	38.7	

Source: US Census 2023 5-year ACS table S0101

Labor Force and Income	Florence	Lane County	Oregon	US
Median household income	\$52,049	\$69,311	\$80,426	\$78,538
Percentage of population 16+ in labor force	39%	61%	62%	64%
Percentage below poverty level in last 12 months	11%	15%	12%	12%

Source: US Census 2023 5-year ACS table DP03

Educational Attainment	Florence	Lane County	Oregon	US	
Population 25 & over	7,686	266,887	3,021,010	228,434,661	
Non-HS graduate	10%	7%	8%	11%	
High school graduate	21%	23%	22%	26%	
Some college	32%	27%	24%	19%	
Associate's degree	12%	10%	9%	9%	
Bachelor's or higher	25%	33%	36%	35%	

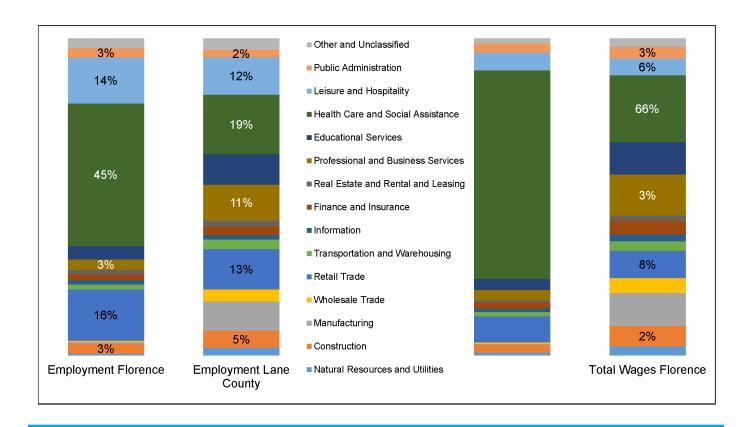
Source: US Census 2023 5-year ACS table S1501

Employment and Wages by Industry, Annual Average 2023

	Florence*				Lane County			
Industry	Establishments	Average Employment	Total Wages	Average Wage	Establishments	Average Employment	Total Wages	Average Wage
Total	467	5,329	\$344,426,606	\$64,633	15,806	157,209	\$8,790,263,381	\$55,915
Natural Resources and Utilities	4	31	\$3,423,021	\$110,420	395	3,761	\$254,520,096	\$67,674
Construction	47	175	\$8,579,576	\$49,026	1,455	8,537	\$566,856,616	\$66,400
Manufacturing	10	24	\$862,661	\$35,944	633	14,631	\$916,103,862	\$62,614
Wholesale Trade	8	19	\$1,327,514	\$69,869	604	5,922	\$410,906,944	\$69,387
Retail Trade	73	863	\$28,476,236	\$32,997	1,350	19,946	\$755,883,040	\$37,896
Transportation and Warehousing	7	85	\$4,633,952	\$54,517	308	4,829	\$266,883,605	\$55,267
Information	12	70	\$3,435,755	\$49,082	435	2,050	\$184,850,156	\$90,171
Finance and Insurance	24	104	\$7,002,049	\$67,327	650	4,546	\$389,106,842	\$85,593
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	28	73	\$2,653,067	\$36,343	743	2,693	\$131,083,011	\$48,675
Professional and Business Services	51	172	\$10,809,963	\$62,849	2,507	17,852	\$1,141,203,558	\$63,926
Educational Services	7	222	\$12,167,714	\$54,810	360	15,258	\$903,147,690	\$59,192
Health Care and Social Assistance	61	2,401	\$226,357,546	\$94,276	3,015	29,198	\$1,844,863,768	\$63,185
Leisure and Hospitality	69	767	\$19,190,578	\$25,020	1,375	18,577	\$469,204,669	\$25,257
Public Administration	9	164	\$10,300,753	\$62,809	129	3,810	\$323,508,884	\$84,910
Other and Unclassified	57	159	\$5,206,221	\$32,744	1,847	5,599	\$232,140,640	\$41,461

*Florence Urban Growth Boundary

Source: Oregon Employment Department, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages









Economic Development can be a fun job, especially behind the scenes helping make connections happen.

Pictured (clockwise from top left): Bridge Lane Florence organizers, a Florence Chamber Business After Hours, South Coast Development Council's 25th anniversary, and economic development partners at the Chamber's Siuslaw Awards.



City of Florence Economic Development Annual Report 2024-2025

Entrepreneurship & Innovation

t its core, economic development entails the creation of opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship, and investment. This often involves promoting innovation, linking to resources, and enhancing productivity across various sectors of the economy. In Florence, economic efforts promote small businesses and enable an environment for entrepreneurship.

This is where our network and partnerships really come into play.

Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network (RAIN) Catalysts

RAIN Catalysts' team of entrepreneurs helps communities build inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems and economies. Since 2015, the City of Florence has contracted with RAIN to continue developing and scaling the RAIN Catalysts Rural Entrepreneurial Program in the City to help startups and small businesses launch and thrive.

The Florence RAIN team consists of a Lane Venture Catalyst and Florence Entrepreneur-In-Community, who gave the FY 2023-2024 Report to the Florence City Council on November 18, 2024, https://www.ci.florence.or.us/council/city-council-meeting-271.

Learn more about RAIN and its programs at https://www.facebook.com/ raincatalysts.org.

"It's inspiring to see the community spirit among business owners here in Florence. In the past three years, I've watched many business owners feel like they had to navigate the journey alone. But I've also seen the immense power and support that comes from the community. ...

