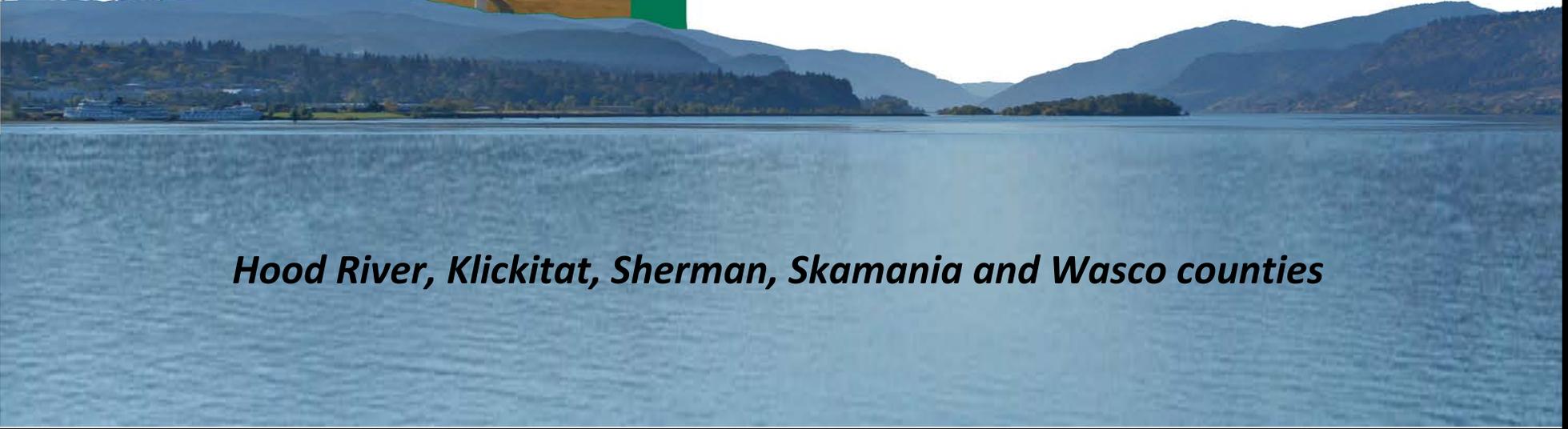


# **Columbia Gorge Economic Development Strategy 2017-2022**

*Updated March 2018*



*Hood River, Klickitat, Sherman, Skamania and Wasco counties*

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## CEDS Strategy Committee and MCEDD Board of Directors

- Rex Johnston, Klickitat County
- Bob Benton, Hood River County
- Bob Hamlin, Skamania County
- Perry Thurston, Cities of Sherman Co.
- Sue Knapp, Cities of Wasco County
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## CEDS Steering Committee:

- Brian Tuck, Oregon State University
- Buck Jones, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
- Caitlin Blagg, Sherman County Medical Clinic
- David Roth, Financial Planner
- Jessica Metta, Gorge Technology Alliance/MCEDD
- Pat Albaugh/Kari Fagerness, Port of Skamania, Skamania County EDC
- David McClure/Richard Foster, Klickitat County EDA

# VISION

The region envisions a thriving economy supporting diverse business opportunities that act in harmony with the area's rural qualities, values and natural resources.



## INTRODUCTION

### What is the Strategy?

Every five years the region develops the comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) as a guide to understanding the regional economy and crafting goals, strategies and actions to create jobs, raise income levels, diversify the economy, and improve the quality of life.

The plan is compiled by Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) and follows the guidelines released by the US Economic Development Administration. MCEDD engaged a diverse workgroup of over 100 local representatives from private, public, and nonprofit sectors in developing the strategy. Public meetings were held in each county.

The following sections form the basis of the strategy:

- Summary of regional economic conditions.
- Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats Analysis
- Action Plan
- Evaluation Framework

### What is the Process?

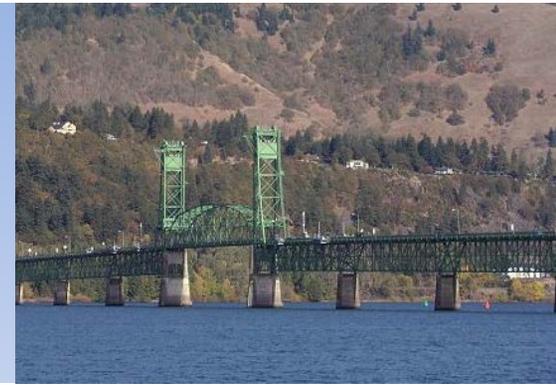
Development of the 2017-2022 strategy began in June 2016 with appointment of a CEDS steering committee. The committee planned and conducted seven regional outreach sessions which rotated throughout the five-county region:

- **Demographics and Data: Economic Summit:** July 2016
- **SWOT Analysis:** September 2016
- **Regional Vision and Goals:** October 2016
- **Sector Focus Areas:** November 2016
- **Strategy Priorities, Action Plans:** January 2017
- **Measuring Success:** February 2017
- **Resiliency:** March 2017

In February 2017 the MCEDD Board adopted individual project priorities. The public comment period remained open until May 25, 2017, with formal adoption in June 2017. The plan was revised and reaffirmed by the MCEDD Board of Directors in March 2018.

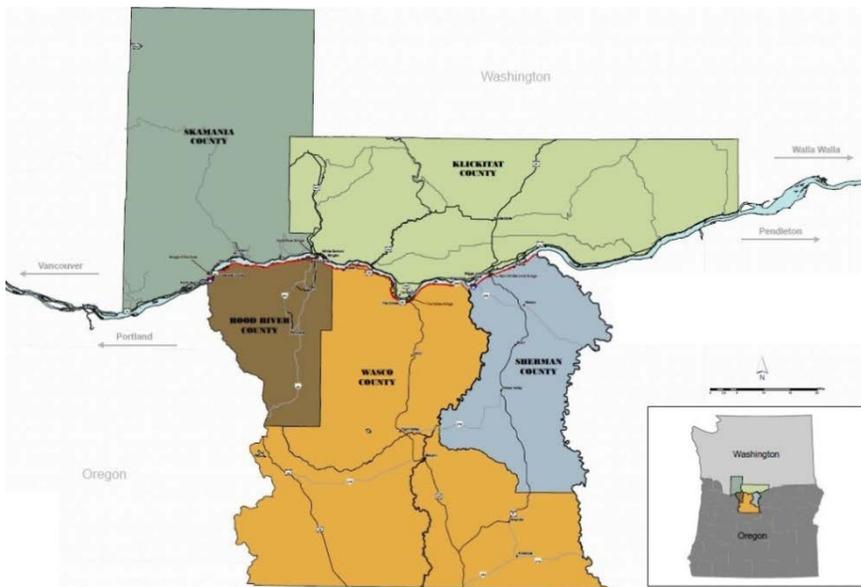
# OUR REGION

*Five counties in two states sharing a common workforce, common geography and common economic development challenges and opportunities.*



## Geography

The region covered under this strategy includes Skamania and Klickitat counties in Washington and Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman counties in Oregon. The region constitutes an area of 7,289 square miles and encompasses parts of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.



## Regional Characteristics

The region is rural, but closely connected to urban markets. With a central location in the Pacific Northwest, the region acts as the “Center of the Hub” with direct access to metro areas and the ability to do business on an international scale.

The region has strong culture and history and has been a trading center for millennia. It has ongoing tribal relationships with four tribes as called out in the National Scenic Area Act: Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Nez Perce Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, and Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.

## Economic Foundations

Traditional foundations of the regional economy across counties correspond with physiographical differences directly affecting the agricultural economy, forest products industry, power generation system, tourism, and recreational activities. Additional key industry clusters include high tech, manufacturing and healthcare.

# DATA FACT SHEETS

## Population

**Population Estimate:**

87,395

**Civilian Workforce:**

43,100 (approx.)

**Growth**

All counties in the region are growing, with the exception of Sherman County which has seen a slight decline in population.

**Data Sources:**

- US Census
- State Employment Departments
- StatsAmerica
- State Broadband Report

## SOCIAL CONTEXT

While there are individual differences between the characteristics of communities within the five counties, regionally some of the primary data points include:

The region's population lacks diversity, with 76% identifying their race as white-alone.

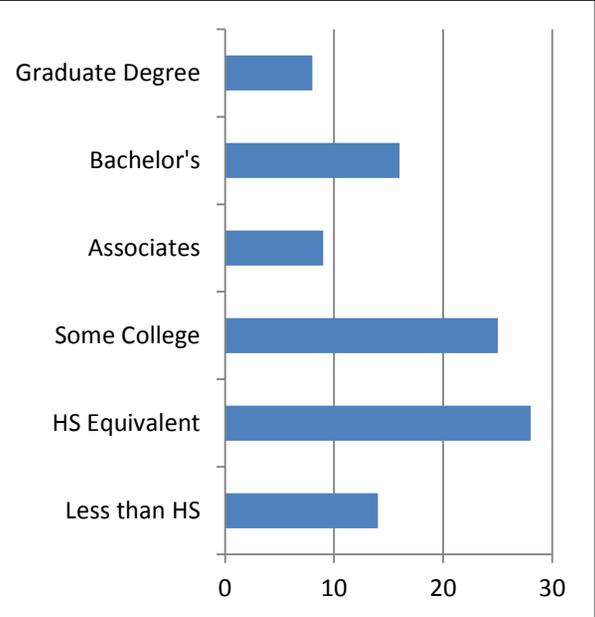
There is a growing Hispanic/Latino population, composing 18% or more of the region's population and in some communities exceeding one third of school-age children.

The region's population is **aging**. As of 2016, 17% of the population was 65+. It is projected to grow significantly by 2022.



Each of the five counties have a higher percentage of **veterans** than the US average.

### Educational Attainment (%)



Urban-Rural Digital Divide: 55% in rural areas have broadband access vs 94% in urban settings.



Mean Travel Time to Work: 20 minutes

# DATA FACT SHEETS

## Income/ Housing

### Poverty

Income disparities remain a significant issue for economic prosperity. The poverty rate continues to climb, with the regional poverty rate at 14.5%.

### Housing

- Number of housing units in 2016: over 37,500; 70% of which are single units
- Built before 1940: 15%

Disparities between individuals, groups, communities, and counties remain a significant concern.

## ECONOMIC CONTEXT

### Employment

The unemployment rate continues trending down with a 24 month average for the five county region of 4.95% for the period ending December 2017.

Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment is increasing slowly, from approx. 28,731 in November 2012 to 31,368 in November 2017.

### Wages and Income

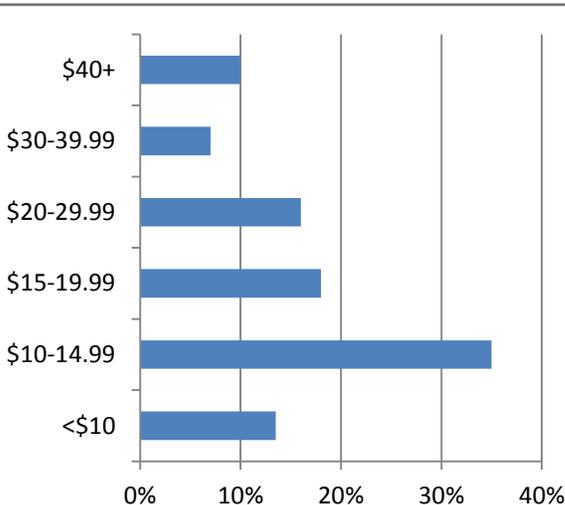
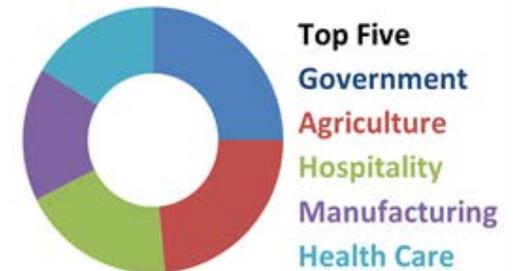
2016 per capita personal income was \$44,857 (vs the US at \$49,246).

Median HH Income (\$)

County	2015	2016
Hood River	53,726	56,581
Klickitat	50,043	49,633
Sherman	51,448	41,389
Skamania	53,733	53,082
Wasco	45,110	46,814

### Major Industries By Jobs

The regional industry mix is shifting, with top employment categories in 2016 by Jobs:

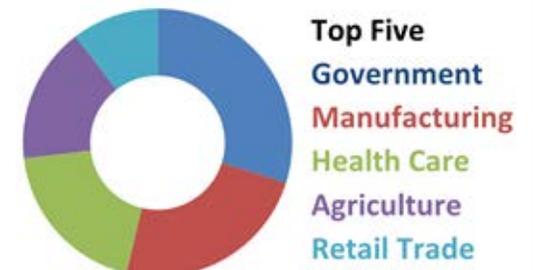


### Wage

In the first quarter of 2016 in Oregon, 35% of jobs paid \$10-14.99 per hour, representing the largest share of the job market.

