



*The Cultural Advocacy Coalition is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, advocacy organization.*

**We do our work primarily in Salem, advocating for policies and funding that will create a thriving environment for art, heritage, history and the humanities across Oregon.**

We believe that when it comes to politics we are most effective when we are unified. We are strongest when we work together. If you are looking for ways to help shape public policy to support a vibrant cultural community, you've come to the right place. We are the Cultural Advocacy Coalition—and we are here to help you make a difference.

## ADVOCACY 101

### Nonprofit professionals:

This is your new mantra: My non-profit organization has the right and the responsibility to participate in the legislative process (subject to legal regulations).

### 501(c)3 nonprofits CANNOT:

- Endorse or oppose candidates for public office.
- Collect or distribute funds for political campaigns.
- Use your facilities for political fundraising (you can rent facilities to candidates at the market rate).
- Engage in legislative activities past a “certain limit” (the IRS has a lobbying limit for organizations; call your tax accountant for more information).

### 501(c)3 nonprofits CAN (and should):

- Schedule four to six opportunities to connect with policy makers each year. This allows you to get to know your legislators personally and it allows them to get to know you—and your organization.
- Participate in and arrange meetings with legislators to learn their views on issues.
- Educate elected officials on issues of concern to the arts, culture, heritage and humanities community.
- Join your legislators’ newsletter lists and add them to yours.
- When your organization receives a grant from the Oregon Arts Commission, Oregon Cultural Trust, County Cultural Coalition, Oregon Heritage Commission, Historic Preservation Office or Oregon Humanities write a thank you note to your legislators.

### Individuals CAN (and should):

Individuals committed to arts and culture: here's how you can advocate, regardless of title.

- Give money, attend events and fully participate in any and all campaign and lobby activities personally.
- Personally offer your endorsement of candidates for public office.
- Give funds to political campaigns.
- Join your legislators’ email newsletter lists.
- Get to know your state senator and state representative by attending their community meetings.
- Join the CAC—we need you in our Coalition!

## Protecting the Oregon Cultural Trust

The Cultural Advocacy Coalition needs your help to protect the tax credit that fuels gifts to the Oregon Cultural Trust. The Oregon Cultural Trust's tax credit will EXPIRE AUTOMATICALLY if we do not stand together to defend it.

## Here's how you can help. Develop an Impact Story!

An “impact story” details the impact of an Oregon Cultural Trust grant on your organization and community.

The impact stories should include four elements:  
**Picture | Narrative | Local Connection | Data**

As you develop your impact stories—share them with the Cultural Advocacy Coalition! As you meet with legislators, identify yourself as a Coalition member and tell us who you have met with.

Just remember, the tax credit that fuels gifts to the Cultural Trust will expire if we do nothing. Legislators don't have to actively oppose the tax credit, they just have to do nothing and the tax credit disappears—and the Trust's impact is diminished.

Take the time to act. Together we will protect the Oregon Cultural Trust and advocate for a thriving environment for art, heritage, history and the humanities across Oregon.



## Communicating with State Legislators

It is easier than you may think to connect with your duly elected representatives in Salem. Legislators listen to their constituents and it makes a difference when you connect with legislators personally. As an engaged constituent, your message can impact your legislator's vote in Salem.

Find Legislators at [oregonlegislature.gov](http://oregonlegislature.gov)

### Tips for Letters or Emails

**Use the correct address and salutation.** If sending mail, your envelope should be addressed to The Honorable (full name) and with the salutation Dear Senator (name), or Dear Representative (name).

**Type or write legibly.** Be sure to include your complete contact information and return address.

**State your position** in the first sentence (or subject line in an e-mail). Keep your message simple and straightforward.

**Be succinct** and remember to make your points relevant, memorable and factual.

**Use your own words**—and stationery. Personal letters, rather than form letters, show a personal investment on the part of the writer in the issue and outcome.

**Keep it local.** Be specific in the way you tie the issue to the legislator's district. If you are writing about a specific piece of legislation, list the bill number in the subject line. Know your facts and be polite. You are an expert on your organization and the only person who can represent your views. Be completely factual and unfailingly polite in any interactions with policy makers.