Organizations are changing the way they support local businesses."

— Jade Rehder,

RAIN Entrepreneur-in-Community

Florence Area Chamber of Commerce

The Florence Area Chamber of Chamber's Vision is, "We are a vibrant community where businesses and residents thrive together with sustainability, livability, and high quality of life." The Mission is, "Champion business. Promote Florence. Embrace cultural prosperity. Connect community." The Chamber Board of Directors recently led the Chamber through a strategic plan.

The City of Florence contracts with the Chamber to provide tourism marketing, visitor information, and events management services. Economic Development Staff serves as an ex-officio member of the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce Board and regularly attends the networking and entertainment events held throughout the year, including the 118th annual Rhododendron Festival. The Chamber will give its next Annual Report to the Florence City Council in July 2025.

Learn more at https://florencechamber.com/ or stop by the Florence Visitors Center, 290 Highway 101. Find the Chamber on social media at https://www.facebook.com/florenceoregon/.

South Coast Development Council (SCDC)

The southern Oregon coast is home to approximately 110,000 residents, four counties, 12 cities, seven port districts, the Coos Bay Rail Line, and the only commercial airport on the Oregon coast. The South Coast Development Council, Inc., https://www.scdcinc.org/, is a regional economic development organization and private non-profit that exists for the purpose of fostering communication, collaboration and partnership among the various collateral public and private entities on Oregon's South Coast; and promoting economic

development, job creation, business retention and expansion, encouraging new investment, and enhancing the economic vitality of the region. SCDC serves the southern half of the Oregon coast from the City of Florence to the Port of Brookings-Harbor, working to enhance partnerships and provide no-cost technical assistance to retain, expand, and attract living wage companies and industry to coastal communities.

In July 2025, the SCDC celebrated its 25th anniversary. To prepare for this anniversary, SCDC updated its Vision to be "Bringing people, places and possibilities together." Its Mission is to "Collaboratively drive sustainable development and living-wage job investment through Business Expansion, Attraction and Retention (BEAR)."

Collaborative Economic Development Oregon (Collaborative EDO/CEDO)

"We're building a more prosperous and vibrant future for Lane County," Collaborative EDO states. "Through intentional and strategic collaboration, CEDO is bringing high-wage jobs to Lane County, supporting local businesses, and developing a self-sustaining economy. From the Cascades to the Coast, we're growing our economy for the future."

Collaborative EDO is a 501(c)3 nonprofit economic development organization that has gained traction in the community through partnerships and events. From rural communities to urban centers, Lane County is ready to engage in a more inclusive model of development that doesn't leave anyone out. CEDO focuses on three strategic priorities: Welcome, Innovate, and Thrive.

Start planning now for the next Bridge Lane Career and Resource Fair in Florence or even the annual Community Collaborative & Industry Luncheon. Learn more at https://www.collaborativeedo.org/.

Lane Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The Lane Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is part of Lane Community College and the Oregon Small Business Development Center Network, which provides advising, training, online courses and resources for businesses throughout the state. SBDC delivers services to anyone who owns or operates a business or is planning to start a business. Advisors work with businesses in every industry and at every stage of growth, from startups to well-established companies, from one employee to 500. In addition to no-cost confidential advising, Lane SBDC offers low-cost training and online courses that cover a wide range of topics, including succession planning and the business of child care. Learn more at lanesbdc.com.



Siuslaw Vision

Siuslaw Vision is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization supporting the Western Lane County region's community-led Vision, with a mission & purpose: Building A Better Siuslaw Community Together. Siuslaw Vision Staff and the Vision Team volunteers help people implement locally-owned solutions that address community-identified goals. These are included in the following focus areas: Working People: Jobs & Economic Development; Happy People: Health & Human Services; Educated People: Lifelong Learners; Creative People: Arts & Culture; Connected People: Human Connection, Infrastructure, Public Services; and Active People: Recreation & Outdoors.

Learn more about the Vision at <u>siuslawvision.org</u>, or follow the community calendar at <u>www.rivercal.org</u>.

Florence Economic Development Task Force

In March 2020, economic development partners from across the region convened the Florence Economic Development Task Force. Partners continue to meet monthly to coordinate economic efforts and work towards mutual goals. The Task Force is comprised of 12 different agencies that are involved in different aspects of the community's economic success: City of Florence, Collaborative EDO, Florence Area Chamber of Commerce, Hyak, Lane Community College, Lane County Community & Economic Development, Lane Small Business Development Center, Lane Workforce Partnership, Oregon Coast Visitor's Association, RAIN Catalysts, WorkSource Lane, and, now, the Siuslaw Vision.

Lane County Community Collaborative

The Lane County Community Collaborative represents a dynamic group of economic development stakeholders from across Lane County. This collaborative aims to optimize our efforts and resources by working together to address the diverse needs of our community. Through this collective endeavor, we aim to create a positive ripple effect, propelling our region towards prosperity and shared growth. These meetings serve as a platform for engaging discussions, meaningful connections, and fostering a culture of collaboration, paving the way for innovative solutions and empowering collective action.

Key functions of this group are Regional Coordination – Efforts & Resources; Knowledge Share; and Relationship Building. More than 50 people regularly attend this monthly meeting, hosted by the Lane Workforce Partnership. Learn more at www.laneworkforce.org/sector-strategies/community-collaborative/.















