

February 12, 2026

The proposed reconstruction of the Elgin Stampede Community Hall in Elgin represents a critical investment in the long-term sustainability, safety, and economic vitality of our rural region. Located in eastern Oregon, the Hall serves not only the residents of Elgin but also neighboring communities throughout the tri-county and tri-state area. After decades of continuous service, the existing structure has reached the end of its functional lifespan and can no longer adequately meet modern safety standards, accessibility requirements, or the growing needs of our community. Replacement of this facility is not optional - it is essential.

A primary objective of the rebuild is restoring and ensuring full ADA compliance. The current building does not adequately meet accessibility standards, limiting participation for individuals with disabilities and aging residents and visitors. The new facility will be designed to meet and exceed ADA requirements, guaranteeing equitable access to all members of our community and reaffirming our commitment to inclusivity.

Beyond its everyday civic and cultural uses, the Elgin Stampede Community Hall plays a critical role in regional emergency management and preparedness. During the 2015 Grizzly Bear Complex Fire east of Elgin, the Hall served as an Incident Command Center for FEMA Incident Teams, the State of Oregon, and the Oregon National Guard. It functioned as a centralized coordination site for wildfire response efforts in Union County. Very few facilities in this rural portion of the county possess the capacity, location, and infrastructure necessary to serve in this role. Rebuilding the Hall will ensure the community retains a structurally sound, code-compliant, and technologically capable emergency operations and resiliency hub to respond to wildfires, severe weather events, and other regional crises.

The new Community Hall will be intentionally designed as a rural resiliency hub, capable of supporting emergency response coordination, temporary sheltering, supply distribution, and community communication during disasters. Strengthening local infrastructure in this way enhances not only public safety but also **rural resilience**, reducing dependence on distant urban centers during times of crisis.

The Elgin Stampede Association remains dedicated to preserving and advancing the traditions of rural Oregon while fostering civic participation, education, and cooperation among community partners. The annual Stampede Rodeo and related events draw an average of 9,000+ visitors each year, generating substantial economic activity for local businesses and reinforcing the cultural identity of our region. More than thirty organizations utilize the existing facilities annually for meetings, educational programs, youth activities, community gatherings, and mission-critical fundraising events.

Without a functional and compliant facility, these organizations, and the broader rural economy, face significant hardship. The Hall provides essential space for volunteerism, civic enterprise, and community engagement that would otherwise be unavailable in our region. Its continued deterioration threatens not only our ability to host events but also the economic stimulus and regional identity they sustain.

Rebuilding the Elgin Stampede Community Hall is therefore a matter of public safety, accessibility, emergency preparedness, and **rural economic vitality**. This project will restore ADA compliance, strengthen emergency response capacity, and secure a modern, resilient facility that supports community life, cultural heritage, and economic development for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Kylie Evans

Kylie Evans
Elgin Stampede Board Secretary