### By Payroll

When sorting by payroll, the categories are similar, but the distribution shifts.



# SWOT Analysis

## *Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats*

MCEDD conducted a SWOT analysis in partnership with private industry representatives, local government staff, elected officials, community members, and other stakeholders. The results of the SWOT analysis, as shown below, helped guide the identification of regional economic development priorities.

<b>S</b> trengths	<b>W</b> eaknesses	<b>O</b> pportunities	<b>T</b> hreats
<b>Scenic Beauty, Recreation, Brand and Tourism Industry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated Scenic Area</li> <li>• Strong Tourism Industry</li> <li>• Four Season Recreation</li> <li>• Natural Diversity</li> </ul>	<b>Insufficient Housing Stock</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient Housing for Local Employees</li> <li>• Housing Stock Quality, Availability Concerns</li> <li>• Affordability Gap</li> </ul>	<b>Growth of Value-Added Ag and Ag Tech Businesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value-Add Sector Coord.</li> <li>• New Food Processing</li> <li>• New Specialty Crops</li> <li>• Ag Tech and Research</li> </ul>	<b>Housing Shortage Impacts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability/ affordability reduces ability to attract and retain workers</li> <li>• Impacts businesses' decisions about expanding</li> </ul>
<b>Central Location:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Center of the Hub”: Geographic advantage in being centrally located in the Pacific Northwest</li> <li>• Access to Urban Areas</li> </ul>	<b>Education, Skilled Workforce:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Education</li> <li>• Quality/Funds for Pre K-12 and Higher Ed</li> <li>• Limited Skilled Labor</li> <li>• Workforce Training</li> </ul>	<b>Expanding Tourism</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year Round, Into Less Traveled Areas</li> <li>• Preserves Rural Character</li> <li>• Brand: Market as World Class Destination</li> </ul>	<b>Education Quality/ Opportunity and Workforce</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational System Challenges</li> <li>• Skilling Up and Meeting Employer’s Needs</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Collaboration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bi-State Cooperation</li> <li>• Spirit of Collaboration</li> <li>• Strong Sense of Community</li> <li>• Strong Local Leadership and Regional Entities</li> <li>• Active Industry Alliances</li> </ul>	<b>Transportation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobility: Gaps in Public Transportation Options</li> <li>• Gaps in Bike/Ped Infrastructure</li> <li>• Capacity of roads, bridges, airports, rail, etc. Maintenance, Expansion.</li> </ul>	<b>Synergy Across State Lines</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination Between Business Sectors</li> <li>• Enhance Industry Associations</li> <li>• Support Effective Regional Teams</li> </ul>	<b>Regulations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrictions Imposed by NSA Constraints</li> <li>• Length of Time for Permitting Decisions</li> <li>• Federal Agency Impact and Natural Resource Management</li> </ul>

<b>S</b> trengths	<b>W</b> eaknesses	<b>O</b> pportunities	<b>T</b> hreats
<b>Availability of Transportation Systems/Modes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interstates, Highways E/W, N/S</li> <li>• Airports</li> <li>• Rail Service</li> <li>• Columbia River Access</li> <li>• Bicycle/Pedestrian/Transit</li> </ul>	<b>Regulatory Environment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Scenic Area Regulations</li> <li>• Slow Land Use Decisions</li> <li>• Impacts on Development.</li> </ul>	<b>High Tech; Unmanned Systems</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued Increase in High Tech Businesses</li> <li>• Support for Unmanned systems Applications</li> <li>• Supply Chain Development</li> </ul>	<b>Impacts of Continued Population Growth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited Infrastructure Capacity to Accommodate</li> <li>• Need for Further Planning</li> <li>• Overuse of Resources</li> <li>• Degradation of Popular Destination Areas</li> </ul>
<b>Natural Resources and Climate:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural Resource Base</li> <li>• Climate</li> <li>• Air Quality</li> </ul>	<b>Infrastructure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utility Limitations</li> <li>• Broadband Capacity Regionally</li> </ul>	<b>Leverage Natural Assets</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wood and Forestry Products Innovation</li> <li>• Renewable Energy</li> <li>• Fishing Industry</li> </ul>	<b>Natural Disasters/Hazards</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wildfire, ice storms and other natural disasters</li> <li>• Aging emergency Response systems</li> </ul>
<b>Culture:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10,000+ years of Indigenous Culture</li> <li>• Evolving Demographics</li> </ul>	<b>Disparities Between States</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differences in regulations</li> <li>• Differences in funding</li> </ul>	<b>Connectivity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market and use the increased high speed fiber optics in region</li> <li>• Further investment in broadband accessibility</li> </ul>	<b>Water Access, Regulations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drought Impacts</li> <li>• Impacts of Water Regulation</li> <li>• Access Issues</li> <li>• Aquifer Concerns</li> </ul>
<b>Diverse Industry Sectors and Growing Business Sectors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse Industries; Growing Industry Sectors (Unmanned systems, value added ag, mfctr, fermentation, wearables, health)</li> <li>• Strong Agricultural Base</li> </ul>	<b>Aging Population:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting the needs of an Aging population</li> </ul>	<b>Focus on Local</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further development of the locally based economy</li> <li>• Buy local education and programs</li> </ul>	<b>Infrastructure Limitations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridges, highways, roads</li> <li>• Transit Capacity/Gaps</li> <li>• Overused infrastructure</li> <li>• Water/Wastewater</li> <li>• Limited existing buildings and industrial land</li> </ul>
<b>Human Capital and Entrepreneurial Spirit:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available Talent with Diverse Skill Sets</li> <li>• Educational Attainment</li> <li>• Unique Educational Programs Supported by Businesses</li> <li>• Access to Education</li> </ul>	<b>Lack of Business Expansion Space</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available and attractive commercial and industrial spaces.</li> <li>• Lack of Shovel Ready Land availability</li> </ul>	<b>Address Public Transportation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilization of new technologies</li> <li>• Expanding Fixed routes</li> <li>• Expanding Regional Transit Connections</li> <li>• Biking/trail systems</li> </ul>	<b>Industry Diversification</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of Any Major Employer</li> <li>• Concentration Risk</li> </ul>

<b>S</b> trengths	<b>W</b> eaknesses	<b>O</b> pportunities	<b>T</b> hreats
<b>Infrastructure:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telecommunication and Broadband Capacity</li> <li>• Infrastructure to support industrial and commercial development</li> <li>• Abundant, Clean Power</li> <li>• Water</li> </ul>	<b>High Poverty Rate/Economic Disparity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High poverty rate</li> <li>• Disparities between communities</li> <li>• Inequities</li> </ul>	<b>Business/Talent Attraction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage Gorge brand to attract aligned businesses</li> <li>• Potential to attract business talent</li> <li>• In-migration</li> </ul>	<b>Funding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declining state and federal funding</li> <li>• Connection to Regional Priorities</li> <li>• Shrinking local government budgets</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Strengths:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Climate</li> <li>• Access to Capital</li> <li>• Business Incentives</li> <li>• Access to healthcare</li> <li>• Access to local foods</li> <li>• Low crime rates</li> </ul>	<b>Additional Weaknesses:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational facilities at/exceed capacity</li> <li>• Coordination and Capacity</li> <li>• Scale of Economy</li> <li>• Emergency Preparedness</li> <li>• Lack of Population diversity</li> </ul>	<b>Additional Opportunities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing innovation: Leaders in attainable housing</li> <li>• Streamline Processes</li> <li>• Healthcare</li> <li>• Enhance infrastructure</li> <li>• Expand Education partnerships</li> <li>• Short sea shipping</li> <li>• Community land trusts or land banking</li> <li>• Leverage presence of a nearby National Laboratory to further R/D</li> <li>• National environmental leaders</li> </ul>	<b>Additional Threats:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty; wage stagnation</li> <li>• Commodity prices</li> <li>• Retaining local property ownership: outside ownership and increase in non-local property owners</li> <li>• Aging population</li> <li>• Drugs/legalized marijuana</li> <li>• Railroad safety</li> <li>• Pollution</li> <li>• Overuse of natural resources and “loving the Gorge to death”</li> <li>• Transition of economy to rich, vacation play zones</li> <li>• Need for more incentives/packages to entice business development</li> <li>• Youth out-migration</li> </ul>

# Economic Resilience

## Why Focus on Resiliency?

Regional economic prosperity is linked to resiliency.

## Resiliency Attributes

- Ability to **recover quickly** from a shock.
- Ability to **withstand** a shock.
- Ability to **avoid the shock** altogether.

## Strategy Role

- Implement specific actions (steady-state) to bolster the long-term economic durability of the region.
- Establish information networks (responsive) among stakeholders in the region to facilitate regular communications and collaborate on existing and potential future challenges.

## Overview

Economic resiliency is incorporated to the overall development of this regional strategy and themes of resiliency are integrated into the concepts, work plans and project priorities.

## Primary Vulnerabilities

The region's primary vulnerabilities clearly align to the weaknesses and threats highlighted in the SWOT analysis. In discussing specific vulnerabilities for the resiliency of the region, the following were identified as major concerns for the ability of the region to enhance its economic resiliency:

- **Industry diversification.** The diversification of the region's economic base has vastly improved over the past two decades. However, concerns about the impact of downturns on industries/employers with a concentration of the employment base (eg unmanned systems) remain.
- **Infrastructure.** From aging water systems (eg Dog River Pipeline), to constraints in our transportation system (eg Hood River Bridge) to challenges with attainable housing, the region recognizes the vulnerabilities of our infrastructure. The plan prioritizes investments in these areas.
- **Labor force constraints.** The region needs to be ready for the future with a skilled and ready workforce and healthy population. We face challenges in the level of education, capacity of skilled trades, and general workforce shortage, particularly for ag which seeks comprehensive immigration reform.
- **Economic disparity.** Strong, equitable regions that support all of the regions residents and embrace demographic changes are more competitive players on a global scale. However, our poverty and income demographics indicate continued and growing disparities across the region.

# Economic Resilience: What makes us resilient?

- Strong Sense of Identity. *We are a single bi-state region.*
- Connectivity: *We work together through established lines of communication to enhance partnerships and relationships.*
- Sustainability: *We prioritize investment in the future, particular for critical infrastructure.*
- Revitalization: *We embrace change.*

## **Current State**

During development of the strategy, regional partners highlighted the following as areas in which they think the region is doing well in addressing economic resiliency:

- Innovation capacity. Existing industries are expanding to new markets.
- Building upon on traditional industry base.
- Desire and capacity to work across jurisdictional boundaries, with a recognition that issues impacting one community can affect the region collectively.
- Collaboration between agencies and people.
- Prioritization of infrastructure investments.
- Self-sufficiency of the rural region.

## **Responsive Initiatives**

Examples of responsive initiatives contained in the regional strategy:

- Hard communications networks, including broadband enhancements.
- Soft communications networks, including regular roundtables with regional stakeholders.
- Development of a collective voice on core concerns.

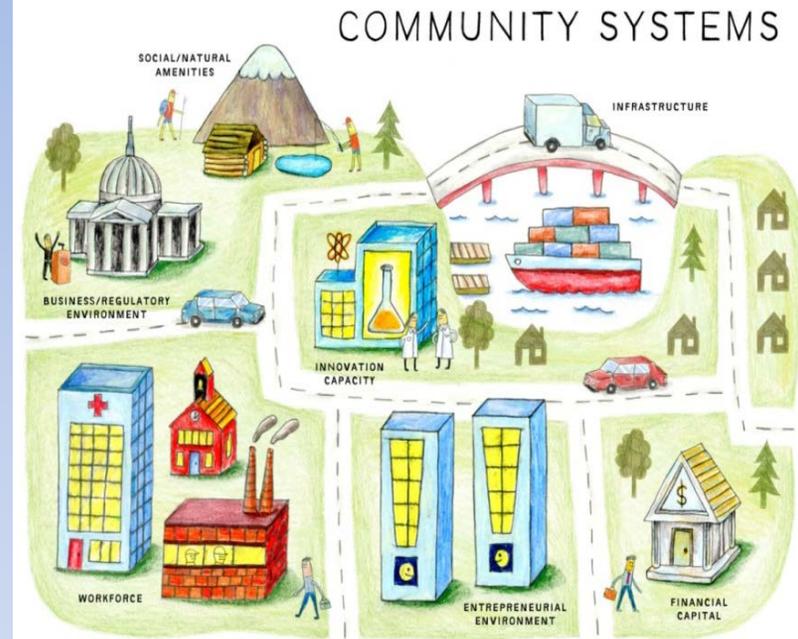
## **Steady-state Initiatives**

Examples of steady-state initiatives as they are currently manifested in the plan:

- Diversification efforts with target industry sectors.
- Focus on specific infrastructure enhancements, particularly in transportation and water and wastewater system.
- Addressing opportunities to enhance housing availability.
- Financial stability efforts. Succession planning and small business enterprise support to increase capacity of local businesses to withstand a variety of economic shocks.
- Workforce and skills development for a capable regional labor force.
- Addressing concerns related to the regulatory environment.
- Creating more equitable opportunities for everyone in our region.