Cascades West Innovation Hub

key strategy in Business Oregon's 10-Year Innovation Plan, Regional Innovation Hubs are partnerships that provide technical assistance, capital, networking, mentorship, and talent development to



innovation-based entrepreneurs statewide. Regional Innovation Hubs assist innovation-based businesses across varied sectors, serving as a regional network of service providers to build and support innovation throughout Oregon's nine regions. The Innovation Hubs are specifically focused on supporting the growth and development of high-growth, scalable, innovation-based companies primarily focused on science and technology.

In the Cascades West Economic Development District in 2025, the Cascades West Council of Governments handed over the Innovation Hub leadership to RAIN Catalysts, with support from Collaborative EDO.

On April 29, 2025, regional leaders from Benton, Lane, Lincoln, and Linn Counties gathered for the Cascades West Innovation Hub: Information & Simulation Event. Attendees received updates on the region's emerging innovation hub, connected with ecosystem partners, and participated in hands-on activities focused on supporting traded-sector business growth across the four-county region.

The event brought together innovators, changemakers, and ecosystem builders from across the four county region to explore how collaboration fuels a thriving innovation economy. Partners included Business Oregon, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, Economic Development Alliance of Lincoln County, Oregon Entrepreneurs Network, Willamette Innovators Network, Lane Council of Governments, and RAIN Catalysts.

More information on the Innovation Hub will be available at https://orinnovationhub.com/discover/cascades-west-innovation-hub.

Economic Development Finance

conomic development finance is the efforts of local communities to support, encourage, and catalyze expansion through public and private investment in physical development, redevelopment and/or business and industry. It is the act of contributing to a project or deal in a manner that benefits the long-term health of the community. The goal is to create permanent private sector jobs, increased productivity, and improvement in the local tax base.



Governor's Regional Solutions Team, Business Oregon's Regional Development Officer, and City of Florence work together frequently. Some tools of economic development financing are Community Development Block Grants, Rural Business Enterprise Grants, Public Infrastructure Grants, Revolving Loan Funds, Community Development Financial Institutions, New Markets Tax Credits, Historic Preservation Tax Credits, Tax Increment Financing, and Enterprise Zones. The City of Florence can connect businesses into the greater network of financing options.

Business Oregon is the state's

economic development agency. Ito invests in Oregon businesses, communities, and people to promote a globally competitive, diverse, and inclusive economy, with "Prosperity for all Oregonians" as its vision. Business Oregon administers more than 80 grant, loan, tax incentive, and other programs to further the development of businesses, communities, and economies in Oregon.

The Business Finance Officer for Lane, Linn, Benton, and Lincoln counties is Marc Bellantoni, marc.bellantoni@biz.oregon.gov. He has hands-on experience working with Florence-area businesses to help them secure a diverse array of financing. For more information, visit www.oregon.gov/biz/programs/homeareas/fundbusiness/Pages/business_finance.aspx, or download the Business Finance Programs brochure at www.oregon.gov/biz/Publications/Biz-Fin-Table.pdf.

The **Small Business Development Center** (SBDC) also has resources for businesses, especially those who have gone through business advising or taken the Small Business Management course. At Lane SBDC, Eric Lind is the Capital Access Adviser with Oregon's SBDC network's Capital Access Team. He specializes in helping small business owners with business planning, developing financial strategies, and accessing debt and equity funding. Find out more at https://lanesbdc.com/.

Enterprise Zone Management

The City of Florence manages its Enterprise Zone designation with Business Oregon and Lane County. Enterprise Zones allow qualifying businesses to receive 3-5 years of property tax exemption on sites and building improvements. The Enterprise Zone freezes businesses' tax rate at the level it was before the property's value was increased with improvements.

Both new and existing businesses can qualify for the City of Florence's three Enterprise Zones and their benefits. In exchange for tax exemption, qualified businesses are expected to increase employment and, for a five-year exemption, compensate new hires at a higher wage than the County average rate. More information is available at www.ci.florence.or.us/economicdevelopment/florence-enterprise-zone.

Business Community & Recruitment

any aspects of economic development wrap around businesses. At the South Coast Development Council (SCDC), they've started calling it BEAR – Business Expansion, Attraction, and Retention. The City of Florence works with several partners to recruit new businesses to our area. This includes Business Oregon, the SCDC, Collaborative EDO, RAIN, and the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce.

Pacific View Business Park

Economic Development Staff continues to market the City of Florence's Pacific View Business Park. The Business Park provides space for offices, service businesses, light manufacturing, research and development facilities, assembly, packaging, warehousing, and supportive uses. Through both selling and leasing, depending on the lot, the high-quality land with utilities in and ready for development, the goal of the Business Park is to help

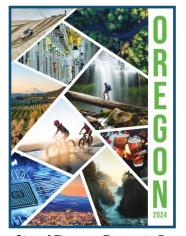
the City attract family-wage jobs that will serve the entire community.

Within the Business Park, there are 58 lots, with 11 remaining available for sale and 6 lots available for lease. Lot sizes range from 12,000 to 129,000 square feet, and prices are negotiable with the City of Florence. The Business Park is within an Enterprise Zone, making tax exemptions available to eligible developments. More information is available at https://bit.ly/FlorenceBusinessPark.

City staff works with Collaborative Economic Development of Oregon and SCDC to market the Business Park on Oregon Prospector, https://www.oregonprospector.com/, social media, and LinkedIn.

City of Florence Business Licensing

The City of Florence requires businesses procure a relevant business license prior to operation within city limits. If a proposed business requires a business license pursuant to Florence City Code Title 3, an application must be submitted to the Florence Finance Department. Learn more and apply online via https://www.ci.florence.or.us/administrative-services/business-licenses.