**Be timely.** Contact your legislator while there is time to consider and act on your request.

**Say thank you.** If you receive a grant from any state supported entity, write your legislator and thank them for their support. In your note, detail how much your organization received as a grant and how the grant will impact the community. If the grant was from the Oregon Cultural Trust, encourage the legislator to support renewal of the tax credit that supports the Trust when it is up for review in 2019.

**Be patient.** If you do not get the vote you had hoped for, be patient and polite. The issue may come up again or there may be other issues that develop with new opportunities for collaboration with a legislator who was not supportive in the past.

### Phoning It In

**Know what you want to say and be brief.** Use your time wisely and get your main points covered as close to the beginning of the conversation as possible. If you are advocating for specific legislation, refer to the bill by number.

**Leave your contact information.**

Follow-up. If a legislator asks you a question that you cannot answer, commit to get back to him or her and then follow up. You do not need to have all the answers at your fingertips, but you do need to respond to requests for information quickly.

**Say thank you.** Follow up your phone call with a brief note of thanks for the conversation, a summary of your position, and additional information that may have been requested.

### Meeting with Legislators

**Call ahead** for an appointment. Explain the purpose of your visit. If the meeting is during a legislative session, plan for no more than 15 minutes of his or her time. If you need more time than this, plan ahead for your meeting to take place in district, during the interim. If your legislator is unable to meet with you personally during session, accept an appointment with the aide handling the issue.

**Arrive on time. Be articulate.** The meeting should be brief and concise. If you are with a group of people to discuss a single issue, plan to designate one spokesperson.

**Be prepared and direct.** Ask legislators if they support your issue. His or her answer will help determine your future advocacy efforts. If you are advocating for specific legislation, refer to the bill by number. You should know where the bill is in the process and be prepared to answer questions related to the legislation.

**Write a thank you** letter promptly after your meeting. If the legislator supported your issue, reiterate any commitments that were made and thank them for their support. If the legislator was noncommittal or opposed to your issue reiterate your key points and encourage them to support your request.

# 2019 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

It is a critical legislative year for Oregon's cultural sector. We know the value that creative expression brings to humanity and public investment helps to insure deeper access for all of our residents. Oregon is behind other states, however, in our support to this vital sector – we urge policymakers to prioritize arts, heritage, and the humanities, in order to encourage creativity, contribute to Oregon's economy and build community. Investing in Oregon's creative and cultural life supports Oregonians' values, promotes whole person health, strengthens communities and attracts and retains workers in an innovation economy.

## **BUILD AND PROTECT THE OREGON CULTURAL TRUST HB2132 – Tax Credit Extension for 6 Years**

The Cultural Advocacy Coalition was formed in 1998 to lobby for legislation which would create the Oregon Cultural Trust. We support the original vision of the 2001 Legislature of a \$200 m. fund to support the arts, heritage and the humanities for generations in this state. The Cultural Tax Credit now generates close to \$5 million per year for the Cultural Trust. Up to 60 percent of that amount is distributed to nonprofit organizations working on cultural activities in Oregon and the remainder is invested in a permanent fund for Oregon culture. All told, since the Cultural Trust was founded, \$23 million has been distributed in grant funds across the state to county coalitions, tribes and statewide partners. A newly released impact study conducted by ECO Northwest concludes that the Cultural Trust has remarkable geographic reach, supporting cultural activities and organizations in every county with higher per capita spending, up to \$15 per capita, in rural counties where grant funding can be scarce.