# PRIORITY GOALS

- Housing
- Financial Capital and Entrepreneurial Environment
- Workforce
- Infrastructure
- Regulatory Environment



The action plan is based on a community systems premise that all elements are inter-connected and must be vibrant and healthy to ensure a functioning economy. The innovation capacity and social/natural amenities elements both scored well in terms of existing efforts. Thus, the strategy focuses on the remaining elements. In priority order, goals include:

- **Housing:** "Plan for, maintain and re-invest in infrastructure, including attainable housing, to provide for current population demands and support future economic development opportunities."
- **Financial Capital & Entrepreneurial Environment:** "Enhance the retention and expansion of business in the region, coordinating resources to diversify the economy and create sustainable quality jobs."
- **Workforce:** "Nurture, educate, attract and maintain a regional workforce that is career trained and work ready."
- **Infrastructure (Water/Wastewater, Transportation, Broadband):** *The goal is the same as listed above for housing, a subset of infrastructure.*
- **Regulatory Environment:** "Collaborate as a region to simplify and decentralize regulatory processes."



# HOUSING

## Overview

In the SWOT analysis, attainable housing is clearly identified as one of the region's primary economic development barriers. Housing is both a quality of life and an economic issue. The shortage of quality housing is a deterrent to businesses, particularly those of any size, which seek to employ a local workforce.

- **Availability and affordability.** Communities need adequate housing for residents of all ages and all income levels. Workforce housing options within reasonable commuting distances are required to support the employees of businesses expanding in the region. Addressing the housing affordability gap is a key concern as the cost for housing has increased more rapidly than wages.
- **Housing stock quality.** Overall, the housing stock in the Mid-Columbia region is older than either that of the US or Oregon and Washington.
- **Impact to Business.** With key large employers expressing concern about their ability to attract and retain a local workforce, this is a critical issue to address in order to secure the opportunity for continued economic prosperity.

## **Challenge:**

- Those who work in our community are increasingly **unable to live here**. Employers are increasingly challenged by their **ability to attract** a talented workforce due to the cost of housing.
- Steep **rises in land costs** and Urban Growth Boundaries limit what is available for housing developments.
- Dwindling **supplies** of available land and housing units constrain opportunities for residents.
- **Vacation and short-term rentals** contribute to the economy, but also create market pressures that deplete attainable housing.

# Housing Action Plan

## Top Three Priorities

- Advocate for funding programs supporting attainable housing.
- Seek resources to provide technical assistance and planning for housing development.
- Increase awareness of regional housing constraints.

	Collaborators	Timeline
<b>1.1 Strategy:</b> Develop and enhance funding and incentives to encourage development and maintenance of attainable housing stock (60%-120%AMI).		
1.1.1 Support regional funding and incentives for housing a) Market the North Central Oregon Attainable Housing Development Revolving Loan Fund (AHDRLF) and fully revolve the fund. b) Grow the AHDRLF with new infusions of funds. c) Establish a comparable resource available in the Washington counties of the region.	MCEDD, North Central Oregon Regional Solutions (NCRST), Mid-Columbia Housing (MCHA), banks, developers	Market/use: 1 yr Grow/WA: long term
1.1.2 Assist local jurisdiction's efforts to incentivize affordable and workforce housing, including consideration of local revenue generation opportunities for purposes of affordable housing.	Counties, cities, MCHA	Mid-term
1.1.3 Advocate for key federal and state funding programs a) Support continued and increased investments in USDA Rural Development and Housing and Urban Development programs that promote housing affordability for renters and homeowners. b) Support adequate investments of capital resources in WA and OR housing programs.	MCHA, MCEDD, Counties, Cities, Associations	Current legislative session
1.1.4 Support development of employer assisted housing programs; host forums on innovative practices and specific investment platforms.	NCRST, MCEDD, Industry Associations, private industry, state housing dept, USDA	Long term
1.1.5 Increase access to, and utilization of, energy efficiency programs and home repair programs to improve existing housing stock.	MCHA, cities, counties	Mid-term

<b>1.2 Strategy:</b> Provide ongoing analysis to understand the issue, using quality data and market studies.		
1.2.1: Utilize regional housing market analysis conducted by OR and WA	Counties, cities, MCHA	Short term
1.2.2 Identify buildable land- support buildable land inventory analysis for communities without current information.	MCEDD, MCHA, State Depts	Long term
1.2.3 Engage in studies and strategies to address tribal housing needs.	CRITFC, Army Corps, Legislators, Tribes, MCHA	Immediate; ongoing
<b>1.3 Strategy:</b> Enhance communication and coordination		
1.3.1 Engage in an education and information campaign to highlight the housing crisis. Develop common materials.	MCHA taskforce NCRST	6 months; ongoing
1.3.2 Develop stronger connections with contractors and developers for multi-housing units.	MCEDD, NCRST, developers, real estate, county/cities	Short term-ongoing
1.3.3 Encourage communication between local and state governments and private sector, particularly through existing industry alliances.	MCEDD, Industry alliances, local govt	Immediate
<b>1.4 Strategy:</b> Improve local and regional capacity for addressing the root causes of housing issues.	MCHA taskforce	Long term
<b>1.5 Strategy:</b> Increase the availability of land for affordable, workforce housing.		
1.5.1 Explore land banking; community land trusts.	Counties, cities	Mid-term
1.5.2 Support identification of properties in public ownership which could be appropriately repurposed to address the housing issue.	Counties, cities, state agencies	Short to Mid-term



# FINANCIAL CAPITAL/ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT

## **Overview**

The region seeks to capitalize on opportunities in six strong regional industry sectors:

### **High Tech: *Unmanned Systems***

The sector includes a focus on unmanned systems as the Mid-Columbia region is a national leading Unmanned Systems hub driven by a local industry heavy-weight and deep breadth in the local supply chain. The industry is a major job producer with a high average wage.

### **Manufacturing: *Fermentation Science, Value Added***

Manufacturing cuts across multiple related sectors and beyond the subset listed here. The sector focus subset ties directly to opportunities with our agriculture base and with growth in fermentation sciences.

### **Healthcare**

The region has invested heavily in healthcare from our major hospitals to a number of independent practitioners. It remains a top employer throughout the region.

### **Renewable Energy**

The region is already an important center of renewable energy production by virtue of the hydropower facilities along the Columbia River and extensive investment into wind development. Our natural potential to participate in a broader range of renewables make our region a center for renewable energy.

### **Forest/Wood Products**

While the sector has been in decline, innovation processing, new products and utilization of byproducts industry will drive growth of this sector.

### **Art/Culture/Tourism/Recreation**

Tourism is a primary industry sector by virtue of the number of jobs it provides, but it does not yet meet wage goals. This sector encompasses initiatives to invest in the quality of tourism venues and visitor infrastructure and to ensure that trained workers are available in the field.

# Financial Capital/Entrepreneurial Environment Action Plan

**Priorities**

- Target industry sector growth in the six key sectors identified.
- Increase business mentorship and support resources and programs.
- Enhance regional information resources, including business siting guides.

	Collaborators	Timeline
<b>2.1 Strategy:</b> Increase locally-available access to capital for entrepreneurs.		
2.1.1 Secure the remaining authorized, unappropriated funds for the Columbia Gorge OR and WA Investment Boards.	Oregon/Washington Investment Boards, Bi-State Advisory Council, MCEDD, CRGC, counties, cities, ports, private industry	Mid term
2.1.2: Advocate for more funding into locally managed capital access programs with increased investment from foundation funders and government entities.	MCEDD, SBDC, partners	Short term-ongoing
2.1.3: Accelerate adoption of new financing options. Provide education for businesses seeking to use alternative financing mechanisms including: a) Community Public Offerings (CPO) b) New Market Tax Credits programs (NMTC) c) Crowdfunding platforms	MCEDD, SBDC, Gorge Owned (GO), partners	Mid-term
2.1.4: Support de-federalization of revolving loan fund programs to reduce administrative burdens locally and make more resources available to businesses.	MCEDD, outreach teams	Current legislative session
2.1.5 Address barriers to women and minorities accessing capital resources.	MCEDD, NDI, industry	Ongoing

2.1.6 Provide financial incentives for target industry cluster businesses.	(eg. State of OR incentives for food manufacturing equip)	Long term
2.1.7 Revive Gorge Angel Investor Network.	TBD	Long term
2.1.8 Increase funding for Individual Development Account (IDA) programs.	Next Door (NDI), MCHA, MCEDD, SBDC	Mid-term
<b>2.2 Strategy:</b> Increase the ease of navigating the financial system.		
2.2.1 Host an annual lenders conference.	MCEDD, private industry, USDA, CDFI network, foundations	Annual
2.2.2 Provide capital coaches through SBDC and MCEDD.	SBDC, MCEDD, NDI	Mid-term
2.2.3 Connect new loan programs through MCEDD to retain an easy to navigate (and sustainable) system.	MCEDD, partners	Ongoing
2.2.4 Provide a standardized information resource for businesses. Business siting guides modeled region-wide.	MCEDD, SBDC, County Ec Dev, partners	Short term
<b>2.3 Strategy:</b> Build and advocate for a local Business Support Network to support local businesses.		
2.3.1 Advocate for sustainable funding for SBDC to stabilize the business climate.	SBDC, Counties, ports, MCEDD, partners	Current legislative session
2.3.2 Seek resources for expanded SBDC services for the entire region (OR and WA).	SBDC, Counties, ports, MCEDD, partners, WSU	Next legislative session
2.3.3 Increase SCORE access in the Gorge and recruit more locally-based SCORE counselors.	TBD	Long term
2.3.4 Further develop the existing business support network: support business boot camps, workshops, and trainings.	WIBs, CGCC, Chambers	Mid-term

2.3.5 Market and communicate available resources: Provide a resource directory to communicate available business resources.		Updated Annually
2.3.6 Provide more business mentorship opportunities: a) Connect start-ups with established businesses b) Utilize existing industry and business alliances c) Develop a Latino Business Alliance	SBDC, MCEDD, Industry Associations, NDI	Long term
2.3.7 Explore options to provide collective IP legal services.	MCEDD, Industry Associations	Mid to long term
2.3.8 Investigate the REDI program.	MCEDD, SBDC, Mainstreet, GO	Short term
2.3.9 Provide more tools for non-profits: technical assistance for social enterprise development.	Nonprofit Association, MCEDD	Mid-term
<b>2.4 Strategy:</b> Support development of alternative working spaces with business support services such as Flex Spaces.		
2.4.1 Support development of makerspaces, using strategies identified in the IMCP plan.	Makerspaces, cities, ports	Short-Long term
2.4.2 Support value added ag incubator.	Port of TD, county ec dev, MCEDD	Mid term
<b>2.5 Strategy:</b> Engage in industry cluster development with specific focus on target industries listed in the plan.		
2.5.1 Engage with State sector leads at Washington Department of Commerce and Business Oregon to cultivate a clear understanding and support for vibrant regional industry sectors.	Industry Association, County Ec Dev, MCEDD	Immediate, ongoing
2.5.2 Support existing industry alliance: High Tech a) Update strategic plan for the sector. b) Provide technical assistance on supply chain logistics. Recruit relevant companies, in coordination with county and Port leads. c) Advocate for resolution on regulatory issues, in partnership with industry. Actively engage in the development of test ranges.	Gorge Tech Alliance	Ongoing