Business Oregon's Site Selector Magazine, "Oregon Investment Guide 2024," features the City of Florence in an advertisement for Lane County. Read online at https://siteselection.com/issue/oregon-investment-guide-2024/.







Networking and Connections

The biggest champion for Florence's business community is the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce (read more on Page 8 of this report). In 2025, the Chamber brought back its monthly Lunch & Learn gatherings and continues to help businesses host Business After Hours events.

This year also saw the launch of the Florence Forward Young Professionals Group, www.facebook.com/ florenceforwardyp/. This is the Chamber's new effort to increase networking and opportunities for the 20-45+ range of residents. Their goal is to host at least one event each month, switching between professional development activities and fun community-building get-togethers. "Our mission is to foster networking, professional development, and community engagement among like-minded young professionals, creating opportunities to build relationships, support one another's growth, and positively impact the Florence community."

The Chamber celebrates businesses with the annual Siuslaw Awards, which recognizes local businesses, nonprofits, and individuals for their impact on the Florence community. The following awards were presented in 2025: • Rising Star Award — Truck Full of Posies • Making a Difference Award — Children's Repertory of Oregon Workshop (CROW) • Community Impact Award — HYAK Broadband • Innovation of the Year Award — Oregon Coast Humane Society • Distinguished Service Award — Al Rojas of Oregon Pacific Bank • Outstanding Ambassador Award — Kathy Bones • Stu Johnston Business of the Year Award — Florence Shipping Solutions

Two additional community awards are now part of a stand-alone celebration and separate from the Siuslaw Awards. The Florence First Citizen Award has been given in Florence since 1958. A new committee and celebration honors this legacy of leadership. This year's honorees were Carol Bennett and Future First Citizen Makali Lade, a 2025 graduate of Siuslaw High School.











Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County • Bright Beginnings Christian Preschool • Business Oregon • Catholic Community Services of Lane County • City of Dunes City • City of Florence • Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians • Collaborative EDO • Early Childhood Cares • First Step Florence • Florence Area Chamber of Commerce • Florence Area Community Coalition • Florence Food Share • Florence Senior Center • Goodwill Industries of Lane and South Coast Counties • Head Start of Lane County • Helping Hands Coalition • Kiwanis Club of Florence • Lane Small Business Development Center • Lane Transit District • Lane Workforce Partnership • Link Lane • Mapleton School District • Nurturely • Oregon Coast Visitors Association • Oregon Employment Department • Onward Eugene Child Care Sector Strategist • Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Association • Oregon Sea Grant • Oregon State University Extension Service Lane County • PacificSource • PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical Center • Plaza de Nuestra Comunidad • Quality Care Connection • RAIN Catalysts • Rotary Club of Florence • Siuslaw Family Connection • Siuslaw Outreach Services • Siuslaw Public Library District • Siuslaw School District • Siuslaw Vision • South Coast Development Council • Three Rivers Casino Resort • Travel Lane County • University of Oregon • United Way of Lane County • Upriver Vision • WorkSource Lane

Siuslaw Child Care Efforts

hild care is part of the critical infrastructure supporting our economy and a key underpinning to economic development strategies. Local government, business owners, employers, and community partners have identified child care as a key issue and cited the need for additional capacity to address the issue.

According to the 2020 Census, there are approximately 642 children ages 0-5 years in the Siuslaw region. Currently, there are about 114 child care slots for this age group. A majority of those slots are not full day, nor available every day of the week. Of the 114 total child care spaces, only 69 of those are licensed and provide full day care. There are currently no centers in the area that accept children under 2 years of age. Rural communities outside of Florence have even fewer options for child care.

The Florence Child Care Collaborative formed in 2022 under the leadership of Onward Eugene Child Care Sector Strategist Holly Mar Conte. The work has included a Lane County Child Care and Preschool Survey, applying for grants, direct assistance to child care facilities, and work on an employer tool kit. Participants include the organizations listed in the box to the left. This has become the Child Care Working Group under guidance from Siuslaw Vision, https://siuslawvision.org/childcare/.

One program championed by these groups is the Lane SBDC and Quality Care Connections' Early Child Care Business

Accelerator Program, https://www.lanecc.edu/community/
resources-community/quality-care-connections/early-child-care-business-accelerator-program. The Early Child Care Business

Accelerator program is a 4-month program that focuses on providing the skills and knowledge for persons who intend to become, and persons who already are, child care providers, to become licensed registered or certified family home-based providers. This program is offered in English and Spanish.









On April 24, 2024, Florence Economic Development Analyst Chantelle Meyer spoke on a panel for the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce Community Solutions Summit on Child Care. She was invited by Onward Eugene Child Care Sector Strategist Holly Mar Conte.

The first-of-its-kind Child Care Community Solutions Summit brought together leaders from both the public and private sectors to explore the crucial role of child care in our economy. The event emphasized the need for examining creative child care solutions, and encouraging collaborative efforts to address the child care challenge while fostering a resilient workforce and economy.

A representative from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce shared the critical impact of child care on the latest workforce data and trends. This was followed panels on: The Critical Role of Employers in Child Care; Providers and the Child Care Supply Crisis; Spotlighting Supply Innovation Champions; Advocacy in Action; and Turning to Experts: Child Care Resource Partners.

Chantelle was on the "It Takes a Village: Spotlighting Innovative Partnerships" panel, along with Willamalane Parks & Recreation District, University of Oregon, and the Eugene Airport, who all have unique public/private partnerships in progress to increase access to child care. The panel was moderated by Lindsey Cochran, Child Care Infrastructure Program Coordinator at Business Oregon.