*The Cultural Advocacy Coalition supports the reauthorization of the tax credit which funds the Trust, the transfer of funds from the sale of the surplus state lands into the Trust and proposals which protect and build the Trust in support of its mission to preserve and expand access to arts, heritage and the humanities throughout Oregon. The Coalition opposes all legislation which may erode the corpus of the Trust or substantially reduce its opportunity for growth; as well as legislation which diverts funds or revenue sources currently dedicated to the growth of the Trust.*

## **PROTECT TAX POLICIES WHICH ALLOW THE CULTURAL SECTOR TO SERVE ITS PUBLIC MISSION, INCLUDING HISTORIC PRESERVATION OF OREGON'S GEMS. SB48 – Historic Property Extension for 3 Years**

Critical this year is renewal of the Historic Property Special Assessments which assist owners of commercial and residential properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This is the longest running tax benefit program for

historic preservation in the country, first enacted in 1975, and scheduled to sunset in 2020. We support an extension of at least three years, through 2023, to provide time for local governments, preservation advocates and others to update Oregon's approach to current preservation needs. While tax policy is an important tool to incentivize activity and fund government services, the nonprofit sector is a partner in the service of public policy goals and should be promoted and strengthened through tax policy where possible.

*The Cultural Advocacy Coalition supports the extension of Historic Property Special Assessments for three years, preservation of existing property tax exemptions for nonprofit organizations, and policies that incentivize charitable giving by individuals and businesses. The Coalition opposes taxes which target transactions related to arts, heritage or the humanities.*

## **CONTINUE TO INVEST IN CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE. HB5030 – Lottery Bonds**

By creating the Cultural Resources Economic Fund in 2013, the State established its role in expanding and strengthening cultural infrastructure by leveraging lottery bonds to invest in arts, heritage and humanities infrastructure projects. This capital support has amounted to about \$6 m. per biennium.

*The Cultural Advocacy Coalition supports continuation of capital construction funding through lottery bonds or other means for projects within the cultural sector. The Coalition oversees a rigorous statewide peer review process and is proposing six projects this year ranging from improving community theatres across the state to helping to secure a legacy property as part of preserving Oregon's Japanese-American history.*

## **EXPAND OREGON'S INVESTMENT IN ITS CULTURAL AGENCIES AND PARTNERS. SB5524 – Business Oregon Budget Bill; SB5527 – Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Budget Bill**

Increased state funding of cultural agencies and partners leverages the full potential of Oregon's creative and cultural resources to attract and retain business, increase tourism, improve education and enrich the lives of Oregonians through greater opportunity to access meaningful experiences in the arts, heritage and the humanities, statewide. The statewide partners and their funding:

- Oregon Arts Commission
- Oregon Cultural Trust\*\*
- State Historic Preservation Office and Heritage Commission
- Oregon Humanities
- Oregon Historical Society

*The Cultural Advocacy Coalition supports sensible policy-based increases in allocations to these statewide agencies and partners to expand access across the state. \*\* For the Cultural Trust specifically, we support extension of the Cultural Trust license plate revenues being use for marketing and promotion of the Trust to encourage increased contributions.*

## **ADVANCE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO A WELL-ROUNDED ARTS EDUCATION FOR OREGON STUDENTS.**

Access to a quality arts education is central to a well-rounded education, which raises graduation rates, lowers absenteeism, and improves educational outcomes for low income and marginalized students.

*The Cultural Advocacy Coalition supports equitable access to arts education, K-12, through arts curriculum, arts integration and arts experiences as a part of a well-rounded education; encouraged across districts, throughout Oregon. Specifically, the Coalition supports the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Student Success which call for funding arts and music specialists in elementary schools. In addition, the Coalition believes a more comprehensive approach is needed across the K-12 grades for access to creative expression and we are working with other partners in the state to bring forward such a proposal in the 2021 legislative session.*

# 2019 Session Bill Summary Report



## HOUSE-SENATE BILL NUMBER & POSITION SUPPORT

### HB2132

**Summary:** Extends sunset for tax credit for contributions to Trust for Cultural Development Account.

**Comments:** 6-year CT tax credit renewal

### HB5030

**Summary:** Increases amount of lottery bonds authorized to be issued for Oregon Business Development Department and Housing and Community Services Department. Authorizes issuance of various other lottery bonds. Establishes funds, or provides for deposit of moneys into existing funds, and appropriates moneys for projects financed. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2019.