<p>2.5.3 Support Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Invest in the quality of tourism venues and visitor infrastructure.</li> <li>b) Focus on tourism activities that are compatible with primary industry sectors and preserve the region’s rural character.</li> </ul>	<p>Columbia Gorge Visitor’s Association, State Travel, Chambers</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2.5.4 Support existing industry alliance: Manufacturing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Further develop nascent industry associations to support knowledge creation and exchange and maintain a network of technologists, entrepreneurs and businesses in the sectors.</li> <li>b) Identify resources for collective marketing and branding of the region for these industries.</li> <li>c) Identify shared distribution opportunities.</li> <li>d) Disseminate best available techniques for sustainability within the sector.</li> <li>e) Support individual technical projects involving the sector.</li> <li>f) Identify opportunities to support retention of local land ownership, avoiding fragmentation of land and supporting succession planning resources.</li> </ul>	<p>Gorge Cider Society, Gorge Grown Food Network, Breweries in the Gorge, Columbia Gorge Winegrowers Association, MCEDD</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2.5.5 Support existing industry alliance: Renewable Energy (Columbia Gorge Bi-State Renewable Energy Zone)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Provide a forum for communication and information dissemination; cross jurisdictional partnerships.</li> <li>b) Support intensive clean and green tech R/D, including renewable H2 fuel.</li> <li>c) Continue to fund projects/programs to increase energy efficiency</li> </ul>	<p>CGBREZ, counties, state depts, private industry</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2.5.6 Support efforts in the growing forest and wood products sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Explore opportunities to advance innovation and development/adoption of new technologies. Advocate for policy changes, where necessary, to accommodate industry innovation.</li> <li>b) Identify and facilitate solutions to primary barriers including ensuring an adequate workforce, supply and market access.</li> <li>c) Continue support for regional forest collaboratives.</li> </ul>	<p>Forest Collaboratives and partners, private industry, MARS, USFS, landowners, County ec dev.</p>	<p>Mid term</p>

<p>d) Engage in stewardship initiatives and partner with Mount Adams Resource Stewards to support and catalyze economic development opportunities in the industry.</p> <p>e) Promote the importance of the industry and enhance public understanding- host tours, panels and disseminate information as appropriate.</p>		
<p>2.5.7 Support efforts to connect and advance the healthcare sector, including those identified in the community health assessment</p>	<p>Health councils, private industry</p>	<p>Mid term</p>
<p><b>2.6 Strategy:</b> Increase opportunities for businesses to export products</p>		
<p>2.6.1 Identify Investment and Trade Leakages to support identification of export opportunities and encourage business expansions. Conduct a trade leakage study.</p>	<p>US Export Assistance, EDA, MCEDD, Ports</p>	<p>Long term</p>
<p>2.6.2 Host Export Training Workshops. Provide resources for businesses to expand their export potential.</p>	<p>County Economic Development, Ports,</p>	<p>Mid term</p>



# Workforce

## Overview

The region recognizes the critical role of a qualified workforce in addressing sustained economic growth of the region. In educational attainment, the MCEDD region is keeping pace with the states and exceeding the nation in the percentage of the population with an Associate's degree, but falls behind in measurements of individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher. The primary avenue to address the need for a skilled workforce is via support to enhance and expand upon existing services, with a long term vision for developing new resources. Needs include:

- Pre K-12 Support The pre K-12 system in the region is the primary provider for basic skills development. Most school districts have struggled in the past few years to maintain vibrancy during state and federal budget cuts.
- Higher Education Local community colleges are responsive to industry's needs with cornerstone programs which have supported the region's economic development initiatives such as CGCC's Nursing and Renewable Energy Technology training.
- Basic Skills Training Basic skill requirements and the workforce quality for entry level positions needs improvement. With a constantly evolving economy, talent in the region must be able to rapidly adjust to new occupations using transferable skills sets. The region seeks to match the needs of businesses with available skills trainings.
- Quality Workplaces With a very low regional unemployment rate, the tight labor market is creating competition for qualified workers. Thus, quality of the workplace becomes paramount.
- Bi-State Workforce As a bi-state area, we share a common workforce and require collective training opportunities and a regional system in Oregon and Washington.

# Workforce Action Plan

## Priorities

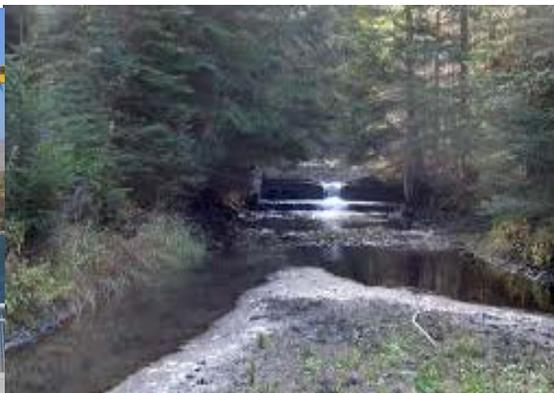
- Increase skill level. Focus on programs tied to key industry sectors (eg food/beverage at Columbia Gorge Community College)
- Develop more paid internship opportunities.
- Enhance regional participation on workforce investment boards.

	Partners	Timeline
<b>3.1 Strategy:</b> Support strong preK-12 programs throughout the region.		
3.1.1 Advocate for consistent and increased funding for educational programs throughout the region. a) Advocate for state funding b) Support mechanisms for local funding (eg Gorge Community Foundation, scholarships)	Education partners, Gorge Comm Fdtn, local advocacy groups	Current legislative session
3.1.2 Encourage participation of all education and workforce entities in the Regional Achievement Collaborative (RAC) to support consistency in quality of education and disseminate best practices.	RAC and partners	Immediate
3.1.3 Identify and address facilities issues for K-12 system a) Support master planning efforts for school districts b) Support new facility needs identified in master plans: Bonding, funding campaigns, site identification. c) Identify re-use options for closed facilities, including makerspace/ trade/skill centers.	School Districts, ESDs, business partners, ED partners	Mid to long term
3.1.4 Identify strong performing schools as an asset for recruitment and retention of business. Encourage media coverage of academic achievements. Compile data for employers of achievement metrics.	School districts, RAC, ED partners, industry alliances	Short to mid term
<b>3.2 Strategy:</b> Enhance/expand regional career preparation programs targeted to students and job seekers, including internships and apprenticeships		

<p>3.2.1 Support career and college readiness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Provide dual credit options: High School and college</li> <li>b) Provide early career education</li> <li>c) Offer trade programs at the high school level: CAD, auto, welding, Career Tech Education</li> <li>d) Coordinate needed training with state school curriculums.</li> </ul>	<p>School Districts, CGCC</p>	<p>Long term</p>
<p>3.2.2 Further develop regional internship and apprenticeships options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Develop multi-faceted first training/employment experiences through job shadow/mentorship program.</li> <li>b) Enhance Columbia Gorge Internship Network.</li> <li>c) Enhance internship opportunities to support local employers.</li> </ul>	<p>Industry alliances, education partners, RAC</p>	<p>Long term</p>
<p>3.2.3 Increase connections to jobs for local students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Continue to host annual STEM career fair.</li> <li>b) Partner with Workforce Investment Boards and counties to host regional career fairs.</li> </ul>	<p>GTA, workforce boards, county economic development (ED)</p>	<p>Annual: career fair, other: mid-term</p>
<p><b>3.3 Strategy:</b> Improve incumbent worker skills; support retooling and upgrading skills</p>		
<p>3.3.1 Increase awareness of training options available. Further establish relationships with local workforce boards.</p>	<p>Workforce boards, CGCC</p>	<p>Short-mid term</p>
<p>3.3.2 Address direct skill needs; focusing on skills transferable to a constantly evolving economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Focus on filling “baby boomer” gap when they start retiring and addressing aging workforce issues.</li> <li>b) Address basic math and literacy skills.</li> <li>c) Develop contextual skills.</li> </ul>	<p>Workforce boards, CGCC, School Districts, RAC</p>	<p>Long term</p>
<p><b>3.4 Strategy:</b> Promote and encourage connections between employers and workforce/education partners.</p>		
<p>3.4.1 Identify means to assist firms to gain access to higher educational and research institutions</p>	<p>County ec dev, industry associations, univ, PNNL,</p>	<p>Long term</p>

	CRITFC, USGS, USFS	
3.4.2 Ensure employers are active on local workforce boards.	Workforce Boards	Short term
3.4.3 Provide ongoing assessment of employer needs.	Workforce Boards, MCEDD, Industry, workforce partners (LLT)	Ongoing
3.4.4 Support employer sponsored training models (eg Wind Challenge, Robotics, Flight Academy). Facilitate development of new programs supported by industry.	Industry, MCEDD, GTA, Alliances	Ongoing (current) Mid-term (new)
<b>3.5 Strategy:</b> Address the talent needs of target industries.		
3.5.1 Food/Beverage Manufacturing. a) Support development of a fermentation/ food/ beverage program at Columbia Gorge Community College. b) Identify opportunities to support employers in meeting Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) requirements. c) Identify and support employers in achieving relevant certifications.	CGCC, CRITFC, BiG, Cider Society, MCEDD, Winegrowers Assoc, Gorge Grown	Short term- Ongoing
3.5.2 High Tech- unmanned systems a) Enhance/expand STEM initiatives. Expand STEM partnership through the STEM Hub. b) Increase connections to R/D facilities. c) Increase connections to Universities. d) Provide resources to identify and support employers in meeting certification requirements.	GTA, Universities, MCEDD, Industry, County Ec Dev	Short term: STEM Long term: universities Ongoing: certification
3.5.3 Art/Culture/Tourism/Recreation. a) Support the nascent culinary arts program. b) Support Qcare and tourism focused training programs, particularly those that “skill up” and lead to higher wages.	Chambers, Col Gorge Arts/Culture Alliance, Fresh Starts, CGCC, Col Gorge Visitors Alliance	Immediate- mid term
<b>3.6 Strategy:</b> Foster regional (cross jurisdictional, bi-state) training opportunities		
3.6.1. Explore possible tuition reciprocity that would be consistent among all	Colleges, universities	Future

higher learning institutions in Washington and Oregon (Bi-State agreement).		legislative session
3.6.2 Support Regional Achievement Collaborative to connect pre K-20 institutions, workforce training programs, employers. Address shared resources and connections.	RAC, workforce boards, industry alliances	Long term
<b>3.7 Strategy:</b> Further efforts to support attraction of qualified employees; job placement.		
3.7.1 Establish incentive to allow people to return to area after training	Workforce boards	Long term
3.7.2 Address related issues to employee recruitment (housing, amenities, broadband)	(see relevant sections of this strategy)	
3.7.3 Provide connections between multiple job listing sites	Lead TBD	Mid-term
3.7.4 Address wage and workplace benefits issues through a human resources support network.	GTA, MCEDD, CGCC, workforce partners	Mid to long term



# Water/Wastewater

## Overview

While some jurisdictions have sufficient infrastructure to meet both current demand and future needs, many of the water and wastewater treatment facilities in the region are aging. Some have reached or are exceeding capacity and overuse of this infrastructure will ultimately limit its productivity and livability. Some systems are dealing with compliance issues that can be challenging to address as these systems represent some of the most costly systems for local governments.

Since adoption of our last economic development strategy, a number of cities and unincorporated communities have made significant strides in upgrading systems or accessing technical assistance that will accommodate current and future growth. However, our expanding economy will continue to place strains on this critical infrastructure and drive demands for well-functioning water and wastewater systems. In addition, increasingly we are faced with water access, storage and groundwater concerns. However, we have been a highly innovative region in our approach to dealing with these constraints. In many areas- from our Soil and Water Conservation Districts to Wy'East RC&D to the Farmer's Irrigation Districts- we are a leader in innovative practices and products.