This was a chance to highlight the City of Florence's efforts in child care, stemming from the Child Care Working Group began by the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce with participation from the Lane County Child Care Sector Strategist, Siuslaw Vision, the City, local child care providers, county-level educational resources, and concerned community members. The main topic, however, was the Elm Park PUD — colocated affordable housing and early learning facility. This was an important chance to introduce this project to an audience of mostly metro-area people and highlight the needs for rural and Western Lane County.

Child Care Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE)

In 2023, the Child Care Working Group identified the possibility of working with RARE, <u>rare.uoregon.edu/</u>, to catalyze child care efforts in the Siuslaw Region. This became a partnership between Siuslaw Vision, Onward Eugene, the City of Florence, and the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce and allowed us to bring on a **Child Care Development Specialist**, Abby Harrison.

Abby is focused on enhancing child care capacity in the region through collaboration with community partners, providers and stakeholders. She conducts in-depth research on child care programs and policies, exploring successful case studies and identifying gaps in marketing training programs. Her efforts aim to create a sustainable plan for ongoing community support beyond her placement.



Career Technical Education (CTE) at Siuslaw and Mapleton School Districts

Both Siuslaw and Mapleton school districts support student success through promoting not only academic excellence and a variety of extracurricular activities, they also provide programming for after school planning.

Career Technical Education (CTE) prepares students for a wide range of careers with the academic and technical skills necessary to succeed. CTE is organized at the national level, and coordinated locally through the Lane Education Service District (ESD), https://lesd.k12.or.us/cte/. It allows students to gain hands-on experience in any number of career pathways. These present a wide range of related career options to our students that can lead to a university, an apprenticeship, work in industry, or any number of other opportunities.

By building their career awareness, students not only discover their interests and passions, but become empowered to choose the education pathway that can lead to a living wage and meaningful work. These careers may require varying levels of education, such as industry recognized credentials, post-secondary certificates, and two or four-year college degrees. In total, about 12.5 million high school and college students are enrolled in CTE courses across the United States.

Mapleton High School has a Project-Based Learning program that includes an art studio, construction workshop, business center, garden, culinary classroom, graphic design class, and technology lab. The CTE program at Siuslaw High School consists of manufacturing, construction, natural resources, culinary, computer science, health science, small business, and auto. Each of the sections has different requirements, but several offer college credits or real accreditation – including Auto, which has a whole booklet on tests for automotive maintenance, and Health Science, which is working with the Lane Community College Florence Center to help students become Certified Nurses Assistants. Both school districts also work with Lane Workforce Partnership's Team Oregon Build, https://ccloregon.org/partners-team-oregon-build/.

Learn more about the school districts' offerings at www.mapleton.k12.or.us/.

Best Place for Working Parents®

Lane County is proud to be a Best Place

for Working Parents — and so is the City of Florence!

Lane County has partnered with Best Place for Working Parents, https://

ounty has with Best Working https://

bestplace4workingparents.com/lanecounty/, to bring businesses innovative workplace solutions for the working parents and families in their workforces. The Best



Place for Working Parents is a growing national network of business leaders utilizing a first-of-its-kind online business self-assessment that highlights the top 10 family-friendly policies proven to benefit working parents AND businesses' bottom line. Our policies are relevant to businesses of every size and industry, and include low - or no-cost options that are proven to boost employee attraction, retention, loyalty, productivity, and engagement – a win-win for working parents and the businesses that employ them.

Elm Park PUD & Early Learning Center

hild care access in Florence and the Siuslaw region of West Lane County will increase 50% next year with the completion of the Elm Park Early Learning Center. Developer Chestnut Management has received commitments for 87% of the cost of the center, which is designed to serve up to 16 infants, 20 toddlers and 40 pre-K children, increasing the area's child care slots from about 150 to 230.



The 5,000-square-foot center will

have four 862-square-foot classrooms with attached child and adult restrooms, a kitchen, administrative and storage space, and a 2,250-square-foot outdoor play area. Head Start of Lane County will provide programming in two classrooms, and community providers will operate two classrooms.

"Hopefully, the center will be the beginning of the end of our child care desert," said Layne Morrill, manager of Chestnut Management, LLC.

The center will be at 1025 Greenwood St., on a 0.37-acre site, part of the mixed-use Elm Park Planned Unit Development that the City of Florence Planning Commission approved in April. Construction is planned to start in November 2025 and be completed in August 2026. Elm Park Apartments, the residential component of Elm Park PUD, will include 32 affordable rental apartments (mostly two- and three-bedroom) serving families with incomes between 30% and 60% of the area median income. Construction of the apartments began on June 13, 2025.

The Florence City Council has identified housing and child care as significant opportunities for collaboration and economic development efforts in the City of Florence.

Mayor Rob Ward said, "You can't talk about finding solutions for one without the other. The Elm Park Early Learning Center and the Elm Park Apartments will help our community move the needle in filling the child care and housing needs gap in Florence." The mayor and council "are excited to see these partnerships between existing and new organizations in Florence develop and can't wait for this new project to help move our community forward."

The center's total cost will be approximately \$4.1 million. BuildUp Oregon has committed \$1.43 million in grant and loan funding for the center. BuildUp is co-sponsored by Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) and the Department of Early Learning and Care to encourage the co-location of child care with affordable housing. Business Oregon has provided a \$2 million grant from its Child Care Infrastructure Fund. The City of Florence has agreed to reduce the purchase price on the site by \$53,250 once the center is operational. John Singleton of Pivot Architecture is the project architect. The general contractor will be selected through competitive bidding.