**Comments:** Lottery Bonds for capital construction projects

### SB48

**Summary:** Extends sunset of historic property special assessment program. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

**Comments:** Historical property sunset extension

### SB5524

**Summary:** Appropriates moneys from General Fund to Oregon Business Development Department for biennial expenses. Limits biennial expenditures from fees, moneys or other revenues, including Miscellaneous Receipts, but excluding lottery funds and federal funds, collected or received by department for certain purposes. Limits biennial expenditures by department from lottery moneys for certain purposes. Limits biennial expenditures by department from federal funds for certain purposes. Authorizes certain nonlimited expenditures. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2019.

**Comments:** Economic Development Budget



# Capital Construction Projects

The Cultural Advocacy Coalition, following vigorous review of cultural projects statewide, respectfully requests the Oregon Legislature's consideration of \$5.725 million in funding for capital construction projects within the cultural sector.

The projects have demonstrated that they will grow jobs in the cultural sector, expand access to cultural resources for future generations; preserve, restore and exhibit culturally significant artifacts and historic treasures; support expansion of both contemporary and traditional arts and theatre, and encourage cost-effective, innovative partnerships among cultural nonprofits and the communities they serve.

A review criteria was used by a subcommittee of the CAC's Board to thoroughly review each of these projects.

The Cultural Advocacy Coalition respectfully requests funding for the following capital construction projects in the current biennium:

## 1. Cottage Theatre, ACT III Theatre Expansion

Amount requested: \$375,000

Estimated project costs: \$1,750,000

Received \$125,000 in 2017

Cottage Theatre, founded in 1982 in the small, rural town of Cottage Grove, produces a year-round season of plays and musicals and offers summer camps for children, serving an annual audience of 11,000 patrons drawn from Lane County and beyond. The theatre operates through the generous investment of time and talent from several hundred dedicated theatre volunteers and a small staff. Cottage Theatre's current 150-seat facility was built with community support in 1998, and continues to operate debt free. As one of just six theatres in the country selected to produce a world premiere in the American Association of Community Theatre's 2018 NewPlayFest, Cottage Theatre enjoys an expanding reputation for its quality productions.

Over the last decade, burgeoning audiences have routinely filled 94% of available seating, with many sold-out performances, so in 2019 Cottage Theatre is undertaking a capital expansion campaign to increase its seating capacity by 50 seats. In addition, the ACT III renovation will improve audience sightlines, enhance auditorium acoustics, and upgrade ADA and safety features, making for an improved patron experience. Cottage Theatre remains committed to offering high-caliber productions while keeping ticket prices affordable for the Cottage Grove area, whose 2016 per capita income was \$19,105. Currently, 70% of CT patrons reside outside the city of Cottage Grove, so CT is a cultural "magnet" for this small, rural community. The ACT III remodeling project will both generate significant benefits for current patrons as well as enable Cottage Theatre to serve 4,000 more audience members annually, providing a positive impact on the local Cottage Grove economy.



## **2. High Desert Museum, By Hand Through Memory & Art of the American West Gallery**

Amount requested: \$250,000

Estimated project costs: \$3,500,000

Received \$125,000 in 2017

Over 1,200 artifacts of the Columbia Plateau Indians have been on display in the By Hand Through Memory exhibit at the High Desert Museum, for nearly 20 years. The exhibit has invited over 130,000 visitors annually to experience the material culture and tribal stories of the Columbia Plateau Indians. In order to continue to honor and respect the collection's significant messages of self-determination, cultural identity and tribal resilience, the High Desert Museum is undertaking significant renovations to the original exhibit. By Hand Through Memory will be reconceived and redeveloped in consultation with local tribes to develop a culturally responsive collections management plan and a relevant, redesigned, state-of-the-art exhibit that continues the Museum's commitment to meaningful interpretation of Native American culture and stories in an interactive, immersive and inspiring environment.

As the largest cultural provider east of the Cascades, the High Desert Museum fills an important regional role as curator and presenter of fine art to visitors and residents in Central Oregon. To expand access to arts education and fine art in Central Oregon, the Museum will develop new gallery space to feature Art of the American West. The new gallery, allows the Museum to display substantial works in their existing collections while expanding access to culturally significant works of art in world-class, nationally recognized collections.

