



JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES

BUSINESS OFFICE
205 S. Central Ave.
Medford, OR 97501

Dear Interested Community Member:

We are excited that you are interested in serving on the Jackson County Library District Board of Directors. We hope that this information packet answers your questions concerning the open positions.

Within this packet you will find information about special districts, Library Districts specifically, what it means to be a board member, and how to serve on our board. We have also included a copy of our latest strategic plan.

This is an exciting time to join the JCLD Board. The District was formed in 2014, with authorization to collect up to 60 cents per \$1000 assessed value on property taxes. In 2024, we will be celebrating our 10th year as a District. In April 2023, library service hours expanded throughout the system by 30%, something our communities had been asking for since before the pandemic hit and disrupted every aspect of our lives.

The JCLS mission is to connect everyone to information, ideas, and each other. With 15 branches throughout the County, JCLS offers in-person and virtual programs, Take & Make kits, At Home Services for patrons who cannot come to the library, Outreach to Child Care, free internet access, 24-hour online resources, and a staff of experts. Patrons can browse the online catalog and curated staff booklists, subscribe to the Library Connect blog, and utilize readers advisory resources via an online form called JCLS Discovery. Learn more at jcls.org.

Next Steps

- Review this packet
- Contact the Jackson County Elections Office at 541-774-6148 for more information about running for election, or download the election filing information [here](#):
- Download a copy of the Elections Manual at <https://sos.oregon.gov/elections/Documents/county-city-district-candidates.pdf>

Thank you for your interest in serving on our board! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at the information below.

Sincerely,
Viki Brown
JCLS Board Chair
vbrown@jcls.org

Kari May
Library Director
kmay@jcls.org



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Jackson County Library District Board Member Duties

A board member of Jackson County Library District serves on an elected, five-member Board of Directors that is responsible for conducting the affairs of the District in compliance with Oregon Revised Statutes. The Board of Directors has the legislative authority and power to establish policies and procedures to fulfill its legal and fiduciary responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the Board is to make policy-level decisions for the District, and to hire, evaluate and manage the District's chief executive officer. Adopting policies that provide for effective oversight of management is a primary responsibility of the Board. Management of the daily operations of the District and management of the staff is the responsibility of the Library Director.

The Board ensures that the District achieves its mission in an ethical, transparent, accountable and prudent manner. Each board member is accountable for the functions described below, all of which are accomplished at board meetings and committee assignments through review of information, strategic planning, conversation, and decision making.

The purpose of the Board, on behalf of the people of Jackson County, is to see to it that Jackson County Library District (1) achieves appropriate results for appropriate persons at an appropriate cost and (2) avoids unacceptable actions and situations. As provided for in ORS 357.256, the District Board shall be the governing body of the District and shall exercise all powers thereof.

Together, board members make decisions and set policy for the District. Individually, you do not have any power, but acting with your fellow board members you have an opportunity to have a positive impact on your community. The Board's major responsibility is setting policy.

Board members also do the following:

- Attend the board meetings, regularly held on the third Monday of each month (sometimes special meetings can be held to address specific issues)
- Review and adopt the annual budget
- Approve financial reports
- Set strategic goals and evaluate progress towards those goals
- Hire and evaluate the executive director
- Help set standards, controls and policies that support sound risk management practices are in place; e.g. safety and security, insurance, data controls and personnel management practices
- Delegate authority
- Connect with and advocate in the community

Why Should You Want to Be a Board Member?

- Your community needs you! We can't operate without elected board members who are willing to volunteer their time and talents
- Serving as a special district board member is a way you can truly make a difference directly for your community
- Joining a board helps you learn from the people around you, but also gives you the opportunity to share your knowledge and experiences with those same people
- Gain experience in government and leadership that can translate into other potential career or political opportunities



Library Districts



Districts connect their community

- *27 library districts exist throughout the state that are independent local governments and not part of a local city or county.*
- *Serve as the community's central democratic place—where anyone, regardless of socioeconomic status, may have free access to information, recreational reading, a gathering space, and services and programs to enhance their lives.*
- *Provide materials in all formats such as books, periodicals, magazines, videos, audios, and digital media.*
- *Provide free services such as preschool story times to encourage early literacy, quiet study and work areas for students and professionals, or book clubs to encourage appreciation of literature in adults.*
- *Governed by a board of five directors elected in May of odd-numbered years serving four-year terms. Any elector residing within the district is qualified to serve on the board. Board members may be elected at large, or by zones of approximately equal population, or a combination of both.*
- *District board is completely responsible for personnel administration, financial administration, and seeing that the requirements of laws governing areas ranging from public records and public meetings to civil rights are met.*
- *Receive tax revenues based on voter-approved permanent rate per \$1,000 in assessed property value within the district's defined geographic area.*



What is a Special District?





