

Letters of Support



Representative Bobby Levy
Serving Umatilla, Union & Walla Walla Counties

Dear Senator Merkley & Senator Wyden:

The Elgin Stampedes along with the City of Elgin, is seeking funding for a new community facility to replace the current Stampede Hall.

The Stampede Hall is used year around by various organizations. There's approximately 9,000 people that go through the doors on an annual basis. Anywhere from 4-H classes, fundraisers, funerals, to wildfire staging, the Stampede Hall has everything a local, state, or federal agency needs to operate on site.

The Stampede Hall was built in the early 1950's and is currently at risk of building and safety code non-compliance in the next few years as the building continues to rapidly deteriorate. The Stampede Hall is approximately 6,000 sq. ft. with a large meeting room, a kitchen with a small meeting room and bathrooms. The exterior of the building is missing siding, the roof is sagging, and the foundation is cracking and crumbling. Water is infiltrating the outside walls creating wall separation. The bathrooms are inadequate with 70-year-old plumbing. The sewer system is a septic tank that is deteriorating and needs replacement.

The Elgin Stampede and The City of Elgin would like to build a new facility in two phases. Phase 1 would include a total kitchen, restroom, and small meeting room replacement. The replacement would demolish the existing kitchen and small meeting room and replace it with a new structure from the ground up. Phase 1 will also include an upgrade and conversion of the Hall's sewer system. Phase 2 will include the replacement of the primary meeting hall space. The overall square footage would be increased and would include an outdoor patio and ADA accessible ingress and egress. The replacement would be from the ground up. At the completion of both phases, the building will be an 11,000 sq. ft. regional multi-purpose conference center.

Restoring the Elgin Stampede Hall will enhance Eastern Oregon and draw more people to our area. The shape that the Hall is currently in is not conducive to both the activity and allowing for people to gather there.

The Stampede Hall is vital in the continuance of promoting traditions of rural Oregon as set forth by our founders almost 80 years ago; promoting civic participation, encourage cooperation with civic enterprise, and strongly support all activities that foster education, participation, and appreciation for their rural heritage.

Thank you!

Best,
Rep. Bobby Levy, HD 58



**UNION COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Paul Anderes, Commissioner

R. Matthew Scarfo, Commissioner

Jake Seavert, Commissioner

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer

1106 K. Avenue | La Grande, Oregon 97850

Phone: (541) 963-1001 | Fax (541) 963-1079

March 19, 2025

On behalf of the Union County Board of Commissioners, we write to express our strong support for the reconstruction of the Elgin Stampede Community Hall, a vital facility that has served Union County for over 70 years. This project is essential to preserving a key community asset that provides both economic and emergency response benefits to our region.

The Elgin Stampede Community Hall has long been a central gathering space, hosting critical community events, fundraisers, and meetings. More importantly, it has played an essential role in disaster response, serving as an incident command center for agencies such as FEMA, the State of Oregon, the National Guard, and the U.S. Forest Service during wildfire season. In addition to supporting emergency operations, the hall contributes to the economic and social fabric of our region, drawing visitors for annual events like the Elgin Stampede and the widely attended Crab Feed.

Unfortunately, after more than seven decades, the current facility is no longer adequate to meet the needs of the community. A modernized hall would enhance public safety, improve accessibility, and ensure continued support for emergency response operations while also fostering economic activity.

We respectfully urge your support to help make this project a reality. Investing in this facility is an investment in the resilience and future of Union County.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Paul Anderes
Chair



R. Matthew Scarfo
Commissioner



Jake Seavert
Commissioner

ELGIN STAMPEDERS COMMUNITY HALL PROJECT 2025



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Forestry
State Forester's Office
2600 State St
Salem, OR 97310-0340
503-945-7200
www.oregon.gov/ODF

To: Grant Committee

September 16, 2024,

This letter is in support of the new Elgin Stampede Community Hall from the Northeast Oregon District of the Oregon Department of Forestry. The Oregon Department of Forestry has used this facility over the years for a wide range of community events, operator trainings and luncheons and frequently as a command post for wildland fire emergencies in the area. Facilities like the Stampede grounds are hard to come by in our small communities, especially ones with plenty of parking area for our wildland fire equipment, grass covered camping areas for our firefighters and a building for our fire teams to work in while we work to limit exposure and risk to our community members, our natural resources and the critical infrastructure we all rely on.

Our agency fully supports the Elgin Stampede in this pursuit for their new hall along with the much-needed upgrades that they are proposing. It's amazing when volunteer organizations come together like the Stampeders have in a selfless manner and work to create, maintain and continually upgrade a facility like this that serves our community in so many ways.

I encourage your committee to support this organization and their venture to build a new community hall as it will help continue a legacy well into the future.

Thanks for your consideration of this letter of support and please feel free to reach out anytime with clarifying questions on the extent and frequency of our Agency's use of the facility.