## **3. Lincoln City Cultural Center, Cultural Plaza and Exterior Grounds Development**

Amount requested: \$600,000

Estimated Project Costs: \$1,800,000

The Lincoln City Cultural Center renovated the iconic landmark 1929-built Delake Elementary School located on Highway 101 in central Lincoln City into an arts center in 2007. The 17,000-foot structure is now a performing arts center, art gallery, dance studio and contains classrooms for ceramics, mosaics, fabrics, yoga and a multipurpose room. The facility serves 15,000 residents in north Lincoln County and attracted over 39,000 attendees in 2017 through its community events. The current 2.5-acre school grounds limit the use of the facilities and need to be redesigned for pedestrian use including an outdoor arts class area and new public art locations as well as an ADA-walkway through the area and improved access and parking spaces. The renovation of the grounds will improve arts access in this coastal community and boost tourism as the LCCC is home to many art fairs and farmer's markets as well.

## **4. Oregon Nikkei Endowment, Permanent home and renovations for the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center**

Amount requested: \$500,000

Estimated Project Costs: \$3,200,000

The Oregon Nikkei Endowment, founded in 1989, is a non-profit whose mission is to share and preserve the history and culture of Japanese Americans in the Northwest, educate the public about their experience during WWII and to advocate for the protection of civil rights for all. Their two major projects are the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, a Japanese American history museum and sole venue for cultural and research activities of the experiences of Japanese Americans in the Northwest, and the Japanese American Historical Plaza that memorializes the importance of civil liberties guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution. The Oregon Nikkei Endowment is partnering with Prosper Portland to acquire and renovate the ground floor of the Old Town Lofts to ensure the museum's permanent presence in this culturally significant neighborhood and remain within walking distance of the Plaza.



The Museum and the Plaza are the only vestiges left of what was once Portland's large and vibrant Japan town, until forced removal and incarceration of its community caused it to disappear overnight. The new museum will feature innovative and immersive exhibits, along with housing a resource library and on-line collections. The museum will honor the history of diverse ethnic groups that called Old Town their home and will establish a community meeting place for events and programs that benefit the public.

#### **5. Beaverton Arts Foundation, Construction of the Patricia Reser Center for the Arts**

Amount requested: \$2,500,000

Estimated Project Costs: \$46,000,000

The Patricia Reser Center for the Arts will be the first performing arts center of its kind to be built in the Portland-metro area in more than 30 years. Adjacent to light rail, the proposed Center will be a state-of-the-art, world class multidisciplinary performing and visual arts center located in Beaverton's Central District. Its mission will be to make arts more accessible to all and it will provide a much-needed cultural hub in Washington County. The facility will include a 550-seat theatre, art gallery, rehearsal, workshop and meeting space. As of January 2019, over eighty-five percent of the total cost to build the Center has been identified through public and private sources, including a \$13 million pledge from Pat Reser through the Reser Family Foundation. Beaverton is the sixth largest city in Oregon and an economic hub for Washington County. With a variety of offerings in music, theater, film, dance and spoken word, the Center will be a beacon for arts and civic engagement, learning and inspiration. Generous public and private investors will bring this once-in-a-generation opportunity to life, shifting the landscape of the city, the county and the region.

#### **6. Very Little Theatre, New Stage House**

Amount requested: \$1,500,000

Estimated Project Costs: \$3,800,000

Founded in 1929, the Very Little Theatre in Eugene is one of the oldest continuously operating community theaters in the Pacific Northwest. The theatre has a season subscriber base of around 800 and it houses the Minority Voices Theatre which invites marginalized communities to be a part of staged readings and productions that reflect their lives. The current structure for this community theatre was built in 1950 without completion of a planned stage house. The Very Little Theatre plans to build a new stage house on its current property which will include state of the art lighting, increased storage, dressing rooms and enhanced seating along with increased disability seating. It is anticipated that the improved facility will provide a 30-40% increase in subscription services and allow for greater rental capacity to the Lane County community.