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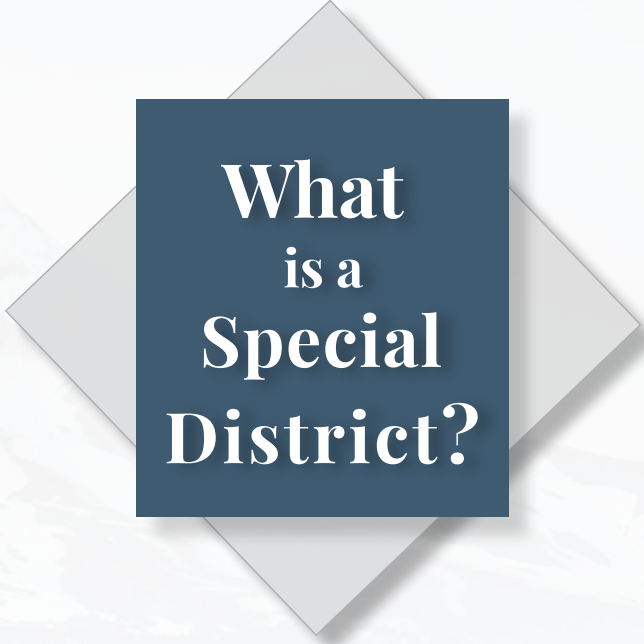
SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION OF OREGON

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What is a Special District?

Most of us do not know much about local governments; and we know less about special districts. Special districts are a form of local government created by a local community to meet a specific need. Inadequate revenue bases and competing demands for existing taxes make it difficult for cities and counties to provide all of the services that their constituents want. When residents or landowners want new services or higher levels of existing services, they can form a district to pay for them. Each special district focuses on a specific set of services, like fire protection, water, healthcare, parks and recreation, among many others. There are currently 34 different types of special districts in Oregon.

Special districts can cross city and county lines to provide focused services to communities of different sizes, allowing them to address their common needs. Special districts can be small, such as a fire protection district serving a rural unincorporated area. They can also cover multi-county regions. The boundaries of special districts are not dependent on the county or city that the residents live in. Instead, special district boundaries are defined by the common needs of the communities and the services they want to be provided.

Like cities and counties, special districts can sign contracts, employ workers and acquire real property through purchase or eminent domain. Following constitutional limits, they can also issue bonds, impose special taxes, levy assessments, and charge services fees. Like other governments, special districts can sue and be sued.

Most independent special districts have boards elected directly by the residents and landowners in the district, making special districts accountable to the people they serve. The special district board is the governing body of the special district. They set policies that are carried out by the district's employees. The special district's general manager is charged with overseeing the day-to-day operations of the district and reports directly to the board of directors.

Statutory Authority for Special Districts

All special districts are created based on laws passed by the State Legislature. These laws also determine which services the district can provide and how districts are managed and governed. Most special districts are created by laws that are applicable to specific types of special districts. These laws are known as "principal acts."

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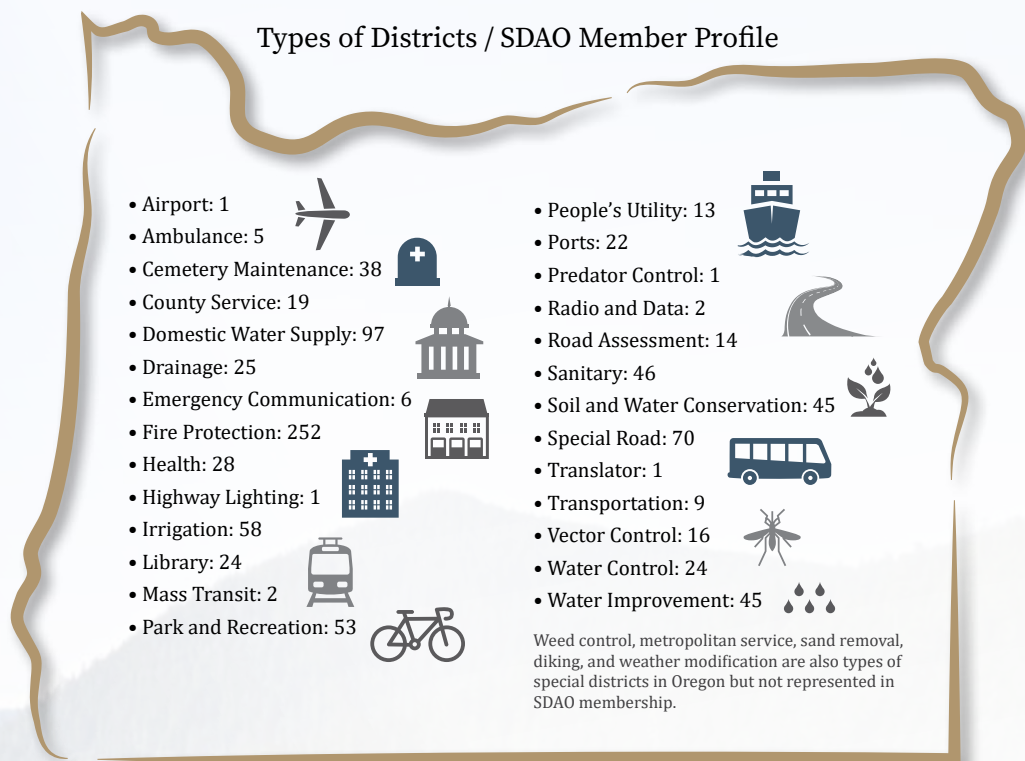
Special Districts