Logan McCrae

La Grande/Baker Unit Forester

Northeast Oregon District

Oregon Department of Forestry

611 20th Street, La Grande OR, 97850

Logan.mccrae@odf.oregon.gov

541-519-1581 (c)

ELGIN STAMPEDERS COMMUNITY HALL PROJECT 2025



City of Elgin

PO Box 128 – 790 S 8th Ave - Elgin OR 97827

Voice: (541)437-2253 Fax: (541)437-0131

Mayor S. James Johnson (541) 975-4129

mayor@cityofelginor.org

February 28, 2023

Senator Merkley

Senator Wyden

RE: Elgin Stampede Hall Community Facility-Congressional Direct Spending Funding

Dear Senator Merkley & Senator Wyden,

The City of Elgin and the non-profit organization, Elgin Stampeders, is seeking funding for a new community facility to replace the current Stampede Community Hall. The Stampede Community Hall is used year around by various organizations. There's approximately, 9,000 people that go through the doors on an annual basis. From 4-H classes, fundraisers, and funerals to wildfire staging, the Stampede Community Hall has everything a local, state, or federal agency needs to complete their work.

The Community Hall was built in the early 1950's and is currently at risk of building and safety code non-compliance in the next few years as the building continues to rapidly deteriorate. The Community Hall is approximately 6,000 sq ft. with a large meeting room, a kitchen, a small meeting room and two restrooms. The exterior of the building is missing siding, the roof is sagging, and the foundation is cracking and crumbling. Water is infiltrating the outside walls creating wall separation. The restrooms are inadequate with 70-year-old plumbing. The sewer system is a septic tank that is deteriorating and needs replacement.

The City of Elgin and The Elgin Stampeders would like to build a new facility in two phases. Phase 1 would include a total kitchen, restroom, and small meeting room replacement. The replacement would demolish the existing kitchen and small meeting room and replace it with a new structure from the ground up. Phase 1 will also include an upgrade and conversion of the Hall's sewer system. Phase 2 will include the replacement of the primary meeting hall space. The overall square footage would be increased and would include an outdoor patio and ADA accessible ingress and egress. The replacement would be from the ground up. At the completion of both phases, the building will be an 11,000 sq. ft. regional multi-purpose conference center. With enough funds, the Stampeders and City will be able to finish the anticipated replacement.

I am a life long resident of Elgin and have gone to more events than I can count at the Elgin Community Hall. From funerals, weddings, and birthdays to gun shows, crab feeds, the rodeo, and a number of others – the Stampede Community Hall is a vital meeting grounds for Elgin. With this rehabilitation and expansion, I believe it will greatly benefit our economy in Elgin with the appeal of the new building. One of my fondest memories was learning to swing dance at the age of 13 in the memorable Stampede Community Hall.

The Community Hall is vital to the promotion of community and economic development in the surrounding area. By hosting events such as Cycle Oregon, Campground space for wildland firefighters, and many more.

As Mayor of Elgin, I rank this project as number 1.

Thank you,

S. James Johnson

Ride.



To: Grant Committee

October 1, 2024

Subject: Support for the Elgin Stampede Community Hall

Dear Grant Committee,

Cycle Oregon has spent nearly four decades working to support and promote the vitality of Oregon and the special people and places that live and visit here. In 2024 we had the privilege of hosting our *Rally* event in Elgin, OR at the Elgin Stampede Grounds.

This facility is a treasure, and a rarity in rural communities throughout Oregon. One of the guiding factors in our decision to host our event there was the infrastructure already in place; in particular the Stampede Hall. With access to a kitchen, bathrooms and a dining hall we were able to provide our participants and vendors with a safe indoor space for cooking and dining.

When Cycle Oregon brings one of our events to a community, we are able to inject thousands of dollars into the local economy through stipends, grants and through our riders visiting local businesses. As a result of access to the Stampede Hall, we were able to provide an economic boost in the Elgin economy this year.

After utilizing the space, I believe with the proper upgrades this facility could further serve the needs of not only the community but bolster their local economy by attracting tourists and encouraging new business opportunities and events. A few of these would be an upgraded commercial kitchen and a larger, slightly redesigned dining hall/event space, more access to power both inside and outside of the facility, updated and expanded bathrooms and increased storage capacity.

It is clear that the Stampede Hall has been well loved and utilized for decades. I believe an investment to upgrade and improve this facility will serve generations to come.

Our experience with the Elgin Stampeders who collaborated with Cycle Oregon to host *Rally* was exceptional. This group was always available, dedicated, supportive and passionate to provide the best experience possible for Cycle Oregon and our community. I have no doubt this group will execute the process of the new Elgin Stampede Community Hall at the highest level.

Cycle Oregon fully and enthusiastically supports the Elgin Stampeders efforts for a new Elgin Stampede Community Hall.

Thank you for considering this application. The new Elgin Stampede Community Hall is an exciting opportunity for Oregon, and we are eager to see it come to fruition.