Community support is needed to raise an additional \$300,000 to help complete the center's funding. With that community support, the center will qualify for an additional \$250,000 in grants from private foundations. Tax-deductible donations can be made to Our Coastal Village, Inc., https://ourcoastalvillage.org.

Siuslaw Childcare Friends (SCF) is a 501(c)(3) organization formed in January 2025 to promote and enhance child care and early learning opportunities in the Siuslaw region. Sandy Craft, a Siuslaw Vision Team member, is SCF's president; Tia Leonard-Durant is treasurer, and Camille Griswold is secretary. Other board members include Kim Erickson, Connie Ford, Adrian Pollut, and Chelsie Reeves. Siuslaw Vision and the Siuslaw Child Care Working Team have provided start-up support for SCF and continue to work closely to support the center. SCF will be the steward of the two community provider classrooms and will engage and assist the community providers who serve those classrooms. SCF will begin community outreach efforts shortly to raise awareness of its role in supporting local child care and the actions it will take. For more information about child care in the Siuslaw region, contact Siuslaw Vision at childcare@siuslawvision.org/childcare/.

Elm Park Apartments will consist of 32 residential units on a 1.10-acre site. Our Coastal Village, Inc. (OCV), a nonprofit affordable housing developer, is developing the apartments. Units will be available to households earning between 30% and 60% of the area median income. OCV completed its 24-unit Oak Manor Apartments project at 3944 Oak St. in 2024.

Morrill "thankfully acknowledges amazing contributions" by the design professionals, public and private financial partners, the City of Florence Community Development Department, the Florence Planning Commission, and the Florence City Council in bringing these projects to fruition.

The total cost of the apartments is \$15 million. OHCS has provided an \$11.83 million 30-year, zero-interest LIFT loan. Banner Bank has provided a \$2 million construction loan and a \$1.85 million 35-year, low-interest permanent loan through the Oregon Affordable Housing Tax Credit program. OCV has committed \$1.25 million of its resources to the project. The City of Florence will reduce the site purchase price by \$199,500 once the apartments are in service.

Construction of the apartments began in June 2025 and will be completed in Summer 2026. BDA Architecture and Planning, Mike Magee and Leanne Love, are project architects. Meili Construction Company is the general contractor.

Northwest 9th Street Neighborhood Infrastructure Project

The City of Florence is constructing streets and utilities in the **NW Ninth Street** neighborhood for future residential development, including Elm Park PUD, using a \$1.9 million state legislative appropriation from Oregon Senate Bill (SB) 1530 that was awarded to Florence during the 2024 short legislation session.

The City was identified as a local government to receive funding for an infrastructure project to catalyze building much needed housing in Florence. The project unlocks an undeveloped section of the community in the heart of the City with easy access to all necessary and discretionary amenities and services.

As part of our application to the State, the City put forth City-owned blocks in the heart of the City Center to construct local streets and utilities to create ready-to-build lots at a cost of \$1.9 million. With the infrastructure investment in the public rights-of-way for transportation related facilities, water, wastewater, stormwater and open space (park), the City can unlock and provide access to 6 privately-owned blocks and two City-owned blocks. This will create ready-to-build lots for a minimum of 113 to 176 units of housing for the area that we are calling the Northwest 9th Street Neighborhood.

Depending on weather and the contractor, we anticipate that the infrastructure project (water, wastewater, streets, and stormwater) for the NW 9th Street Neighborhood Project to be completed in Autumn 2025. Follow along at www.ci.florence.or.us/publicworks/northwest-9th-street-neighborhood-infrastructure-project.

Planning, Building, & Real Estate

lorence continues to make strides to bring additional housing to our area. From partnering with the local real estate agents to actively working with prospective developers, Economic Development works hand in hand with the Florence Community Development Department. Development often requires efforts from the private market, public partners, and even nonprofits.

The City of Florence has been hard at work since 2017 to prepare the way for housing development. Over the next 20 years, the City will need 1,664 new dwellings to meet housing demand, as determined by the Housing and Economic Opportunities Project, www.ci.florence.or.us/planning/housing-and-economic-opportunities-project-completed-nov-2018, we completed in 2018 and the Housing Implementation Plan, www.ci.florence.or.us/planning/housing-implementation-plan-project, adopted in 2023. This net new housing need is expected to consist of 764 owner-occupied dwellings, 597 renter-occupied dwellings, and 263 short-term rental units. Since then, the City of Florence has started to see some progress.

Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption (MUPTE) Program

Since December 2021, the City of Florence City Council has had a Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption program. MUPTE is a state-enabled housing incentive program that allows for cities across Oregon to exempt property tax on residential improvements of approved multi-unit properties for up to 10 years. Although the State of Oregon enables this program, each municipality has the opportunity to shape the program to meet its own goal by controlling program requirements, criteria, and program caps. More information is available at www.ci.florence.or.us/economicdevelopment/multi-unit-property-tax-exemption-mupte-program.

Since March 2022, the City of Florence has approved two MUPTE Applications that are now fully leased:



Shore Pines at Munsel Creek, 3900 Highway 101

Northwest Housing Alternatives

- 68 units of affordable housing
 - one-bedroom units
 - three-bedroom units
- Approved by City Council on March 7, 2022
- Construction completed by Dec. 29, 2023
- Fully leased by March 2024



Oak Manor Apartments, 3944 Oak Street

Our Coastal Village

- 24 units of affordable housing
 - one-bedroom units
 - two-bedroom units
 - three-bedroom units
- Approved by City Council on March 7, 2022
- Construction completed in Spring 2024
- Fully leased by May 2024

One additional MUPTE application has now been submitted successfully. On February 15, 2025, the City of Florence received an application from Our Coastal Village, Inc., for the MUPTE Program for the Elm Park Apartments. The development that Our Coastal Village is applying for is 32 apartment units in three 3-story buildings and two 2-story buildings. The proposed development was approved by the Community Development Department and the Florence Planning Commission on January 28, 2025, and will have six one-bedroom units, 16 two-bedroom units, and 10 three-bedroom units. The project went before City Council in April 2025. Resolution No. 6, Series 2025, grants a 10-year residential improvement property tax exemption to Our Coastal Village for the Elm Park Apartments. Learn more about the project on Page 18 and 19 of this report.