Fast Facts

- 1,000+ special districts located in every region of the state
- 920 special districts are members of SDAO
- Over 4,350 locally elected/volunteer board members
- Special districts of some type provide services to nearly every Oregonian
- 350 districts operate exclusively with volunteers
- Special districts are fiscally responsible. 350+ operate with budgets under \$100,000
- Large, regional special districts solve regional challenges and provide for economics of scale, saving tax and rate payer money

Types of Districts / SDAO Member Profile



What a Special District is Not

• Special districts are not state government

Special districts are local agencies which deliver specific services to specific communities. Operating under state laws, special districts are autonomous government entities that are accountable to the voters or landowners they serve. State officials, however, oversee special districts. For example, special districts must send their annual financial reports to the Secretary of State Audits Division. Districts must also follow state laws for public meetings, public records, public contracting, bonded debt, and elections.

• Special districts are not county governments or cities

Counties and cities are general purpose governments. Counties and cities perform a broad array of services to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens. Special districts are limited purpose governments. They can provide only the services allowed by state law and supported by their residents. Sometimes county commissioners are special district governing boards, but those districts are legally separate local entities.

• Special districts are not school districts

School districts exist to provide one service – public education. Special districts can deliver a variety of public services, excluding education. School districts get most of their money from the state government. Special districts rely mostly on local revenues.

Special Districts Provide Essential Local Services



- Airport districts manage airports and enhance local economies.
- Cemetery districts provide cost-effective burial services and preserve historical community information.
- County service districts offer over 22 different type of services, such as law enforcement, agricultural educational extension services, and street lighting.



- Diking and drainage districts protect lives and property from the threat of flooding.
- Fire protection districts protect homes, businesses, and the environment from fires and respond to medical emergencies.



- Port districts manage recreational, economic, and environmental coastal and river infrastructure.
- Health districts promote the physical and mental health of communities, which may include preventative care, nutrition education, health clinics, traditional hospitals, or other services.
- Library districts provide access to educational and informational resources, including collections of books, photographs, newspapers and videos.



- Park and recreation districts provide parks, open spaces, and community programs to improve quality of life.



- People's utility districts provide power.
- Sanitary districts treat and recycle wastewater.
- Soil and water conservation districts identify local conservation needs and support landowners in implementing solutions.



- Transit districts provide public transportation services that connect regions.
- Vector control districts control mosquito populations and reduce the spread of vector borne diseases.
- Water related districts deliver water to residential, commercial, and agricultural areas.

Special District Advantages

Special districts can...



- empower citizens to govern their own neighborhoods and community.



- provide opportunities for citizens to get involved in the governance of their community through service on the district's governing body and attendance of meetings, which are usually held near their homes.



- be a financing mechanism to help the private and public sectors govern, finance, construct, operate, and maintain essential public services and facilities.



- provide enhanced and specialized public services in response to citizen demand that a county or city is unable or unwilling to do.



- allow cities and counties to focus more on general government issues.

- provide for a local special-purpose governmental agency with funding, employment, and missions separate from local general-purpose governments.