# Infrastructure: Water/Wastewater Action Plan

## Priorities

	Collaborators	Timeline
<b>4.1 Strategy:</b> Address water and wastewater system constraints to economic development and to increase economic resiliency		
4.1.1 Inventory water and wastewater systems regionally. a) Assess current capacity and identify systems with room for growth. b) Provide mechanisms to support public awareness of facility capabilities- eg regional website page	Water districts, cities, MCEDD, county ec dev	Mid-term: assess Awareness: Long term
4.1.2 Prioritize and upgrade key water systems to address economic development constraints, focusing on: a) Systems serving industrial parks b) Redundancy for systems accessing water through sensitive ecological areas. c) Investments into facilities to keep pace and support growth in key industry sectors, such as food processing	Water districts, cities, MCEDD, county ec dev	Annual
4.1.3: Address aging septic systems. Provide technical assistance to small unincorporated areas.	States, local partners TBD	Long term
4.1.4: Provide technical assistance and grant administration to support key water/wastewater system projects. Host regional wastewater conversations to identify opportunities for collaborative management.	MCEDD	Ongoing
<b>4.2 Strategy:</b> Advocate for funding into innovative products and practices in the region and proliferate best practices		
4.2.1 Support innovation of technologies in irrigation and improving tools to support management of water resource (eg scientific irrigation scheduling-Wy'East)	Wy'east, FCA, soil/ water conservation districts, watershed councils, industry	Immediate-long term

4.2.2 Engage with and support Irrigation districts and Watershed Council projects.	Watershed councils, irrigation districts, county ec dev	Ongoing
<b>4.3Strategy:</b> Support Watershed councils in addressing water resource concerns, such as declining aquifers.	Councils, local govt, county ec dev, MCEDD NCRST,	Ongoing
<b>4.4Strategy:</b> Encourage state/federal money and grants at low interest for water/wastewater projects in the region.	Local advocacy entities	Current and next legislative session
<b>4.5Strategy:</b> Further develop efforts focused on water conservation.		
4.5.1 Encourage recycling techniques/sustainable practices to decrease effluent.	Industry associations, university, state	Mid term
4.5.2 Focus initially on large businesses and large municipal water users.	Industry associations, state	Mid term



# Transportation

## Overview

Location advantages support trade within and outside the region, offering options for expanded export opportunities. The region has a distinct geographic advantage in being centrally located in the Pacific Northwest and is uniquely positioned to do business with approximately a 6,000 mile area from the West Coast to the East Coast to Asia, all within one regular business day. The region is a significant transportation corridor and offers market access through:

- Interstates and Highways both East/West and North/South with connecting bridges.
- Airports, with close proximity to Portland International Airport and the presence of regional and local airports.
- Rail Service: Burlington Northern and Union Pacific offer rail services for the movement of goods in Oregon and Washington. Currently, passenger rail service is only available on the Washington side of the river.
- Barge traffic along the Columbia River which is particularly important for transporting waste and ag products.
- Bicycle/Pedestrian/Transit connections.

While market access and the mix of transportation modes available for the movement of goods and people are a distinct asset to the region, maintaining that infrastructure, and expanding it to meet growing industry and population needs, is a challenge. Issues include County/City road maintenance and funding, limitations to Interstates and Highways, the need for expanded Columbia Gorge Regional Airport runways and facilities, rail safety, aging bridges, aging dams, and challenges maintaining access to federal lands. In addition to infrastructure, our transportation network increasingly serves the needs of a mobile workforce. Data describing commuting habits in the Mid-Columbia by place of work show that workers in the Mid-Columbia region travel outside their state of residence to work to a greater extent than the average worker in Oregon, Washington, or the nation. Public transportation is necessary both from a human and social services standpoint but also from an economic standpoint.

# Infrastructure: Transportation Action Plan

Our goal is to “provide a safe and efficient regional transportation system to enhance the livability and economic vitality of the Mid-Columbia region.”

	Collaborators	Timeline
<b>4.6</b> Coordinate transportation investments to support the region’s economies and communities.		
<b>4.7</b> Advocate to enhance federal, state and private investments into transportation.		
4.7.1 Identify opportunities to advance regional transportation priorities in a potential Oregon Transportation Package.	Local govts- counties, cities, ports, transportation providers	Current session
4.7.2 Pursue Federal Lands Access Program funding options.	TransLink and providers, Hist Hwy, DOTs	Next round
4.7.3 Identify and pursue opportunities through federal transportation programs	Local govts, Hist Hwy, Ports, DOTs	Current session
<b>4.8</b> Maintain, preserve and enhance existing infrastructure to improve the transport of goods and movement of people.		
4.8.1 Improve connections between rail, air, highway, and river systems.	Regional airport, port, DOTs, FHWA	Long term
4.8.2 Pursue immediate truck parking opportunities to support regional economic development.	Cities, counties, county ec dev, ODOT	Short term
4.8.3 Commit resources to address facility modernization critical to the overall transportation system.	DOTs, counties, cities, Ports	Mid-long term
<b>4.9</b> Identify, seek funding and complete priority highway, road and bridge transportation infrastructure projects.		

4.9.1	Participate in the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), Region 1 Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) and Lower John Day ACT to identify priority projects. Integrate annually to this strategy with regional project prioritization.	Local govts, ACT, SW WA RTC, TransLink and providers, MCEDD, DOTs	Immediate, ongoing
4.9.2	Focus on key corridors and market roads necessary for the transport of goods. Address bottlenecks on the road system and bi-state connections.	Local govts, ACT, SW WA RTC, TransLink and providers, MCEDD, DOTs	
<b>4.10</b>	Support regional airport enhancements.		
4.10.1	Further develop the Columbia Gorge Regional Airport, serving key healthcare and tech businesses. Further develop capacity of the airport as a bi-state firefighting base.	Col Gorge Regional Airport, Klickitat County, City TD, industry	Mid term
4.10.2	Identify opportunities to further Goldendale airport's potential as a distribution center.	City Goldendale, Klickitat County ec dev	Mid term
4.10.3	Support enhancements to the Hood River Jernstedt airport.	Port of Hood River	Mid-term
<b>4.11</b>	Enhance the Columbia River system transportation system (eg docks to support commerce and cruise ships)		
<b>4.12</b>	Increase access to cargo and passenger rail.		
4.12.1	Advocate for facilities at Amtrak passenger rail stops.	Local governments- WA counties, cities, MCEDD	Mid-long term
<b>4.13</b>	Improve safety of regional transportation network.		
4.13.1	Address parking, issues, especially along Hwy 14 and at access points (e.g. trailheads) that impact safety.	WSDOT	Mid term
<b>4.14</b>	Increase capacity of regional transportation network with efficient and accessible bi-state transit options.		
4.14.1	Address priorities expressed in Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plans.	TransLink and providers, RTC	Immediate-long term
4.14.2	While there are practical limitations to dramatic increases in transit, focus on incremental and sustainable success on both the local and regional scale for transit both inter and intra community.	TransLink and providers, RTC, DOTs	Ongoing

4.14.3 Actively engage and follow-through with feasibility assessments for fixed route transit.	Local governments, providers	Long term
4.14.4 Further bolster the Gorge TransLink Alliance to support a seamless bi-state transit system.	TransLink Alliance and providers	Immediate-long term
4.14.5 Support transportation options programs through Drive Less Connect.	MCEDD	Ongoing
4.14.6 Facilitate employment transportation needs; coordinating vanpools and pursuing transportation options.	MCEDD, Industry	Ongoing
4.14.7 Build awareness of available services.	TransLink, MCEDD , providers, NDI, social svc	Short term-Ongoing
<b>4.15</b> Provide modal options with facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.		
4.15.1 Support completion of the Historic Columbia River Highway trail.	Hist Hwy	Advocacy: immediate; completion: long term
4.15.2 Further facilitate Gorge Hubs facilities.	Gorge Hubs communities, Hist Hwy, MCEDD, ODOT	Short term
4.15.3 Assess opportunities and develop strategies for all bridges to enable bike/pedestrian access	Ports, DOTs	Long term
4.15.4 Complete a usage study for impact of pedestrian traffic and tourism.	TBD	Long term



# BROADBAND

## Overview

Broadband is essential to providing economic opportunities throughout the Mid-Columbia region. The region's rural nature and challenging and diverse terrain make building broadband infrastructure extremely costly and nearly impossible for private sector investment alone to meet needs. Enhancing broadband capacity for the region will enhance economic opportunities and support more resilient and networked communities. In addition:

- Improving broadband connection in the region means several things. Building **redundancy** that connects east/west and north/south enables more reliable broadband connections throughout the region in the event of an outage, cable-cut, or natural disaster. This redundancy is a necessary condition for businesses interested in locating or growing in the region. **Increasing speeds** and **decreasing latency** in connections means that they can better support industry growth in the technology sector as well as others, improve telemedicine and distance learning capabilities, and provide more robust use of many other applications for businesses and communities.
- Reaching **key tower sites and facilities** increases service for public safety communications as well as opportunities for private internet and cellular carriers to build upon the backbone investment for additional connectivity;
- **Addressing un/under-served areas** will increase internet access at homes, businesses, and key community anchor institutions.
- Increasing broadband throughout the region means additional **homes** become viable choices for residents that require internet access for their work or businesses at their residences, relieving some housing pressures with adequate broadband access currently.
- Enhanced broadband provides **connection to education and training** opportunities for the growth of a skilled and talented workforce.

The strategy to address broadband falls into three primary areas: Access, Awareness, and Adoption.

# Infrastructure: Broadband Action Plan

	Partners	Timeline
<b>4.16 Strategy:</b> Support coordination between local governments in the five county region and internet service providers.		
4.16.1 Convene and facilitate bi-annual Columbia Gorge Broadband Consortium meetings.	MCEDD	Bi-annual
4.16.2 Support County broadband planning groups and conversations to leverage federal and state investment.	MCEDD, Counties, ISPs	Short-long term
<b>4.17 Strategy:</b> Increase publically available broadband access points and their use. Maintain an inventory of sites.	Broadband Consortium, community groups	Mid-term
<b>4.18 Strategy:</b> Support Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in addressing middle and last mile telecommunications infrastructure gaps		
4.18.1 Further develop relationships with and engage ISPs to discuss gaps in services throughout the region. Assist identification of demand in under and unserved communities.	Gorge Broadband Consortium and partners	Ongoing
4.18.2 Reach key tower sites/facilities. Identify and map sites.	Gorge Broadband Consortium, counties, States and partners	Map: Immediate, Reach: Long term
4.18.3 Connect directly with private internet and cellular carriers to build upon existing backbone investments. Leverage public investments (eg 911 cell tower infrastructure in Klickitat County) to support expansion of service.	Gorge Broadband Consortium, ISPs, counties and partners	Connect: immediate Leverage: mid term
4.18.4 Work with ISPs to support improving available speeds and reduce latency in the network to support business development in the tech sector and other industries where applicable.	Gorge Broadband Consortium, ISPs and partners	Long term
<b>4.19 Strategy:</b> Support investments into a fully redundant network.		

4.19.1 Build redundancy connecting east-west and north-south for a more reliable system in the event of an outage, cable-cut or natural disaster.	ISPs, Gorge Broadband Consortium and partners	Long term
4.19.2 Address wireless deadzones, in partnership with internet and cellular providers	Cell providers, counties, Gorge Broadband Consortium	Long term
4.19.3 Encourage backup power for key sites.	Gorge Broadband Consortium, utilities, county ec dev	Mid-term
<b>4.20 Strategy:</b> Advocate for and pursue funding through federal and state funding programs.		
4.20.1 Maintain the funding resource guide through the Gorge Consortium.	MCEDD, State broadband office	Immediate, ongoing
4.20.2 Support continued and increased funding into currently over-subscribed USDA programs, including Community Connect, Distance Learning and Telemedicine grant programs and the Rural Broadband Loan program. Identify projects to utilize FCC e-Rate and Healthcare Connect funding.	Gorge Broadband Consortium and partners	Current legislative session
4.20.3 Increase state funding into targeted middle-mile build out. Support development of state incentive programs to match federal and private resources.	MCEDD, NCRST, Gorge Broadband Consortium and partners	Current legislative session
4.20.4 Work with local policy makers to develop a plan for providing business incentives for paying into tech/broadband improvements.	TBD	Long term
<b>4.21 Strategy:</b> Address barriers to efficient broadband expansion.		
4.21.1 Create a resource guide for, and identify opportunities to implement, “Dig Once” policies. Engage local planning entities, local and transmission focused power companies, wireless tower owners, water infrastructure providers, transportation entities, to better understand their policies around utility siting and sharing infrastructure/trenches.	Gorge Broadband Consortium and partners	Mid-term

4.21.2 Support streamlined permitting for broadband projects.	Gorge Broadband Consortium, counties, cities, states, ISPs, utilities and partners	Mid-term
4.21.3 Support incorporation of broadband into local plan updates as appropriate.	Gorge Broadband Consortium, counties, cities	Ongoing
<b>4.22 Strategy:</b> Increase adoption and use of existing broadband infrastructure.		
4.22.1 Maintain and use mobile laptop learning lab. Transform to mobile device learning lab. Encourage additional use of other existing regional resources for tech training.	MCEDD, foundations, Broadband Consortium, Industry Alliances	Mid-term
4.22.2 Offer business technology trainings and forums.	MCEDD, SBDC, Industry Alliances	Mid-Term
4.22.3 Offer trainings and forums focused on community technology literacy.	Broadband Consortium, County Ec Dev, Foundations	Short term
<b>4.23 Strategy:</b> Improve awareness and promote available broadband infrastructure necessary for business success.		
4.23.1 Continue to host regional website to promote the available broadband options in our five counties (gorgebroadband.org).	Gorge Broadband Consortium and partners	Ongoing
4.23.2 Gather and disseminate information on broadband in meetings with ISPs, local government entities and economic development professionals.	Gorge Broadband Consortium and partners	Bi-annual
4.23.3 Host Oregon Connections Telecommunications Conference.	State, MCEDD, Industry Sponsors	Annual



# Regulatory Environment

## Overview

With two states, a National Scenic Area overlay and high percentages of federal land ownership, the level of regulations affecting development activities in the region is a significant concern. All five counties in the Mid-Columbia region have zoning ordinances and land use comprehensive plans. Additional state and federal regulatory agencies also affect development activities in the region, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, and the Washington Department of Ecology.

