



Pend Oreille County Public Utility District

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Pend Oreille PUD Receives Grant, Awards Early Learning Center Project Contract

Newport, WA – Public Utility District No. 1 of Pend Oreille County (PUD) has received a \$100,000 grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce (which includes matching funds from the Seattle Foundation) to develop a business plan for an Early Learning & Child Care Center (the “Center”) here in Newport. The grant was issued through a state-wide effort to foster collaborative partnerships that expand child care capacity in Washington communities. The PUD is pleased to have been awarded this grant and received support from the following community partners to work collaboratively on this project: Newport Hospital & Health Services, Pend Oreille County, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, and the Newport School District (“Community Partners”).

The purpose and scope of this project is to provide a feasibility analysis and business plan for increasing the capacity of early childhood programs to serve the needs of the City of Newport and the outlying Pend Oreille County communities. This effort will provide a comprehensive picture of the current demand for child care services in the Newport area, market for child care in the area, potential child care service types to meet demand, potential partnership agreement structures, estimated start-up costs, operating costs and financial models, and a conceptual architectural design for the Center. Information gathered from the study will assist the District and the Community Partners in determining potential priorities to create solutions to meet the childcare needs of within the City of Newport and the greater Pend Oreille County community.

The PUD along with its Community Partners solicited proposals from qualified firms and/or consulting teams to evaluate, plan and conceptually design the Center in the City of Newport, Washington. The PUD recently awarded a contract to ALSC Architects out of Spokane, WA, and its team of early learning associates, to complete this first phase of this project with the goal of having the analysis and business plan complete by mid-May 2021. Various sites will be evaluated as potential locations for the Center. The PUD has been in contact with the city and understands that the open field adjacent to Stratton Elementary could be a future home for the Center.

“The PUD is excited about this opportunity and looks forward to working with our fellow community members on this project,” said Sarah Holderman, the PUD’s Director of Treasury, Broadband and Strategic Planning. “Now, more than ever, there is an urgent need in Newport and our surrounding communities for affordable early learning and child care and we hope this effort results in a step in the right direction.”

The PUD and its Community Partners anticipate using the business and development plan to apply for future construction grants to build the facility.

About Pend Oreille County Public Utility District

Pend Oreille PUD was established in 1936 and began operations in 1948. The PUD is governed by three locally elected Commissioners. A General Manager and staff operate the utility within policies set by the Board of Commissioners. The PUD has four operating systems: The electric system distributes electricity to the county, the production system produces power from the Box Canyon Hydroelectric Project, the water system consists of nine individual water distribution subdivisions, and the community network system provides wholesale broadband communication services. For more information visit: <http://popud.org>.

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