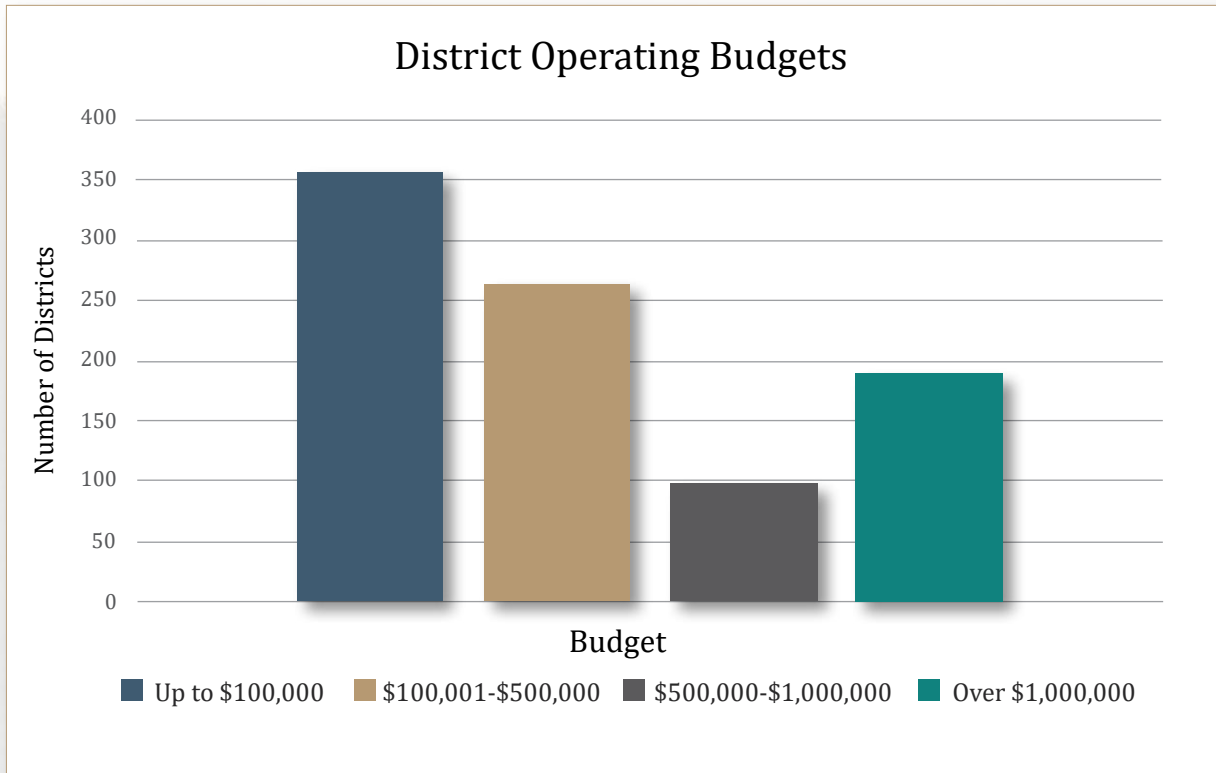


- provide governmental services when the need transcends the boundaries, responsibilities, and authority of individual counties and cities. This is one reason we have regional and multi-county special districts.

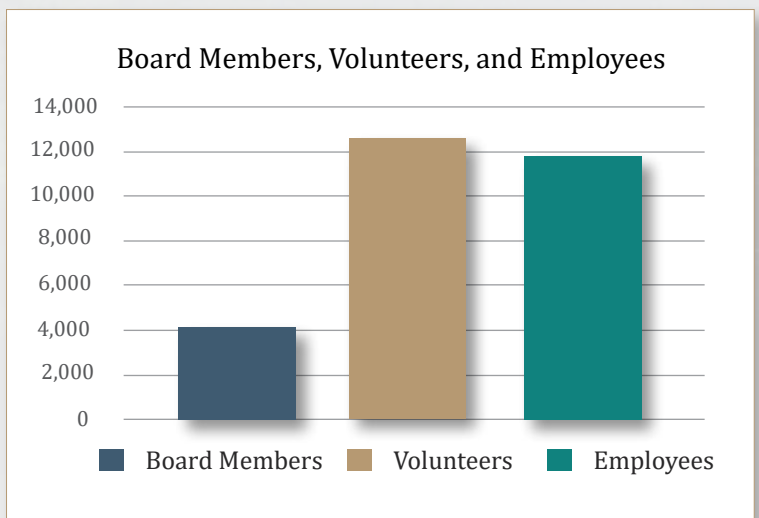
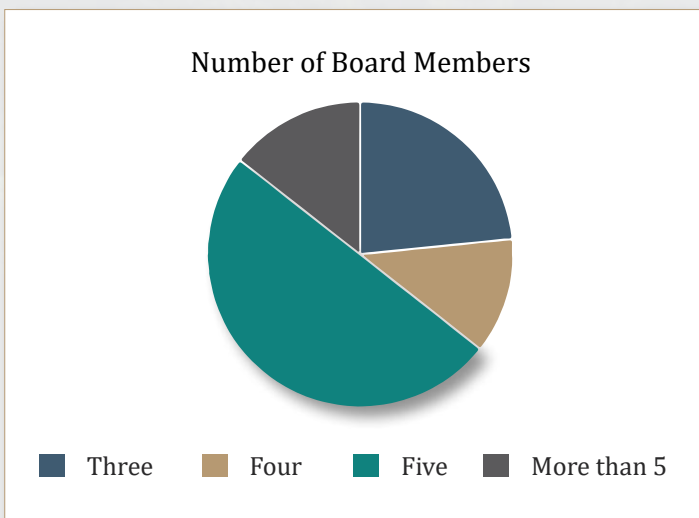
- ensure accountability of public resources, since they are held to the same high standard as cities and counties.