# Regulatory Action Plan

## Priorities

- Develop a Regulatory Road Map.
- Facilitate industrial site readiness.
- Support interagency coordination to address multi-layered regulatory issues.

	Partners	Timeline
<b>5.1 Strategy:</b> Address permitting time for business investments. Streamline regulatory processes to reduce complexity, delay and uncertainty.		
5.1.1 Develop a “Regulatory Roadmap.” Maintain business siting guides and develop new guides.	County ec dev, MCEDD, regulatory agencies	New: 1 yr Maintain: Ongoing
5.1.2 Facilitate Industrial site readiness and expedited permitting (examples: regional wetlands permit, energy overlay zone) a) Advocate for resolution of easement issues at Cascades Biz. Park.	Ports, county, city, MCEDD, state and federal agencies	Easement: 1 yr Overall: long term
5.1.3 Support localized decision making that will allow for clear and early guidance in the siting process. Advocate for adequate funding to City and County planning offices.	Legislative action teams and advocacy groups	Current legislative session
5.1.4 Explore mitigation bank options for wetlands	Ports, counties, cities	Long term
<b>5.2 Strategy:</b> Facilitate improved housing development processes.		
5.2.1 Support jurisdictions to establish expedited permitting mechanisms for attainable housing projects.	County, city, state agencies, MCHA	Mid-term
5.2.2 Disseminate innovative or best practices that further development of attainable housing. Eg. a) Zoning and codes allowing varied housing types to support density. b) Exemptions from or lower SDCs for attainable or affordable housing c) Rezone/zoning efforts to create market opportunities for attainable housing.	County, city, state agencies, MCHA	Ongoing

5.2.3 Develop strategies to work within National Scenic Area requirements to build communities.	CRGC, counties, cities, MCEDD, OIB/WIB	Short-long term
<b>5.3Strategy:</b> Advance a process to provide clarity around urban area growth boundary adjustment determinations.	CRGC, USFS	Mid-term
<b>5.4Strategy:</b> Advocate for solutions to address regulatory issues impacting key regional industry sectors		
5.4.1 Work with industry alliances to identify regulatory issues and convene regional support (eg FAA issue resolution on impacts to ren. energy).	Industry alliances, MCEDD, NCRST, local governments	Ongoing
5.4.2 Convene a regional policy team and facilitate technical support (eg government affairs specialist) as needed.	MCEDD	Ongoing
5.4.3 Coordinate regional issues through the Gorge Consortium for multi-agency support.	Consortium	Immediate
5.4.4 Leverage legislative advocacy from partner entities (eg associations of counties/cities). Distribute regional priority white papers.	AOC, LOC, WAC, NCRST, MCEDD, LWC, Consortium, other associations	Current legislative session, ongoing
<b>5.5Strategy:</b> Support interagency coordination to address issues resulting from overlay of multiple levels of regulation.		
5.5.1 Coordinate with North Central Oregon Regional Solutions to address issues with multiple state agencies involved.	OR State agencies, local jurisdictions, NCRST, MCEDD, industry alliances	Ongoing
5.5.2 Correspond directly with regulatory agencies in Washington to address common regional issues.	WA State agencies, local jurisdictions, MCEDD, industry alliances	Ongoing

# PRIORITY PROJECTS

## Prioritization Consideration

- **Alignment with Strategy** with preference given to projects which will measurably move the needle on one or more of the top five strategy goals.
- **Regional Impact** with preference given to projects impacting multiple jurisdictions.
- **Potential availability of funding sources** with preference given to projects with a commitment of local resources and an identified funding strategy.
- **Economic impact.**

## Washington Top Ten

Rank	Project	Description	Goal Areas Addressed
1	<b>White Salmon Slow Sand Filter Water System</b>	Develop a new water system to add capacity to accommodate future growth. Current capacity is 2-3 cfs and the system will add another 15 cfs.	<b>Housing, entrepreneurial environment</b> (key industry sector) and <b>infrastructure</b> (water).
2	<b>Stevenson Wastewater System</b>	Upgrade the wastewater system to address compliance and future growth. Includes pretreatment for high-load commercial users.	<b>Infrastructure</b> (wastewater).
3	<b>Dallesport Industrial Park Improvements</b>	Construct a 20K sf light industrial building; move Dow Road North and bring 13 acres to shovel ready status.	<b>Entrepreneurial environment</b> (key industry sector).
4	<b>Cascades Business Park</b>	Complete phase 3 of site infrastructure to the largest contiguous shovel ready industrial site in Skamania County (32+/- acres).	<b>Entrepreneurial environment</b> (key industry sector).
5	<b>Bingen Point Projects</b>	Construct a 15K sf flex building; acquire 7 acres to bring to shovel ready; construct street and utility improvements for targeted properties.	<b>Entrepreneurial environment</b> (key industry sector).

# PRIORITY PROJECTS

## Washington Top Ten

### Prioritization Consideration

- **Readiness to proceed** with preference given to projects ready to start immediately.
- **Alignment with EDA Priorities:** Enhances National and Global Competitiveness, Furthers Public/Private Partnerships, Expands Collaborative Regional Innovation, Develops in Environmentally-Sustainable Manner, and/or Serves Economically Distressed and Underserved Communities.

Rank	Project	Description	Goal Areas Addressed
6	<b>Goldendale Energy Project</b>	Resolve brownfield and environmental study issues. The \$2 billion pumped hydro energy storage project (previously John Day Pumped Storage) would increase regional opportunities.	<b>Entrepreneurial environment</b> (key industry sector)
7	<b>Stevenson Shoreline Restoration</b>	Construct a new public access beach to the Columbia River.	<b>Infrastructure</b> and social/natural amenities
8	<b>Columbia Gorge Regional Airport</b>	Rehabilitate runway 7/25 and lengthen existing primary runway to 5,500 feet.	<b>Infrastructure</b> (transportation).
9	<b>Goldendale Airport</b>	Provide a card-lock fueling system at the airport	<b>Infrastructure</b> (transportation).
10	<b>Skamania PUD Upgrades</b>	Upgrade 7.9 miles of electrical line for Stabler Feeder project; replace the aging North Bonneville substation and upgrade feeder lines to increase capacity and provide for redundancy; underground power lines.	<b>Entrepreneurial environment</b> (key industry sector) and <b>Infrastructure</b> (utilities).

# PRIORITY PROJECTS

## Oregon Top Ten Priorities

### Purpose of Prioritization

Prioritization is designed to:

- **Inventory and prioritize** economic development needs and regional issues;
- **Develop regional consensus** on high priorities;
- **Develop a tool to promote** high priority projects or issues to state and federal funders.

Rank	Project	Description	Goal Area Addressed
1	<b>Workforce Housing</b>	Sherman: A new program to incentivize construction of new rental units. Hood River: update housing plans, relocating maintenance facilities and explore use of the construction excise tax. Wasco: support the Community college in addressing student housing needs and developing a skills center.	<b>Housing</b>
2	<b>Biggs Water System</b>	Design and construction for a municipal water system in Biggs. Future development is limited due to the lack of a water system. Fire protection is limited.	<b>Infrastructure</b> (water).
3	<b>Deschutes Rim Clinic</b>	Expand the health clinic in Maupin. The project has completed the feasibility study.	<b>Entrepreneurial environment</b> (key industry sector)
4	<b>Mosier Well Repair</b>	Repair the co-mingling wells in the area around Mosier. Well problems impact property values, increase costs for agricultural operations and threaten Mosier's economic stability.	<b>Entrepreneurial environment</b> (key industry sector) and <b>infrastructure</b> (water).
5	<b>Bridge of the Gods</b>	Maintain the Bridge of the Gods across the Columbia River and provide additional pedestrian and bicycle capacity.	<b>Infrastructure</b> (transportation)

# PRIORITY PROJECTS

## Oregon Top Ten Priorities

### Agora Investment Platform

Learn more about priority projects at [www.agora-platform.com](http://www.agora-platform.com). Agora links community projects with capital providers through an online collaborative transaction platform.

Intended outcomes:

- Community projects extend reach to a broader set of capital providers with consistent project summaries.
- Capital providers gain insight into community priorities, quickly identify projects that match investment parameters.

Rank	Project	Description	Goal Area Addressed
6	<b>Confluence Business Park</b>	Construction of infrastructure for the largest remaining area of light industrial zoning in the City of Hood River.	<b>Entrepreneurial environment</b> (key industry sector).
7	<b>Dog River Pipeline Upgrade (City of The Dalles)</b>	The existing pipeline transports over 50% of the City's water supply and is a deteriorating wooden pipe. The project would replace it with a new ductile iron pipeline. The capacity will increase from 8 to 17 million gallons per day.	<b>Infrastructure</b> and public safety/healthy communities.
8	<b>Parkdale/Odell Treatment of Biosolids/Sludge</b>	Create additional storage to digest sludge composition. Explore an MBR treatment solution. The project is in feasibility stage.	<b>Infrastructure</b> (wastewater) and <b>Entrepreneurial environment</b> (key industry sector).
9	<b>Mosier Fire Hall/City Hall Bridge of the Gods</b>	The City of Mosier and Mosier Fire District have partnered to explore opportunities to locate a joint City Hall and Fire Hall in downtown Mosier.	<b>Infrastructure</b> and public safety/healthy communities.
10	<b>New Fire Hall: South Sherman Fire and Rescue</b>	The fire department has long outgrown their space to store and maintain equipment and files. The fire department also needs space for training the volunteers.	<b>Infrastructure</b> and public safety/healthy communities.

# EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

## Evaluation Areas

### Metrics

Metrics represent quantitative changes in the health of the regional economy.

### Milestones

Milestones include significant activities that incrementally move us closer to reaching our vision. Within each goal area, we have identified the top three priorities (milestones).

### Meaningful Impact

Qualitative changes are used to understand the real impact and effectiveness of our actions/strategies.

## Metrics: Regional Economic Health

Broad measurements which provide a snapshot of the region's economic health and address our key concerns are presented below. These include elements which may be attributed to implementation of the economic strategy and elements which are more directly influenced by outside factors. For instance, per capita personal income is strong in one of our counties, due in large part to global commodity prices. We will likely experience a reversal of gains in that category in the near term as commodity prices change. Thus, each of these will be measured over time, with a focus on industry diversification to reduce fluctuation and we will use our narrative to understand why changes may be occurring.

### TARGETS

#### Income

- Increase per capita personal income (within the workforce).
- Increase median wage/job.
- Reverse the trend of an increasing poverty rate.
- Provide a healthy distribution across wage ranges.

#### Labor Force

- Increase rate of participation in the labor force by 10% by 2022.
- Reduce the unemployment rate (u6 to include discouraged workers).

#### Businesses

- Net increase in private firms.
- Net increase in payroll.
- Enhance job creation and retention: Change in seasonally adjusted employment.

### DATA

Broad measures are presented to the left, but the region seeks to identify data with more granular information based around the following categories:

- Demographics (age, race, gender, etc).
- Geography.

# EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

## Metrics: Priority Areas

### HOUSING

- New construction; by single unit, multiple unit and accessory dwellings.
- Vacancy rates.
- Short term rentals in comparison to the housing stock.
- Number of units on the market for sale.
- Utilization of housing needs analysis: extent of strategy implementation.

### ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT

- Job creation in each industry sector.
- Number of companies in each sector.
- Revenue and payroll growth for target industries.
- Number of entrepreneurs receiving small business counseling services.
- Volume of small business lending.
- Decreased trade/services leakages.

### WORKFORCE

- Internship: % matched, # paid.
- Average employment duration.
- Pre-school enrollment.
- Graduation/GED achievement%
- Rate of enrollment in post-secondary education. Local student's completion rates.
- Increase in high school students earning college credit.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

- Amount of funds invested in infrastructure.
- Broadband: Increase in number with access to *high speed* internet, subscription rates/use, business utilization, affordability rate.
- Water/Wastewater: capacity limitations, level of excess capacity, # of systems with compliance issues, consumption rates.
- Transportation: Traffic counts, ridership by purpose, reduced redundancy of service.

