



FIVE COUNTY NEWS FROM 'R' VIEW

VOLUME XII NUMBER 6

NEWSLETTER OF THE FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

NOVEMBER- DECEMBER 2017

Director's Dialog



Bryan D. Thiriot, Executive Director

The Association completed a number of projects that took a team effort, as well as the use of key cooperative and collaborative partnerships, to accomplish in 2017.

Thank you to the Association's dedicated staff, informed elected officials, volunteers throughout the region, board members of various advisory boards, service partners, state legislators and state agency

officials, our congressional delegation and staff, and any others I haven't named, but truly appreciate, who continue to work so hard to make southwestern Utah such a great place to live and work. A few program highlights I would like to bring to your attention that are directly helping people in southwestern Utah include, but is certainly not limited to:

Medicare:

Amy Brinkerhoff, one of our team members who has been with the Association for 6 years, works as a SHIP/SMP Coordinator answering questions about Medicare for individuals. Since June, she started calculating the amount saved in Medicare Drug plans. We have always provided this service, but recently started tracking the savings amounts. From June-November of this year, we saved 49 individuals a combined total of \$132,324, with an average savings of \$2,700 per person.

Veteran Benefits:

Janeil Esplin-Jackson, a Case Manager who has been with the Association for 22 years, has worked with our military veterans in the Five County region in the "Cover to Cover" program since 2013. She connected veterans with their benefits until the program was cut off in September due to loss of funding. Here are the numbers served over the past several years:

2017	252 veterans served
2016	114 veterans served
2015	43 veterans served
2013-14	5 veterans served

As word got out about the program, you can see above the success in actual numbers that Janeil along with other Association staff accomplished in connecting Veterans to benefits in southern Utah. Here is a summary of the project:

- 50% of Veterans were not connected to the VA for benefits prior to calling.
- 51% of Veterans, caregivers, or widows were assisted with an application.
- 20% of surviving spouses were served through the screening process.

Examples of referrals:

- 54% Health Care
- 51% Disability Compensation
- 42% Aid and Assistance
- 79% of Veterans served in WWII, Korea, or Vietnam

We at Five County are inquiring to state and federal agencies to determine the next best steps to see possibilities to continue the program, especially with all the certifications we had to complete.

Transportation:

We have seen more roads and bridges recently completed in the Five County region, such as on I-15 south of downtown St. George, and I am excited that a soon to be realized pedestrian underpass below I-15 in St. George will safely connect students to the Dixie State University campus from the areas east of the I-15 freeway near 400 south. Projects such as these are examples of the work that the highly involved and capable transportation planning staff at the Association are involved in to help ensure an adequate road transportation network and other multimodal options for an ever increasing population in this region.

Natural Resources:

Beaver, Garfield, Kane, Washington, and Iron Counties completed their County Natural Resource Plans that Five County had collected data from socio and economics, to landscapes, and these plans will significantly be helpful in submitting to the federal land agencies and updating resource management plans.

Economic Development:

In 2019 the Five County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy or CEDS with the Economic Development Agency will be required to be updated, but we will begin laying the ground work in 2018 to create a modernized, dynamic overall economic plan for the region. Director of Community & Economic Development, Gary Zabriskie, with 24 years at the Association, administers the Five County Economic Development District's Revolving Loan Fund, and closed a number of loans this year, creating tax-paying private sector jobs in our region that wouldn't have otherwise been realized without our loan fund's participation. Several new RLF loans are currently in the works.

Community Development:

In January of 2017 the Regional Multijurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP) that was prepared by our Community Development staff over the past 1½ years was formally approved by the Federal Emergency Management

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Agency and provided to each jurisdiction that participated to adopt by resolution. This enables participating jurisdictions to access FEMA grant funding for mitigation projects over the 5 year period of the Plan. The extensive work to stabilize the Truman Drive landslide area in Santa Clara City is a great example of the type of project that can be funded by FEMA grants by participating in the NHMP process. Associate Planner Nate Wiberg, who in January will have been with the Association for 2 years, was the author of the regional NHMP and has also been busy developing Affordable Housing Plans with our region's jurisdictions that are required under Utah law to have a "plan for moderate income housing". The plans he submitted to the state for scoring, following their adoption by the entity, rank among the highest scored plans in Utah.

Additional accomplishments this past year at the Association are highlighted in this newsletter. I, and the entire staff here at the Association, sincerely wish you the best in the coming new year.