By the Numbers

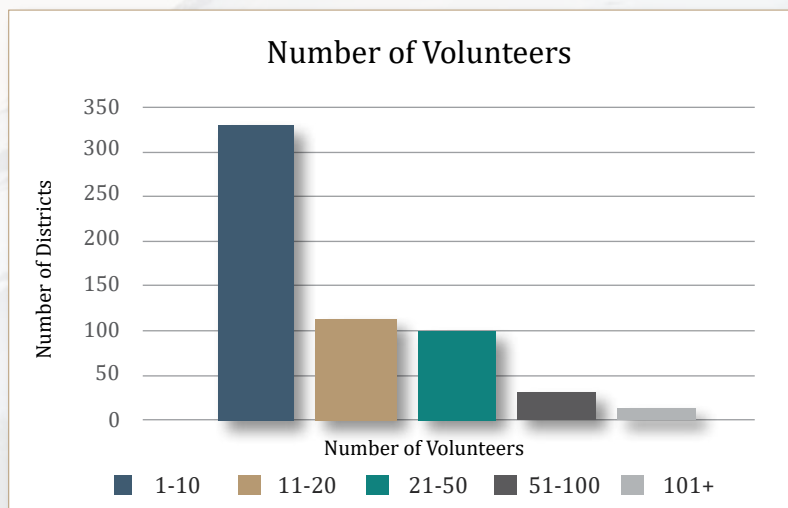
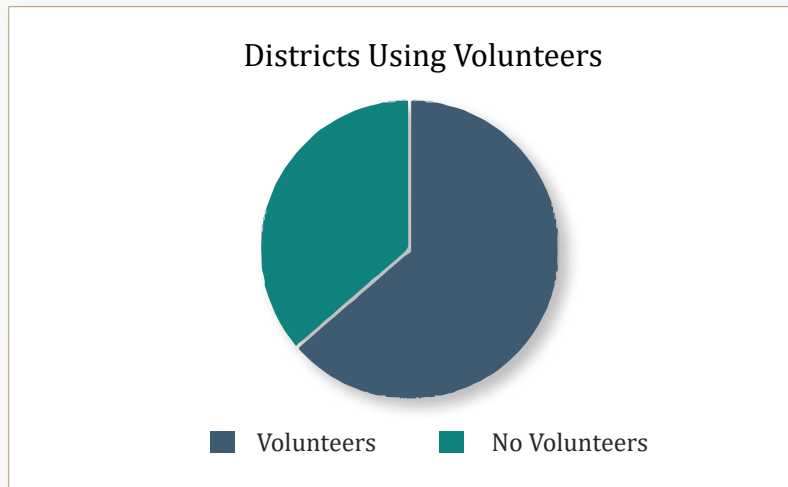
Special districts are funded by local property taxes and/or fees for service. The operating budgets of our members varies widely as do the services they provide. Amazingly, about 40% of SDAO members serve their communities with a budget of less than \$100,000 per year. The graph below shows the number of districts and the range of operating budgets.



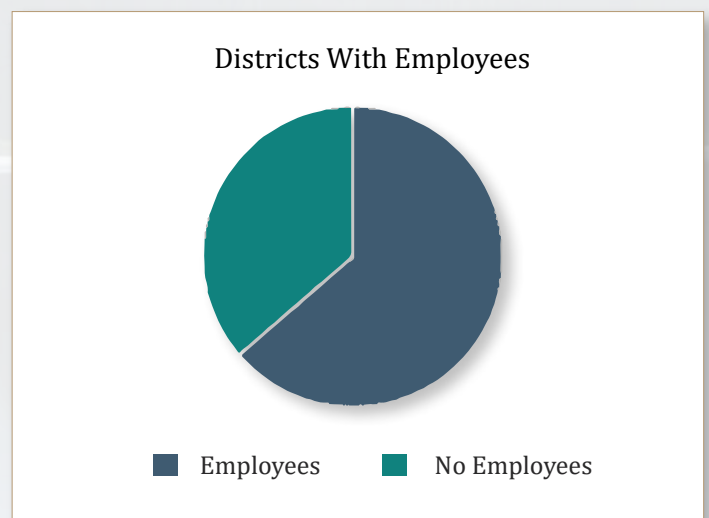
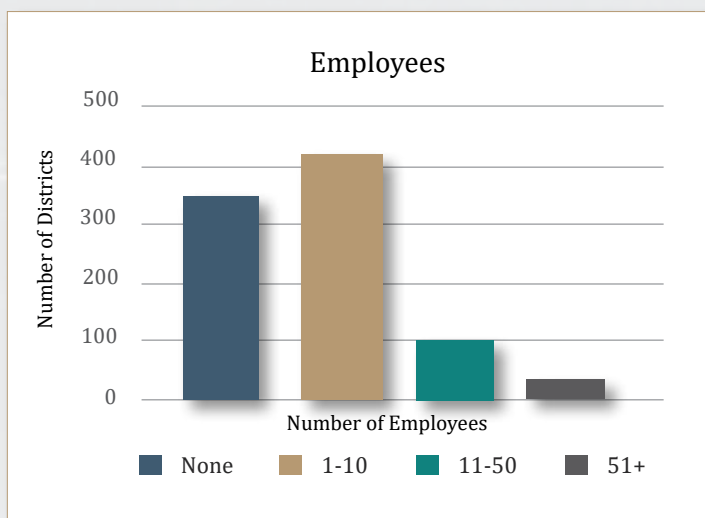
A strong board is essential to the successful governance of a special district. Board members must follow state requirements regarding public meetings, record keeping, ethics, and more. A minimum of three members is required to conduct business. The graphs below show the number of board members for our special districts.



