

SOREDI Board Report

From: Blair Sundell, Executive Director
To: SOREDI Board of Directors
Date: January 6, 2026

Items for Board Vote

1. Increase in Legal Services (Line 6106, Professional Services Category)

We are requesting Board approval to increase the “Legal Services” line item from \$5,000 to \$10,000. This adjustment raises the total “Professional Services” expense category from \$99,045.41 to \$104,045.41. While this remains within the 10% adjustment threshold, it is a notable increase and we seek formal Board recognition and approval.

The additional \$5,000 is needed to engage outside counsel for several delinquent loans and to strengthen key documents. While there is no direct offsetting revenue, our management of delinquent accounts is generating, and is expected to continue generating, income from previously non-performing loans.

Executive Director Request to Board: Increase the Professional Services expense category in the amount of \$5,000 to support loan recovery efforts and legal document review.

2. Increase in Computer Software (Line 5106) and Small Tools & Equipment (Line 5108, Supplies & Materials Category)

- **Computer Software (Line 5106):** Increase from \$6,500 to \$23,385. This involves a \$14,385 increase specifically to fund the SizeUp platform, which will provide technical assistance resources accessible throughout Jackson and Josephine counties. The SizeUp platform is funded by above-target sponsorship revenue for the State of the Rogue Valley breakfast (over \$18,000 above target from Carrie’s efforts). During the breakfast, we will unveil the economic data tools and resources that we are bringing to market (in the SOREDI update section below) and we want to acknowledge that community support is how we are able to accomplish initiatives like this.
- **Small Tools & Equipment (Line 5108):** Increase from \$1,000 to \$3,500, representing a \$2,500 increase to accommodate equipment necessary for the new Business Development Manager position located in Grants Pass. This position is currently posted online and we are actively receiving applicants.

Executive Director Request to Board: Increase the Total Supplies & Materials expense category by \$16,885 to pay for the SizeUp platform and equipment for the Business Development Manager for Josephine County.

Items for Discussion

1. Search for New Facility & EAA Grant Opportunity

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) has communicated with SOREDI regarding the Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) grant. The EAA grant is a federal program designed to help communities and organizations respond to economic challenges and opportunities by supporting infrastructure and facility projects that drive regional economic growth.

The EAA grant can finance up to 80% of the cost of a new SOREDI facility, making it a critical funding source for our goal of purchasing and developing our own building. To be eligible, SOREDI must secure partner organizations (currently confidential), provide incubator space (exploratory discussions underway with the City of Medford), and complete due diligence steps such as property identification, environmental studies, and signed leases (subject to grant approval).

Current EAA Grant Status:

- While applications are accepted on a rolling basis, current funding is unavailable, and new applications are likely to be backlogged until mid-2027.
- Estimated due diligence costs are approximately \$50,000. We plan to incorporate this into the next budget cycle and request a transfer from unrestricted reserves to begin preliminary work.
- This initiative would reduce SOREDI's long-term rent expense and could generate additional income for our budget.

Discussion Point:

We invite Board discussion on whether to modify the budget now to accelerate this initiative. If the Board wishes to proceed, we can reconvene the Facilities Committee and authorize a transfer from reserves to fund due diligence and preliminary planning.

2. Executive Committee Term Lengths

The Executive Committee has recommended revising officer term lengths:

- President and Vice President terms reduced from two years to one year, with an option to extend to a second year if requested.
- Vice President to progress to President, as per tradition, with this progression clarified in the bylaws.
- Past Board President need not have previously held the President role.
- Secretary/Treasurer role not part of the progression through the VP and President position.

This item is presented for discussion and feedback, with potential bylaw revisions to be considered at a future meeting.

3. Board Meeting Frequency

The Board is invited to discuss whether to maintain the current schedule of six meetings per year plus an annual meeting, or to consider reducing the number, and in turn, the frequency. The intent is to ensure meetings remain actionable and relevant, while also accommodating Board members' preferences.

Informational Updates

Revolving Loan Program Re-Launch

- Nearing completion, including a Master Credit Policy, updated accounting standards, and three program policies (Direct Loan, Loan Participation, PO Financing).
- The framework is under review by lenders on the Board and will be presented for vote at the February 10th meeting. Materials will be distributed at least three weeks in advance.

Data & Insights Initiative

- Public-facing data and insights will be unveiled at the February 26th breakfast.
- Economic reports are now available on the website.
- We are leveraging Vertical IQ for industry data (SOREDI loan analysis support & member/client industry value-add), economic development dashboard with real-time economic data (including the Annum Workforce Housing Survey), and, pending Board approval, SizeUp to support technical assistance and entrepreneurial development.

Events

Through SOREDI and SOIH, we are increasing our outreach among various economic sectors with an array of events throughout the Rogue Valley:

- January 6, 2026: Industry Tour – “The Manufacturing Experience”
Behind-the-scenes tour of NIC Industries, Cascade Fire, and Herb Pharm. Open to SOREDI members and local educators. These are guided tours, led by Terrill, that connect educators and partners to local businesses to create a feedback loop of information between educators and the private sector.
- January 9–10, 2026: CO.STARTERS BootCamp! SOIH 2-Day Workshop
A two-day workshop in Grants Pass, led by Dr. Kim Freeze, featuring business strategy and foundational course material.
- January 20, 2026: From Great Business to Great Social Media
SOIH technical assistance workshop at Jackson County Library, led by Lisa Paris of Lisa Paris Social.
- January 26, 2026: “So, You Want to Start a Business? – Workshop #1
Workshop on analyzing and exploring business ideas. Recurring monthly on the fourth Monday.
- February 10, 2026: CFO Briefing – Tax-Exempt Manufacturing Bonds
The first of its kind workshop designed to connect mid-sized manufacturers to tax-exempt financing to lower their borrowing costs with low-interest rate financing for expansion.
- February 23, 2026: “So, You Want to Start a Business? – Workshop #2
Workshop guiding participants on readiness to start a business, held at Jackson County Library.

- **February 26, 2026: Elevate – State of the Rogue Valley Breakfast 2026**

Annual economic development forum and breakfast at Rogue Valley Country Club with business leaders and community partners. **Sponsorships have exceeded targets, with current commitments at \$33,550 as of January 6th (up from \$15,250 last year).** Ticket prices have increased, and we expect to net approximately \$20,000 above budget projections.

Post-event recognition from the January 6th Industry Tour:

NIC Industries, Inc.
1,663 followers
2m • 

Today, NIC hosted nearly 30 business and education leaders as part of the 2025 [Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc.](#) (SOREDI) Industry Tour.

Guests got a behind-the-scenes look at NIC, learned how [CERAKOTE®](#) and [Prismatic Powders](#) operate, and heard how our culture fuels innovation across the company.

We were glad to be included alongside [CASCADE FIRE EQUIPMENT COMPANY](#), [Herb Pharm](#), and the [Eagle Point High School](#) Career and Technical Education Program.

At NIC, we believe a good career doesn't solve every societal challenge, but it does provide a strong foundation. We're grateful to SOREDI and today's participants for advancing the long-term health of Southern Oregon's economy.



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