### REGULATORY

- Time to permit a project.
- Number of steps to start a business. # agencies using lean efficiency measures.
- Number/acres of "ready" industrial sites.
- Cost of establishing a company; cost of regulatory compliance

### Meaningful Impact

Raw numbers do not tell the whole story. For instance, for entrepreneurs receiving support services, are they able to internalize and apply their knowledge? Are new graduates coming out of high school workforce ready? The true impact of our strategies requires a commitment to conducting in-depth interviews to obtain more qualitative data.

# APPENDICES

- A. 2012 Strategy Outcomes*
- B. Detailed SWOT Analysis*
- C. Project Lists*
- D. Participant List*



## Appendix A: 2012 Summary Outcomes

### Overview of the 2012 Strategy Objectives

In 2012, the Mid-Columbia region developed and adopted a new Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to identify strategies which would sustain and enhance the region's economy. Focus areas included:

- Addressing a lack of access to capital.
- Increasing rural broadband connections.
- Increasing receipt of economic resources for infrastructure projects listed in the strategy.
- Increasing access to transportation resources.
- Addressing housing constraints.
- Improving workforce skills.
- Supporting key industry clusters.
- Improving bi-state capacity.

The plan served as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities.

### The Result

Overall, the region is making significant progress implementing the 2012 regional economic development strategy. A few of the key accomplishments in the focus area categories are listed within this summary appendix.

## 2012 Outcomes: Facilitated Increased Access to Capital

### Increased Locally Managed Business Financing Options

- Received an additional \$310,000 US Department of Agriculture Revolving Loan Fund for bi-state lending, increasing access to capital for rural businesses.

### Provided Financing to Grow Local Businesses

- Approximately \$5 million provided to regional businesses through Mid-Columbia Economic Development District and Oregon Investment Board's loan programs.
- Funds supported the direct retention and creation of over 280 jobs.

### Deployed the Agora Investment Platform

- Developed and deployed the Agora Investment Platform ([www.agora-platform.com](http://www.agora-platform.com)) to link community projects with capital providers.
- Received a National Innovation Award.



### Sample Businesses Supported:

Far left: Skunk Brothers;  
Top middle: Veronica's Salsa;  
Bottom middle: Freebridge Brewing;  
Far right: 64oz

## 2012 Outcomes: Expanded Broadband Capacity

### Established a Regional Gorge Broadband Consortium ([gorgebroadband.org](http://gorgebroadband.org))

- Identified un/underserved markets in the region.
- Conducted more than 20 trainings. Created a wifi hotspot inventory.
- Developed a regional mobile laptop lab.

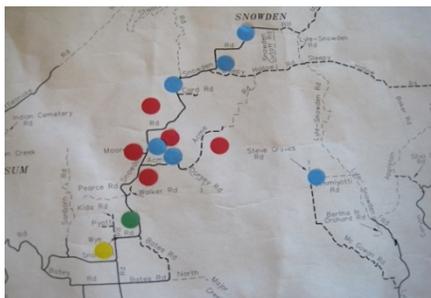
### Secured Funding for Broadband Expansion

- Funding to run fiber-optic Internet through Sherman County from Wasco to Erskine, Erskine to Grass Valley and Wasco to Rufus.
- Funding to extend broadband to Maupin. Developed demand studies and conducted business case analysis for the planned Maupin area fiber project.
- Middle and last mile investments in Skamania and Klickitat counties.



### Bridging the Rural Digital Divide

The Gorge Broadband Consortium provides an opportunity for collaboration between community members, local officials, and internet service providers to enhance our bi-state region's broadband capacity.



## 2012 Outcomes: Increased Regional Attention to Housing Constraints

### Advanced Attainable Housing as a Regional Priority

- Convened regional stakeholders to further define housing issues and develop a plan to address housing constraints.
- Established the North Central Oregon Attainable Housing Fund, initially seeded with \$2 million.
- North Central Oregon Regional Solutions prioritized additional investment of \$410,000 to support Hood River in addressing its housing challenges.
- The City of Hood River adopted its housing needs analysis (including buildable lands study) and housing strategy. The City of The Dalles received funding for their buildable lands inventory.
- Affordable Housing Initiative funds awarded to Mid-Columbia Housing Authority to support a community-based housing network to address affordable housing issues.
- Heritage Heights Farmworker Housing completed in The Dalles, with 24 new units.



The region focused attention to identifying solutions to a primary barrier to economic development: a shortage of quality housing stock at price ranges and rental levels which are commensurate with the financial capabilities of workers and households.

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## 2012 Outcomes: Increased Regional Public Transportation Options

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### Enhanced Regional Connections

- Connected a network for regional public transportation through the Gorge TransLink Alliance.
- Conducted analysis of fixed route transportation options in Hood River and The Dalles.
- Established new vanpools and transportation programs to support regional employers.
- Received a Highly Rural Veterans grant to support additional transportation connections and outreach to veterans in Sherman and Skamania counties.
- Received funding for the Historic Columbia River Highway Trail connection.
- Planned “Gorge Hubs” for communities along the Historic Columbia River Highway.

### Expanded Services

- Intercity route between Hood River and Portland established.
  - Skamania County's West End Transit (WET) bus initiated, offering seasonal bus service on Saturdays and Sundays in the summer.
  - Columbia Gorge Express launched, with ridership exceeding 30,000 trips in the first year.
  - Mount Hood Express expanded service, with more than 50,000 trips in the 2016 season.
  - Regular Upper Hood River Valley pilot transportation service funding approved.
-

## 2012 Outcomes: Facilitated Investment Into Water/Wastewater Systems

### Supported Water/Wastewater System Construction

- Parkdale Sanitary System: \$1.51 million loan and \$1.17 million grant to upgrade the Sanitary District's 40 year old wastewater collection and treatment system.
- Klickitat PUD/Wishram Water System: \$750,000 obtained to construct a new well.
- The Dalles Safe Drinking Water Project: Completed, at an estimated cost of \$8.1 million.
- Dallesport Water/Wastewater District: Funded for distribution system, new reservoir and new well in Murdock.
- Mosier Watershed Council: \$1 million in state funds for well repair and replacement.

### Provided Technical Assistance

- Provided technical assistance and coordinated a meeting of wastewater treatment operators in the region to collaboratively approach joint solutions to local wastewater issues.
- Obtained \$70,000 for the City of Dufur's water system plan and wastewater facilities plan.
- Hosted a one-stop to analyze funding resources for construction of Biggs Water System.
- Wamic Water System received a \$20,000 planning grant.
- City of Mosier received planning funds for addition of a back-up well.



Prioritized water and wastewater system investments expanded capacity of municipalities to serve key industries.

# Infrastructure

## 2012 Outcomes: Completed Regional Priority Public Works Projects

### Increased the Region's Receipt of Federal Public Works Funds for Regional Priority Projects

- The Dalles Marine Terminal and Lewis and Clark Festival Area completed.
- Investments into Columbia Gorge Industrial Park Development at Port of The Dalles.
- Columbia Gorge Regional Airport Flex Space received \$625,000 in US Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding.
- Regional Wetland Strategy initiated by Port of The Dalles.
- Port of Skamania received \$925,000 in EDA funds to renovate the River Point Building.
- The Moro Medical Clinic received \$250,000 financing.
- Sherman Cities Downtown Plans funded and completed.
- The Discovery III Building, owned by the Port of Skamania, received state investment.
- Conducted NorCor Industrial Property evaluation and analysis.



### Investing in our Future

In total, the region increased receipt of federal public works funding by more than \$10 million for projects across the five county area.

## 2012 Outcomes: Accelerated STEM Education

### Advanced the Regional STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Partnership

- Obtained Gorge STEM Hub designation.
- Refurbished the robotics loaner program, with almost \$28,000 in private industry contributions raised to enhance the program.
- Hosted annual STEM career fairs, with approximately 700 students attending.
- Established the Corwin Hardham memorial scholarship at Gorge Community Foundation. The scholarship is the first regionally available funds to support students pursuing STEM education.



### STEM Benefits Students

Top: Industry-supported events, like the newly developed Gorge Wind Challenge, advance hands-on learning.

Bottom: Hosting FIRST Lego League (FLL) and FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) Tournaments annually challenges student teams.

## 2012 Outcomes: Advanced Regional Industry Sectors

### Furthered Growth of Existing Industry Sector Alliances

- Coordinated regular meetings of the Columbia Gorge Bi-State Renewable Energy Zone.
- Established the Sherman Solar loan program. Furthered a Pumped Storage project.
- Secured funding to create Wine Adventure Trails, develop a cohesive marketing strategy and provide training for members of the Columbia Gorge Winegrowers Association.
- Developed and distributed a regional Gorge Arts and Culture Map.
- Grew the membership of the Gorge Technology Alliance to connect tech businesses across the region. Completed the GTA Strategic Plan. Established “Geek Lunch” program and CEO Forum.

### Developed New Industry Alliances to Support Value Added Agriculture and Fermentation

- Created the Gorge Cider Society. Supported the Hard Pressed CiderFest tasting event and designed and distributed the Columbia Gorge Cider Route map.
- Hosted several tours of researchers to connect with value added food processing businesses.



### Learn more about industry sector activities:

Gorge Tech Alliance: [crgta.org](http://crgta.org)

Gorge Cider: [gorgecidersociety.com](http://gorgecidersociety.com)

Gorge Wine: [columbiagorgewine.com](http://columbiagorgewine.com)

Renewable Energy: [cgbrez.org](http://cgbrez.org)

Arts/Culture: [gorgeculture.org](http://gorgeculture.org)

## Appendix B SWOT Detail

<b>Strengths</b> <i>Our Region's relative Comparative Advantages</i>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <i>Our region's relative competitive disadvantages</i>
<p><b>Scenic Beauty, Recreation, Brand and Tourism Industry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Designated National Scenic Area:</b> Parts of the region encompass the federally recognized Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.</li> <li>• <b>Tourism industry:</b> In 2009, National Geographic Traveler ranked the region 6<sup>th</sup> internationally on its destination scorecard to the world's most iconic destinations. We have a strong existing tourism industry and are maturing as a destination.</li> <li>• <b>Four season recreation:</b> Abundant recreational opportunities for all four seasons including cycling, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, camping, rafting, kayaking, canoeing, windsurfing, rock climbing, and a variety of snow sports.</li> <li>• <b>Natural diversity:</b> The scenic beauty of the region traverses mountains, rivers and plains.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Insufficient housing for local employees constrains the ability of businesses to recruit and retain a workforce. It hampers economic growth and the economic vitality of the region.</li> <li>• <b>Quality</b> of housing</li> <li>• <b>Affordability gap:</b> the cost of housing is very high, especially in comparison to average regional wages</li> <li>• <b>Lack of affordable land</b> for housing development</li> <li>• <b>Lack of variety</b> in housing options</li> </ul>
<p><b>Central Location</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Center of the hub:</b> The region has a distinct geographic advantage in being centrally located in the Pacific Northwest. We are described as the "Center of the Hub."</li> <li>• <b>"World Clock":</b> Our region is uniquely positioned to do business with approximately a 6,000 mile area from the West Coast to the East Coast to Asia, all within one regular business day.</li> <li>• <b>Access to urban areas:</b> We have direct access to metro areas: Portland/Vancouver, Tri-Cities, Yakima, Bend, Boise, and Boardman/Hermiston. This proximity offers distribution options for products, increases cultural opportunities, and enhances workforce and business opportunities. There is bi-directional access: rural to urban and urban to rural.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Education, Skilled Workforce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The region is lagging in college and graduate degree completion.</li> <li>• Pre K-12 quality: Uneven quality of public education across the region.</li> <li>• Pre K-12 funding: Schools are consistently underfunded.</li> <li>• Limited skilled labor pool. It is further difficult to attract and recruit employees due to the relatively high cost of living</li> <li>• Lack of trained workforce and limited workforce training opportunities</li> <li>• Lack of vocational learning options</li> <li>• Impacts of drug use on labor pool</li> <li>• Seasonal nature of farm/recreational labor</li> </ul>
<p><b>Regional Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bi-state cooperation:</b> The region is historically connected through the Columbia River and is unique in working across</li> </ul>	<p><b>Transportation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mobility:</b> Data describing commuting habits in the Mid-Columbia by place of work show that workers in the Mid-</li> </ul>