Each day, thousands of Oregonians volunteer their time and efforts for special districts. They are a vital resource and often make it possible for districts to fully serve their communities. 64% of our district members have at least one volunteer.



The majority (62%) of our district members employ individuals to provide services to the community. However, most of them do so with a very small staff. In fact, 75% of our members that utilize staff have ten or fewer employees.



Profile of a Small District

JASPER KNOLLS WATER DISTRICT

- Domestic water supply to 53 metered properties
- 45-acre service area in Prineville
- Two 20,000 gallon concrete water reservoirs enclosed within a 1,300 square foot wood frame building and an 80 square foot filtration building
- Five volunteers, no paid staff
- 2017-18 Budget: \$16,000



Profile of a Large District

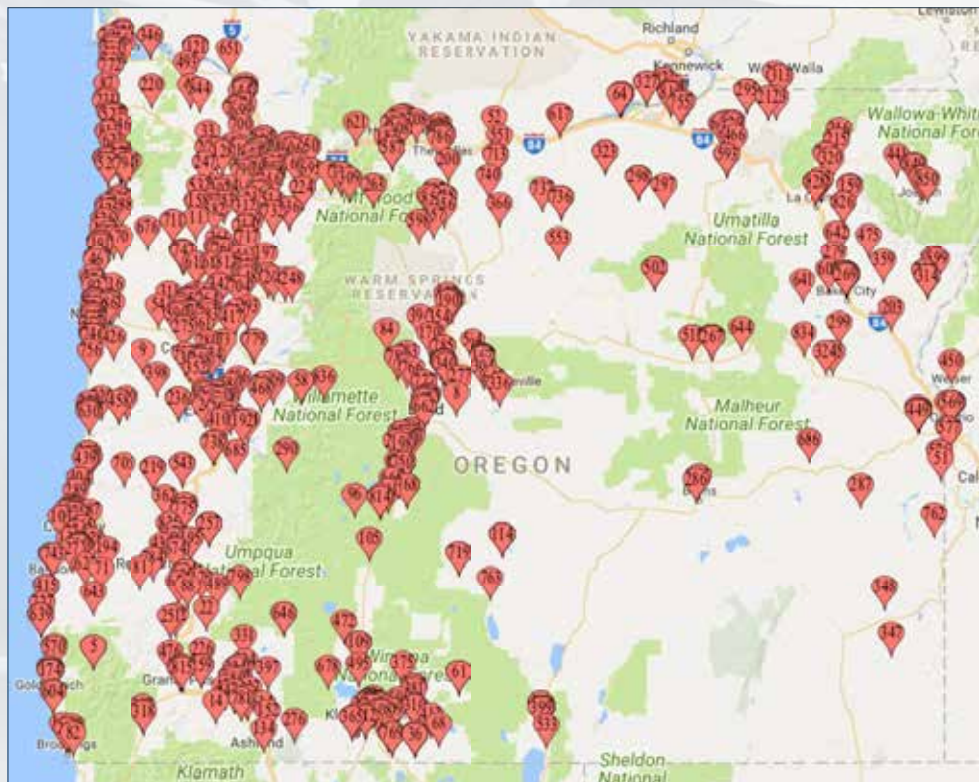
TUALATIN VALLEY FIRE & RESCUE

- Fire protection and emergency medical services to approximately 530,000 residents
- 390-square-mile service area includes 11 cities and unincorporated portions of Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties
- 26 fire stations staffed by more than 400 career firefighters and 90 volunteers
- 2017-18 Budget: \$149,782,000





OREGON SPECIAL DISTRICTS MAP



Special districts are the most basic, grassroots form of government. Members of the public can feel like they can have a real impact on the direction, control and services they receive. Nationwide government satisfaction surveys show that special districts are the most popular type of government because they are focused on specific missions and engaged with the public they serve.

The number of special districts in Oregon has been on an upward trend for the last 70 years. Since 1942, this number has grown about 400% to just over 1,000. The State of Oregon estimates that the state's population will increase to approximately 5.5 million people by the year 2050. As our population grows, city and county resources will be stretched, causing a need for cities, counties and special districts to work together as a means of installing the infrastructure to support the growth.



S | D | A | O

SPECIAL DISTRICTS
ASSOCIATION OF OREGON

Special Districts Association of Oregon

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STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026



MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR



I am pleased to present to you the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan for Jackson County Library Services. The past two years have been abnormal in so many ways, with our lives – and library services – disrupted by COVID-19 and by the devastating wildfires that impacted Jackson County in 2020. It's nice to be able to look towards the future and envision where library services can best meet the needs of our communities over the next five years.