Summary Of Our Recently Held Early Childhood Collaboration Conference



Care About Child Care Staff

What a great way to celebrate the end of Summer and welcome in Fall as the Early Childhood Collaboration Conference was held on September 23-24, 2017. Care About Childcare-Five County was appreciative of the venue as this year's conference was held on the beautiful campus of Dixie

State University in St. George. A combination of childcare providers, teachers, parents and college students represented the 257 conference attendees.

The theme, "*Keep Calm and Sail On- Helping Children Navigate their World*" was emphasized throughout the conference with amazing classes and exceptional speakers. Friday night began with a "*Sail Away Provider Night*". The presenter was Hannah Rothlin, Mind+Body Specialist at the Live Well Center at Dixie Regional Medical Center who helped attendees learn and practice important techniques for relaxation and dealing with stress. The night was topped off with a tasty treat from Zepppe's.

Saturday began early with registration, a warm welcome and an inspiring keynote address by Nathan Cureton who is a teacher, author, and passionate speaker. His words were inspiring and motivational as he shared his vast knowledge and experience working with students and families.

Throughout the morning, and again after lunch, participants were able to choose classes and workshops dealing with a range of topics from trauma awareness, math, science, music and art, along with classes on brain science, autism, play, understanding the challenges of early childhood behavior and many, many more topics. The staff at Care About Childcare-Five County are extremely appreciative of the vast diversity of the almost 30 presenters and are grateful for their time spent sharing their knowledge and experience with each of us at this conference.

Lunch was provided by Dixie State Food Services and attendees were kept busy as they listened and participated in a Lunch-And-Learn presented by Keri Allred, Director Tri-Chair for the Utah Head Start Association.



Well Attended Early Childhood Collaboration Conference held back on September 23-24 at Dixie State University.

Participants were reminded of the importance of "Advocacy" and were able to share their own experiences with "making a difference" in the lives of the children they serve. Various vendors were available during the day and they generously donated door prizes which were a huge success, as always. The afternoon air began to cool as the conference concluded and many happy, re-energized, motivated childcare providers and teachers left with great ideas, new concepts and fun memories of this year's Early Childhood Collaboration Conference. Care About Childcare-Five County staff is very grateful to all those who contributed time, effort and resources to make this conference a success. We are appreciative of great dedication and continued service and remind all Early Childhood providers to "Keep Calm and Sail On" as they continue to "Help Children Navigate Their World". Another conference is planned for next fall.

~ Tammy Douglas, Quality Improvement Supervisor Care About Childcare

Wildfire Protection Planning Underway in the Five County Region

This past summer's Brian Head fire was a devastating event in southwestern Utah. This fire burned over 72,000 acres and cost \$36 million to suppress. Unfortunately, that's but one of the costs resulting from this catastrophic event; others include lost homes and property, flooding that has, and will happen, wildlife and fishery impacts, and critical watersheds that will take years to recover. Most of these impacts are yet to have a cost assigned to them but will surely add significantly to the \$36 million price tag already accrued.

Wildfires have been, and are, a natural part of our lives in the West. Development encroaching into wildland urban interface areas is becoming much more difficult to manage. Suppression of wildfires by land management agencies over the last century has proven to be problematic in the management of fire in current times by not allowing those fires to do natural thinning of fuels, ensuring a patchwork of healthy fire-adapted trees throughout the forests. That previous practice has resulted in vast stands of overcrowded and diseased trees primed for large uncontrollable fires. Although both federal and state agencies

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recognize these problems and the impacts to related communities, the conditions continue to worsen. Thus, the Utah State Legislature mandated that every community at risk develop a Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan (CWPP) that will identify both its specific risks and its available resources to better be prepared for the inevitable. In the Five County region, 60 communities at risk have been identified, and through a process developed by the State Division of Forestry Fire and State Lands, work is being done to help these communities become prepared and defensible. This process was started back in the early 2000's but was not continued. The growth in areas such as Duck Creek, Panguitch Lake and Pine Valley has increased exponentially. Sadly, the vegetative state has worsened and in many cases these homes and cabins are in danger.



Panguitch City's municipal watershed was devastated by this past summer's Brian Head wildfire, forcing the City to cease using water from its extensive culinary spring system west of the City.