Workforce Housing Support

City of Florence Staff continues to work with Homes for Good, https://homesforgood.org/, on a housing development seeking funding for Quince Street near the Florence Events Center. City Staff are working to schedule a Florence City Council Work Session on Housing in September 2025, which will include Homes for Good and a Market Report from local real estate professionals.

Florence Mayor Rob Ward and City Manager Erin Reynolds have given testimony to the Oregon State Legislature on housing and Florence several times in the past year. This includes House Bill 3939, which sought to increase housing for Oregon's workforce, and Senate Bill 5531, which authorized the issuance of lottery revenue bonds for specified projects. Florence testified first in favor of a private development, Campbell Commercial Real Estate's Pine Crossing Subdivision. a 44-unit housing development on Spruce Street for workforce housing at 80-130% of area median income with a target sale price under \$400,000.

In May, Florence testified in favor of the City-Led Workforce Housing Development included in the 2025-2027 Work Plan: "Develop plans to invest initial resources towards future City led development projects related to workforce housing, primarily including the Lane Community College (LCC) property with a City deed restriction requiring the property be used for education related purposes." The City and LCC have each independently held discussions with their legal counsels regarding deed restrictions and history on the property. Preliminary discussions have been held with LCC staff and partners related to initial concepts for potential development on the property.

Central Oregon Coast Board of Realtors

City of Florence Staff meet quarterly with the Government Affairs Committee of the Central Oregon

Coast Board of Realtors (COCBR). According to https://cocbrflo.com/, "Owning a home or property is purchasing stock in the community. Homeowners have a vested interest." This meeting allows for information sharing between the City and this group of professionals actively working to promote Florence and build up this community. Members of COCBR have since joined several City committees, including the Planning Commission and Florence Urban Renewal Agency.

Plus, COCBR acquired a grant from the National Association of Realtors that went toward the replacement of the Old Town Park Gazebo. The City thanks you!



Florence Urban Renewal Agency

ax Increment Financing (TIF) is a strategic tool to encourage redevelopment and infrastructure improvements within designated areas, making it the kind of special district warranting its own separate category. By capturing the incremental increase in tax revenues resulting from development projects, TIF districts can finance public improvements upfront without the imposition of new taxes. This mechanism not only facilitates immediate enhancements but also promises long-term benefits for all taxing entities within the district once the TIF expires.

In Florence, the TIF district is the Florence Urban Renewal District, managed by the Florence Urban Renewal Agency (FURA), https://www.ci.florence.or.us/urbanrenewal.

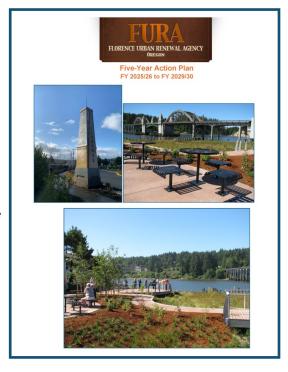
In August 2006, the Florence City Council adopted an ordinance approving the Florence Downtown Preservation and Renewal Plan. The plan created an urban renewal district encompassing properties along Highway 101 generally south of Highway 126, east of Kingwood Avenue and inland of the Siuslaw River. Urban renewal projects under the Plan are financed by private and public funding sources as well as tax increment funds (taxes on the increase in assessed value of property in the urban renewal district that occurs after the Plan was adopted).

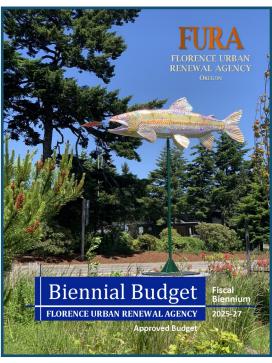
The Plan does not increase taxes that property owners pay. The Plan proposes projects such as construction and repair of public infrastructure including parks, streets, and other public facilities; facilitation of public-private partnerships to revitalize and preserve downtown properties; promotion of mixed-use development; and rehabilitation of the waterfront for public and commercial uses.

The Florence Urban Renewal Plan was approved by the voters in November 2007. The maximum indebtedness authorized under this Plan is \$22,545,000.

In June 2024, FURA engaged Elaine Howard from Elaine Howard Consulting, LLC, along with Tiberius Solutions, to create the next Florence Downtown Preservation and Renewal Plan Five Year Action Plan. On April 23, the Agency Board of Directors approved Resolution No. 1, Series 2025, to adopt the Five-Year Urban Renewal Action Plan for Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2026, through 2030. Read more at https://www.ci.florence.or.us/urbanrenewal/five-year-urban-renewal-action-plan.

Additionally, FURA approved the Biennial Budget for 2025-2027 during its June 25, 2025, meeting. The FURA 2025-27 Approved Biennial Budget and further information can be viewed at https://www.ci.florence.or.us/urbanrenewal/fura-2025-2027-budget-information.