The strategic planning process included community engagement in a variety of ways from participation on the steering committee to a community survey and several focus groups. While we were unable to meet in person to gather information, we enjoyed connecting with people via Zoom for the focus groups, and hearing your voices in the comments left on the community survey. The planning process also generated organic conversations and connections with potential community partners that demonstrate, once again, how much our libraries are valued.

Our mission is to connect everyone to ideas, information, and each other, a mission I hold dear to my heart. I look forward to implementing the strategies put forth on the following pages, which reflect the direction our community asked us to take.

Sincerely,

Kari May, Library Director

Jackson County Library District Board

Eric Dziura, Chair
Jill Turner, Vice Chair
Viki Brown
Susan Kiefer
Kim Young

Strategic Planning Steering Committee

Kristin Anderson | JCLS Staff
Mark Angle-Hobson | Southern Oregon Educational Services District
Ginny Auer | Jackson County Library Foundation
Ryan Bradley | JCLS Staff
Viki Brown | JCLD Board
Lilia Caballero | Medford Police Department
Eric Dziura | JCLD Board Chair
Brynn Fogerty | JCLS Staff
Jim Fong | Worksource Oregon
Seth Kaplan | A Greater Applegate
Kathy Keesee | Unete

Kari May | Library Director, JCLD
Karen Spence | Friends of the Ashland Library
Brystan Strong | JCLS Staff
Claudine Taillac | JCLS Staff
Marta Tarantsey | Business Oregon

INTRODUCTION

In September 2021, the Jackson County Library District engaged Library Strategies to help facilitate a strategic planning process. The District's previous plan was set to expire at the end of 2021. During the previous 5-year planning framework, the District had undergone numerous changes, as well as experiencing the challenges and difficulties of providing service during the COVID-19 pandemic. The new strategic planning process, in cooperation between the District and Library Strategies, was designed to foster extensive community engagement and input to ensure that the changing library needs of residents continue to be met in the future. Presented here is an overview of the process, major findings, and the high-level goals and strategies of the new plan.





MISSION

The mission of the Jackson County Library District is to connect everyone to information, ideas, and each other.

VISION

Through the Jackson County Libraries individuals reach their potential and our communities thrive.

VALUES

To fulfill our mission and realize our vision, the following ideals shall direct us in our service to the community and interaction with each other.

Inclusion

Our libraries welcome everyone, and we honor diversity and individual perspectives and the right to.

Trust

We champion free and open access to knowledge and value everyone's right to privacy and confidentiality when accessing library resources.

Stewardship

We are responsible, honest stewards of public resources.

Collaboration

We foster an environment that inspires building relationships and working together.

Innovation

We encourage creative ideas and solutions.

Respect

We build and foster an environment where everyone is heard and treated fairly and with kindness.

GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL 1: ENERGIZE LIBRARY SERVICES AND RESOURCES

Building on the current foundation, enliven facilities, collections, programs and other services to more robustly serve the community

STRATEGY 1 - Improve and enhance the collections:

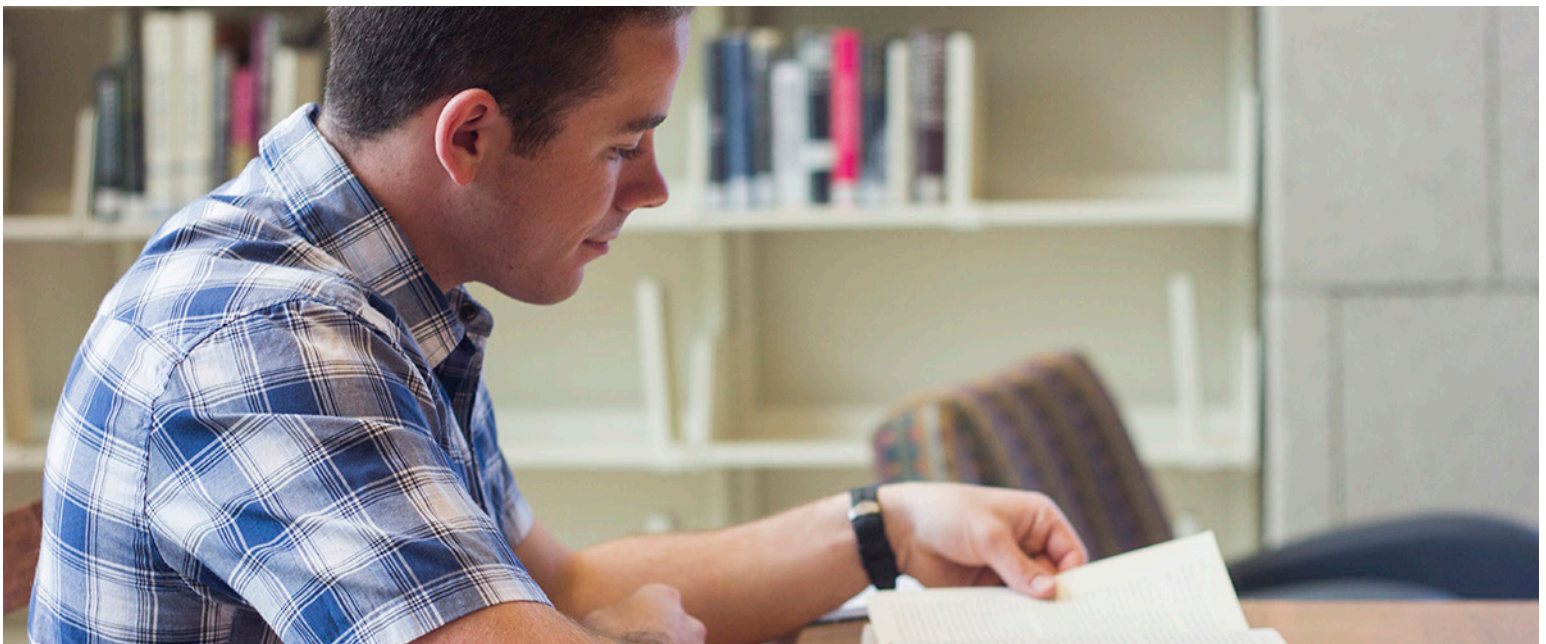
- Conduct an audit of all collections to ensure they are current and relevant, strike a good balance of digital and hard copy materials, and effectively serve targeted communities
- Grow collections of new materials, such as the Library of Things, based on ongoing community needs and wants