Sincerely,

Steve Schulz
Executive Director, Cycle Oregon

Building community through cycling

CYCLE OREGON, INC. — P.O. Box 13695, PORTLAND, OR 97213 — 503.287.0405 — CYCLOREGON.COM

ELGIN ELECTRIC CO.
PO BOX 36
ELGIN, OR 97827
541-437-2054
elginelectricandappliance.com

02/12/25

To Whom it may concern:

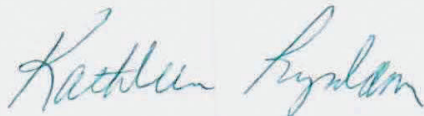
On behalf of Elgin Electric, an Elgin business that has been in this community since 1952, I am writing this letter in support of the Elgin Stampeders Association and their quest in receiving grants for their new building project.

As a lifelong resident, I have witnessed firsthand the impact of the Stampeders commitment to this community. Their commitment goes beyond just the annual rodeo they put on; it's their devotion to the entire area that is outstanding.

Numerous events are held annually in their old Stampede Hall, which urgently needs to be replaced. From the Rodeo, banquets, funerals, weddings and other events that the building is used for, this building is one of the mainstays and meeting places of our community, and without it there isn't a place big enough here to hold these events.

Bringing community and families together in a small area such as ours is one of the primary focuses of the Stampede Association. They have repaired, replaced and modernized all of their other buildings and arena over the years, and now it's time for them to be able to take the last important step, and that is to build a new Stampede Hall. Generations to come will have the same advantages from a new building as we who have lived here for decades have had.

As a business owner, Elgin Electric stands behind the Stampede Association and hope that this final step becomes a reality.



Kathleen Rysdam
Partner/owner
Elgin Electric

ELGIN WOMEN'S SERVICE CLUB

1902 PUBLIC ST.

ELGIN, OR 97827

02/12/25

To Whom it May Concern:

Elgin Women's Service Club has been an Elgin institution for over 100 years, and as such, has had many opportunities to be involved in functions at the Elgin Stampede Hall.

Having served on many of our committees to serve luncheons after funerals, help with weddings and banquets, I can personally attest to the need for a new building for the Stampede Association.

While the Stampede Association has tried over the years to keep this building in working order, it is now to the point where it is no longer feasible to continue to try and keep it running.

The need for a new, modern meeting place for Elgin is significant, and along with the other members of the Elgin Women's Service Club, I encourage you to give serious consideration to their grant application.



Sharon Glasson

President, Elgin Women's Service Club

Elgin Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 1001

Elgin, OR 97827

February 13, 2025

Dear Grant Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter to endorse the grant writing endeavors of the Elgin Stampede Association. I have lived and worked in Union County for over 23 years. While working in Elgin I have had the opportunity to serve as the past Treasurer for the Stampeders and as the President for the Elgin Chamber of Commerce. These positions have taught me the importance of community.

The Stampede Hall has been the center of our small community for over 70 years. It is the gathering place for events like the Elgin High School FFA Banquets, Annual Chamber Banquets, wedding receptions, funerals, Cycle Oregon and of course all things Elgin Stampede. More importantly, the Stampede Hall and surrounding grounds have been the command center for wildfire operations on many occasions.

Built and maintained by faithful volunteers this community building has served us well. As our needs grow as a community, so does our need for a larger, more efficient building with improved ADA access and adequate space for events that are drawn to the spirit of the Stampede Hall.

As the past Chamber President, I have seen the positive financial impact that the Stampede Rodeo provides for our small community. The residents and merchants of Elgin also benefit from all the additional events held at the Stampede grounds. I am proud to write this letter in support of the Elgin Stampede Association.

Sincerely,

Kathy Bonney, Past President

Elgin Chamber of Commerce

February 7, 2025

RE: SUPPORT FOR REPLACING THE ELGIN STAMPEDER'S MEETING HALL

To Whom it May Concern,

I'm writing in support of the Elgin Stampeder Association's quest to replace their aging meeting hall. This facility was built by Stampeder members around 1950 and has served as an essential resource for Elgin residents, visitors, and emergency responders ever since. It is the only building in Elgin and the surrounding area that can accommodate large gatherings. I have fond memories of attending community dances in the 60's and 70's, multiple crab feeds, gun shows, fundraisers, family celebrations and annual Elgin Alumni get togethers in this facility. I've also attended way too many funerals in the hall. With the growing severity of the wildfire season throughout Northeast Oregon, and due to the facility and grounds strategic location, emergency responders have chosen this resource as their command center when major fires occur.

Over 70 years of wear has left the hall in urgent need of replacement. As a retired engineer/project manager I have had the opportunity to inspect the facility. The building's wooden trusses have been spliced, patched and braced for years now. It is no longer feasible to continue chasing the checking and cracking of the truss members and expecting the building to remain a safe gathering space. Total roof replacement is not an option as the foundation stem walls are severely cracked and have started to lean in multiple locations. The facility is simply worn out. Where the meeting hall has provided an essential and safe place for families, businesses and governmental agencies to come together and support one another for 70 years, it is only prudent from a need and safety standpoint to replace the structure.

Having lived in Elgin since the Stampede Hall was built, I can't imagine losing a facility that has meant so much to the traditions and heritage of our area. Thank you in advance for any help you can provide to the Stampeders with their replacement project. If you have any questions of me please don't hesitate to call at (541) 786-1285.

Sincerely,

Jared Rogers
Elgin Resident