Quince Street Hotel Development

The Florence Urban Renewal Agency (FURA) has been working with **Braun Development**, a hotel developer, to develop an 86-room, four-story Wyndham Microtel on Quince Street, across from the Florence Events Center. The goal of the development of the site has always been to support the City-owned event center and its needs to host larger, more regional events and conferences.

In 2022, the FURA Board authorized its Executive Director to proceed with executing the Development and Disposition Agreement (DDA) with Braun Hospitality and proceed with a public/private partnership that includes the transfer of a 3.12-acre portion of the property. The site plan will provide parking, trailer parking, outdoor green space, outdoor patio, two vehicular egress paths and stormwater detention. The hotel fronts Quince Street with pedestrian circulation throughout the site and to the adjacent Florence Events Center.

Braun Hospitality has spent the past three years developing site plans and creating a financial portfolio. The June Urban Renewal Board of Directors meeting, www.ci.florence.or.us/urbanrenewal/florence-urban-renewal-agency-meeting-70, included an update that the hotel is set to break ground in late summer 2025. The schedule from groundbreaking to first guest occupancy is projected to be 14-15 months.

One of the next steps for this project will be to coordinate the Enterprise Zone designation with the developer. More Information on the Quince Street development can be found at www.ci.florence.or.us/urbanrenewal/quince-street-property-development.

Siuslaw Estuary Trail

When FURA purchased the property on Quince Street, it split it into three parcels: the hotel property at the south end; the Siuslaw Estuary Trail property on the east side; and the north property, which will be the next phase for the FURA Board determine the goals for development and the plan for soliciting developers. The City received a Recreational Trails Grant from the State of Oregon for \$115,000 to develop a portion of the Siuslaw Estuary Trail and a Parking area off Highway 126. This project is part of a larger plan to create a Siuslaw Estuary Trail throughout the whole Estuary, starting at the FURA-owned Highway 126 property abutting Munsel Creek to the east, along the Quince Street property, and making its way throughout Old Town to the Exploding Whale Memorial Park on Rhododendron Drive. The first part of the Siuslaw Estuary Trail was completed in Spring 2025. Learn more at www.ci.florence.or.us/publicworks/siuslaw-estuary-trail.

Placemaking & Economic Development

he Florence Public Arts Committee continues to operate the Art Exposed Rotating Outdoor Art Gallery, https://bit.ly/FlorenceArtExposed, like it has since 2018. There are eight locations in the Art

Exposed Old Town area and, starting in 2024, six locations for vibrant, large-scale pieces of public art on Highway 101 in Art Exposed ReVision Florence.

Art Exposed is a dynamic bi-annual rotation of public art that improves the livability of the Florence area, creates a unique sense of place, and enhances community identity, while also providing an increased economic impact for visitors and residents. The program offers the community a chance to view interesting, fresh artwork every two years at a low cost, while providing artists with an opportunity to display and sell their work to a wide audience. Selected artists are paid a \$1,500 stipend to display their

art for a two-year period. During this time, the art is available for sale. If a piece sells, the City of Florence retains 30% of the proceeds to reinvest in the Public Arts Program.

New art went up in Art Exposed Old Town in Spring 2025, and Art Exposed ReVision will rotate pieces in Spring 2026.

2024 Urban Renewal Project of the Year — Art Exposed ReVision Florence

In 2023 and 2024, the Florence Urban Renewal Agency and the City of Florence Public Arts Committee worked to expand the City's foundational public art project, Art Exposed. Art

Exposed ReVision Florence is a .7-mile stretch of the Oregon Coast Highway and part of the Florence Urban Renewal District's ReVision Streetscaping Project, which was completed in 2019. Adding vibrant, large-scale public art in the highway district has been part of the plan for the project since the beginning.

The City of Florence is pleased to report that Art Exposed ReVision Florence was named the Urban Renewal Project of the Year during Oregon Economic Development Association's 2024 Awards of Excellence in Economic Development in October 2024.



City of Florence Economic Development Annual Report 2024-2025

2025 Travel Lane County Placemaking Award — Florence Public Arts Committee

On May 22, the City of Florence was honored to receive the 2025 Placemaking Award from Travel Lane County during the annual Visitor Industry Celebration. The Eugene, Cascades & Coast Placemaking Award is presented to a business or organization that supports or creates community-led, equity centered arts and culture efforts that strengthen people's connections to each other or Lane County.

The Florence Public Arts Committee was awarded in light of the Art Exposed Rotating Outdoor Art Gallery, community engagement around public art, and the economic impact the arts have on western Lane County. Committee Chair Maggie Bagon accepted the award, thanking the Florence City Council for their direction, City Staff, and the community.

Hear more about public art in Florence at the award video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?
y=SSMSS9z8nRQ.



A Look Ahead

ity of Florence Economic Development Staff are currently working on website page refreshes for Economic Development and the Art Exposed Rotating Art Gallery, along with grant work, training, and further coordination with regional partners. This includes extensive work in the Child Care Sector.

Additionally, Staff will work with other City departments on several items in the City of Florence 2025-2027 Work Plan, www.ci.florence.or.us/council/city-council-goals-work-plan, including "City-Led Workforce Housing Developments," "FURA Development Projects Support," and the "NW 9th Street Neighborhood Project."

Economic development is critical to the success of our region, and this report provides an overview of the progress the City of Florence has made in this area. Our region has a rich history and unique assets, which we continue to leverage to increase investment and create opportunities for

CITY OF FLORENCE

businesses and residents alike. It's one of the many things City Staff does to keep Florence A City in Motion. Learn more at www.ci.florence.or.us/economicdevelopment.



www.ci.florence.or.us/economicdevelopment