STRATEGY 2 – Diversify and increase programming and events:

- Expand programming to underserved audiences, especially tweens/teens and rural populations
- Advance early literacy programming and related services
- Explore adding programming and resources to meet community needs, notably in the areas of health and well-being, financial literacy, and workforce and economic development
- Serve as a convener of community conversations on topics of broad interest in the county

STRATEGY 3 – Enliven and improve facilities:

- Make public areas more vibrant by refreshing furniture, spaces and ambiance



- Undertake a major interior renovation of the Medford branch, including creation of more engaging teen and children's areas, a possible makerspace, more attractive gathering areas, and an overall welcoming atmosphere
- Create early literacy environments in all larger branches
- Where possible, repurpose space to add community meeting rooms of varying sizes
- Improve the placement and use of self-check options and holds pick-up where appropriate
- Conduct a review to ensure that all spaces, furniture and equipment are fully accessible
- Create welcoming outdoor spaces in facilities where realizable

STRATEGY 4 – Ensure that user technologies remain current and accessible:

- Make the website/catalog more user-friendly and accessible
- Work to improve Internet access in more rural locations through added hotspots, friendlier WiFi availability outside of facilities, and through other community networks
- Maintain up-to-date and relevant equipment, software, and tech assistance

GOAL 2: EXTEND ACCESS TO THE LIBRARY

Increase the awareness, use, and accessibility of the Library

STRATEGY 1 – Increase open hours & make hours more consistent/convenient across the system

STRATEGY 2 – Expand and diversify marketing and promotion:

- Continue to advance the system brand across all platforms
- Develop varied marketing strategies for different branches and areas of the County
- Advance messaging that goes beyond books to other library services, such as technology, early literacy and the Library of Things

STRATEGY 3 – Work to remove barriers to use of the Library:

- Expand offerings in non-English languages, especially Spanish
- With community partners, work to overcome transportation obstacles for users
- Explore options with the community for improved parking at the Ashland branch
- Examine options for providing 24/7 access to materials through locker or kiosk systems

STRATEGY 4 – Advocate for more resource sharing with other Oregon libraries, especially with Josephine County

GOAL 3: ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY MORE FULLY

Support the inclusion and advancement of the varied communities in Jackson County

STRATEGY 1 – Increase outreach and community partnerships:

- Expand partnerships with the education service district (ESD), local schools, pre-schools, and the homeschool community, especially in the more rural areas
- Explore expanded relationships with Rogue Community College and Southern Oregon University
- Advance other meaningful community partnerships in such areas as programming, events, volunteerism, and marketing

STRATEGY 2 – Create ongoing community processes, such as surveys, forums, and outreach, to regularly engage residents

STRATEGY 3 – Advance ongoing work to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment in facilities, services, and resources for all segments of the community, notably the Latinx population, unhoused individuals and families, tribal members, and homeschool groups

GOAL 4: NURTURE THE LIBRARY INFRASTRUCTURE

Further the Library as an effective, efficient, well-supported organization with a cohesive and supportive internal culture

STRATEGY 1 – Foster additional internal communication and engagement across all branches

STRATEGY 2 – Explore options for internal reorganizations and/or additional staff to increase service effectiveness, system-wide staff engagement, and to advance goal areas, notably outreach, marketing, and collections

STRATEGY 3 – Support additional professional development, especially in the areas of technology, cross-departmental training, and community inclusion

STRATEGY 4 – Strengthen support and engagement with the Friends groups and the Library Foundation



PREPARED BY

LIBRARY STRATEGIES