Just in the past year, CWPP's have been developed for the communities of Hi/Lo (Beaver Co.), The Greater Duck Creek Area (Kane Co.), Old Iron Town (Iron Co.), Bryce Woodlands (Kane Co.), Brian Head (Iron Co.), Deer Springs Ranch (Kane Co.), and Red Canyon (Iron Co.). These communities have established Fire Councils and are well on their way to developing projects within the private lands to enhance their ability to survive a wildfire event. Other CWPP's in Washington County have also been developed and meetings are being set to establish goals there as well. These CWPP's do not guarantee that a community will be safe from wildfire, but provides the education, tools and opportunities to plan for and work toward having residents, county officials, and neighboring agencies all on the same page about the risks and solutions to preventing catastrophic results.

As more communities organize and work toward a more "Fire Wise" status, additional preventative measures will take place. Residents becoming better aware of their community's surroundings and natural hazards which threaten its homes is critical to safety of the entire community. A quality CWPP will help communities be more prepared and also heighten cooperation between city, county, state and federal entities making a more efficient, sustainable and safe situation.

I encourage you all to get educated of your surroundings, especially if you live in the wildland urban interface area. Make

your home safe from outside elements of which Mother Nature is ultimately in control. ~ Bevan Killpack, Community Fire Planner

The Dixie Transportation Expo Seeks Public Involvement on February 13, 2018



New configuration of the intersection of Bluff Street and Sunset Boulevard in St. George

Local elected officials and community leaders continue to cite the benefits of population and economic growth in Washington County and are taking positive proactive steps to accommodate and encourage changes needed to further attract residents, jobs, tourists, and recreation amenities to the area.

The population in Washington County has grown from 135,000 residents in 2010 to over 165,000 in 2016 and is projected to more than double by 2035. One necessary step in accommodating all this growth is a hardline look at roads and other transportation facilities.

Future improvements to roads, bus lines, bike trails, and sidewalks are being planned and contemplated right now - and the public's input is needed at the annual Dixie Transportation Expo scheduled on February 13, 2018.

The Dixie Transportation Expo typically attracts crowds of over 700 people who come to find out what transportation projects are in the works and to render their input on how the future should develop - and planners have listened. Public input is directly responsible for inspiring the bicycle facilities at the Red Hills Parkway/Bluff Street interchange. Public input was instrumental in designing what is now being built at the intersection of Bluff Street and Sunset Boulevard, and public interest has stimulated recent and expected expansions of the SunTran transit system.

This year, planners and community leaders will again seek public input on projects along Bluff Street, Interstate 15, River Road, Old Highway 91 in Santa Clara and Ivins, an I-15 pedestrian underpass at 400 South in St. George, possible transit service from St. George to Springdale, the extension of the Southern Parkway through Hurricane, State Route 9 through Hurricane, and many other local projects. **The Expo is open between 10:00 a.m. and its closing time at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 13, 2018, at the Dixie Convention Center, 1835 Convention Center Dr, St. George, Utah.** Admission to the Expo is free.

~ Myron Lee, Director Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization

Capital Improvement List Deadline for all Entities is January 11, 2018:



Local Capital Improvement Lists are used when applying for funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and/or the Utah Permanent Community Impact Fund Board (CIB).

We are underway with your entity's only opportunity to submit updated Capital Improvement Lists to be used for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications submitted in January 2018. The lists will also be used for applications submitted to the CIB in the June 2018, October 2018 or February 2019 CIB application cycles.

A memo detailing the process to collect these lists was mailed out to your entity back in late October, along with pages from last year's consolidated lists that your jurisdiction submitted. We also sent out new blank tables for developing your jurisdiction's new 1-year action plan and year 2-5 project list. We need your jurisdiction to submit back to us a copy of your updated lists to the Five County Association of Governments office. **YOUR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT LISTS MUST BE RETURNED TO OUR OFFICE NO LATER THAN 5:00 P.M. ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2018.** Projects on lists received after that deadline will not be eligible to be applied for funding this year.

Please contact Associate Planner Nate Wiberg at (435) 673-3548, ext. 105 or e-mail: nwiberg@fivecounty.utah.gov to answer any questions or obtain further details.

Please submit articles, or suggestions for them, to our Newsletter editor via e-mail to (newsletter@fivecounty.utah.gov) or in writing to: FCAOG Newsletter Editor P.O. Box 1550; St. George, Utah 84771-1550.

For information on AOG services, please call (435) 673-3548, or visit our website at: <http://www.fivecounty.utah.gov>

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