<p>state boundaries, forging partnerships between Oregon and Washington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Human networks/spirit of collaboration:</b> Collaborative human networks exist within the region and agencies exhibit a willingness to partner across sectors. The tendency of our rural communities is for residents to be active in multiple organizations, wearing “many hats.” The region offers ample opportunities for leadership and civic engagement.</li> <li>● <b>Strong sense of community:</b> A strong sense of community exists throughout the region. Community pride is evident and lends itself to having residents working hard to maintain economic viability. Towns are small enough to “know your neighbors.” Strong rural values and characteristics are present that the region seeks to maintain and protect.</li> <li>● <b>Strong local leadership and regional governmental bodies</b></li> <li>● <b>Active industry alliances:</b> Active industry alliances support industry sectors including the Columbia Gorge Bi-State Renewable Energy Zone, Gorge Technology Alliance, Gorge Grown Food Network, Columbia Gorge Winegrowers Association, Breweries in the Gorge and Gorge Cider Society.</li> </ul>	<p>Columbia region travel outside their state of residence to work to a greater extent than the average worker in Oregon, Washington, or the nation. Public transportation is necessary both from a human and social services standpoint but also from an economic standpoint to support the mobile workforce. We market the region as one workforce area and need to provide the transportation options to facilitate that to a greater extent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of transportation options</li> <li>● Transportation accessibility</li> <li>● Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need for expanded Columbia Gorge regional Airport runways and facilities</li> <li>- Aging bridges</li> <li>- County/City Road Maintenance and funding</li> <li>- Limitations to Interstates and Highways- needs for ongoing maintenance, funding and increased capacities</li> <li>- Aging Dams</li> <li>- Access to federal lands- road maintenance</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Availability of Transportation Systems/Modes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The region is a significant transportation corridor and offers market access through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interstates and Highways both East/West and North/South with connecting bridges.</li> <li>- Airports: Close proximity to Portland International Airport. Presence of regional and local airports. Life Flight services are also available from the regional airport.</li> <li>- Rail Service: Burlington Northern and Union Pacific offer rail services for the movement of goods in Oregon and Washington. Currently, passenger rail service is only available on the Washington side.</li> <li>- River access: The Columbia River facilitates barge traffic. This is particularly important for transporting waste and ag products.</li> <li>- Bicycle/Pedestrian/ Transit: Collaboration between transit providers through the Gorge TransLink Alliance. An extensive trail system and reconnection project through the Historic</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Regulatory Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>National Scenic Area regulations</b></li> <li>● <b>Slow land use decisions</b></li> <li>● <b>Overlay of multiple levels of regulations</b> (federal, state, regional and local): With two states, a National Scenic Area overlay and high percentages of federal land ownership, the level of regulations affecting development activities in the region is a significant concern. All five counties in the Mid-Columbia region have zoning ordinances and land use comprehensive plans. Additional state and federal regulatory agencies also affect development activities in the region.</li> </ul>

<p>Columbia River Highway.</p> <p><b>Natural Resources and Climate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Natural resource base:</b> The area is rich in natural resources, supporting timber, agriculture, recreation and tourism as well as lifestyle entrepreneurs attracted to the natural amenities.</li> <li>- <b>Climate:</b> Diverse climates exist within the region’s borders from the warm, arid eastern parts to the cool, damp western parts of the region. Generally, we enjoy a temperate climate with welcome seasonal changes and varying degrees of precipitation. The variation in both topography and climate leads to a diversity in economies, variations in crops and living opportunities.</li> <li>- <b>Air Quality</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Utilities:</b> Continued affordability of power. Availability of other utilities</li> <li>• <b>Broadband:</b> Improving but still inconsistent wireless and broadband service to businesses and to residents. Need for consistent, redundant service throughout the Gorge.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>10,000+ years of indigenous culture:</b> The region has strong culture and history and has been a trading center for millennia. Four tribes are called out in the NSA Act: Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Nez Perce Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation of Oregon, and Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.</li> <li>• <b>Evolving Demographics:</b> The region also has evolving cultures as the demographics of the region continue to change.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Disparities Between States. One Region; Two States</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bi-State economy but can be challenging to cooperate across state lines due to variations in rules, regulations and restrictions between the two states</li> <li>• Funding differences between the states can hinder regional programs (eg the State of Oregon has dedicated funding for the State tourism office while the State of Washington does not have the same level of funding)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Diverse Industry Sectors and Growing Business Sectors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Diverse Industries:</b> Diverse foundational businesses alleviate peaks and troughs of economic cycles. These include historical strong businesses in the ag and forestry sectors as well as new industry clusters.</li> <li>• <b>Growing Sectors:</b> Unmanned systems, fermentation industries, manufacturing, tech, outdoor gear/wearables, healthcare and value added agriculture are all growing industry sectors in which our region has a competitive advantage.</li> <li>• <b>Strong Agricultural Base:</b> Agriculture forms a base for our economy and is a stabilizing force to moderate economic swings. The diversity of our agricultural products is a strength: cherries, wheat, grapes, apples, pears, cattle, sheep, and a variety of other products are grown or produced in the region. There is</li> </ul>	<p><b>Aging Population</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting the needs of an Aging population which may require more services to support</li> <li>• Increase in number of retirees</li> </ul>

<p>both commercial-scale agriculture and small farms.</p>	
<p><b>Human Capital and Entrepreneurial Spirit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Human capital:</b> skilled, hardworking and motivated people with a strong Entrepreneurial spirit.</li> <li>• <b>Available talent with diverse skill sets:</b> From entrepreneurs to retirees; from light manufacturing skills to high tech.</li> <li>• <b>Educational attainment:</b> The region has a strong showing in high school and AA degrees in comparison with the states of Oregon and Washington</li> <li>• <b>Unique educational programs supported by regional businesses:</b> Educational programs are responsive to industry needs, beginning at the K-12 level and businesses financially support these programs including robotics programs, STEM training, vocational programs and others.</li> <li>• <b>Access to education:</b> Higher education opportunities are currently available in the region through Columbia Gorge Community College and OSU and WSU Extension.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lack of Business Expansion Space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanding and new businesses need support with the development of more available and attractive commercial and industrial spaces.</li> <li>• Lack of shovel ready land availability in some parts of the region</li> </ul>
<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Communication:</b> Telecommunication and broadband capacity in parts of the region that supports a high level of high tech and self-employed workers.</li> <li>• <b>Infrastructure:</b> Infrastructure has been developed throughout the region to support industrial and commercial development. It is also a challenge, though, in maintaining and expanding our region’s infrastructure. Shovel-Ready Commercial Property is available in parts of the region.</li> <li>• <b>Power:</b> Abundant clean energy sources are available near the Columbia River. Affordable electricity is a benefit to business development. The hydro system and dams along the Columbia River are located within the region, with recent upgrades to transmission facilities.</li> <li>• <b>Water:</b> Both a strength and a threat. Fresh water sources support healthy populations, business development and agriculture throughout the region.</li> </ul>	<p><b>High Poverty Rate and Economic Disparities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High poverty rate</li> <li>• Disparities between communities</li> <li>• Inequities- limited engagement with Native Americans; inequity in serving the Latino population</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to healthcare</li> </ul>	<p><b>Additional Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many recreation facilities reaching or exceeding capacity in</li> </ul>

- Access to local foods
- Low crime rates
- Business Climate
  - Available capital
  - Enterprise Zones (Oregon)
  - HUBZones (varied sections of the region)
  - No income tax (WA)
  - Business friendly

high visibility locations, especially along the Columbia River corridor

- Lack of coordination between some agencies and jurisdictions. Lack of unified leadership and constrained leadership capacity
- Scale of Economy
- Emergency Preparedness
- Scattered marketing from many sources dilutes messages
- Lack of population diversity

<b>Opportunities</b> <i>Chances or occasions for regional improvement or progress</i>	<b>Threats</b> <i>Chances/opportunities for negative impacts on our region/regional decline</i>
<b>Value-Added Ag/Food/Beverage/Ag tech</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sector coordination</li> <li>● New food processing and beverage manufacturers</li> <li>● New specialty crops</li> <li>● Ag tech and natural resources research. New program at local community college matching industry needs</li> </ul>	<b>Housing Affordability/Availability Impacts Employers</b> Access to housing, particularly workforce housing, is an issue for the entire Mid-Columbia region. Without affordable options, individuals must commute or find work elsewhere and businesses may elect not to move into or expand in our communities.
<b>Expanding Tourism</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enhance less traveled areas</li> <li>● Culinary/Ag tourism</li> <li>● Recreation tourism year-round</li> <li>● Authentic experience</li> <li>● Brand: Market as world class destination</li> </ul>	<b>Education Quality/ Opportunity and Workforce</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Educational System Challenges: funding, quality and access.</li> <li>● Skilling Up and Meeting Employer's Needs</li> <li>● Lack of excellent educational consistently throughout the region</li> </ul>
<b>Synergy Across State Lines</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coordination between business sectors and integrated with public organizations</li> <li>● Enhance and Support Existing Industry Associations</li> <li>● Support Effective Regional teams working together</li> </ul>	<b>Regulations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National Scenic Area. Restrictions imposed can impact economic development. Need for urban growth area determination</li> <li>● Length of time for permitting decisions may stall/prevent business development</li> <li>● Federal Agency impact and natural resource management (particularly in relation to the lack for forest management)</li> </ul>
<b>High Tech; Unmanned Systems Applications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continued increase in high tech businesses in the region</li> <li>● Support for Unmanned systems R/D and applications in ag, natural resource, scientific and other areas</li> <li>● Further development of the supply chain</li> <li>● Unmanned systems commercialization</li> <li>● Connecting education and training programs</li> </ul>	<b>Impacts of Population Growth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Limited infrastructure capacity to accommodate growth</li> <li>● Need for Further Planning: Many of our comprehensive plans and regional strategies need to be updated to reflect increased population growth</li> <li>● Overuse of Resources</li> <li>● Degradation of Popular Destination Areas</li> </ul>
<b>Leverage Natural Assets for further Business Growth</b> <b>Further Expansion of Key Industry Clusters</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increasing emphasis on natural resource based economy and opportunities associated with the Columbia River, including</li> </ul>	<b>Natural Disasters/Hazards</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wildfire, ice storms and other natural disasters</li> <li>● Aging emergency response systems in some communities</li> </ul>

<p>fisheries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewable energy assets include utilization of solar, wind, geothermal and biomass opportunities throughout the region. Pumped Storage. Opportunities for branding, strategies and business development.</li> <li>• Expanding partnerships in healthcare</li> <li>• Wood products and forestry products innovation</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Connectivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market and use the increased high speed fiber optics in region. Klickitat County 911 towers, new broadband in Wasco/Sherman counties, middle mile infrastructure regionally.</li> <li>• Use Gorge Broadband Consortium to advocate for further investment in broadband</li> <li>• Growth in telecommuting</li> </ul>	<p><b>Water Access, Regulations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drought and need for water conservation strategy focus</li> <li>• Limited Water Access</li> <li>• Groundwater and Aquifer concerns</li> <li>• Threat of increased regulations that would limit opportunities for continued vitality of communities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Focus on Local</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further development of the locally based economy</li> <li>• Farmers markets, Gorge Grown programs, Grown in the Gorge</li> <li>• Buy local education and programs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Infrastructure Limitations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Transportation Infrastructure for Business Development:</b> While market access and the mix of transportation modes available for the movement of goods and people are a distinct asset to the region, maintaining that infrastructure, and expanding it to meet growing industry and population needs, is a challenge.</li> <li>• <b>Design:</b> Design of certain infrastructure does not meet regional needs (eg narrow bridges and low tunnels).</li> <li>• <b>Funding/Environment:</b> Constrained financial resources and the rural/dispersed nature of the region contribute to a challenging environment to fund expanded services.</li> <li>• <b>Overuse of infrastructure</b> limits its productivity and livability</li> <li>• <b>Water, Wastewater</b></li> <li>• <b>Limited existing buildings and industrial land</b> can contribute to the loss of business opportunities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Address Public Transportation Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilization of new technologies</li> <li>• Expanding Fixed routes</li> <li>• Expanding Regional Transit Connections</li> <li>• Multi-faceted transportation options include Biking/trail systems.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Industry Diversification</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of any major employer</li> <li>• Concentration risk. Particularly in manufacturing, the region has a high concentration with a single manufacturer. Any changes with the manufacturer would have a disproportionate impact on the regional economy.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Business/Talent Attraction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leverage Gorge brand to attract aligned businesses such as outdoor/sports apparel, etc</li> <li>● Potential to attract business talent due to lifestyle and access to natural resources</li> <li>● In-migration of retirees and young businesses/employees</li> </ul>	<p><b>Funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Declining state and federal funding reduces the resources available to maintain existing infrastructure/projects and expand them to meet the needs of our growing region.</li> <li>● Impacts of PERS (Oregon) and court decisions (Washington) on funding</li> <li>● Dissemination of state/federal funds without adequate conversation regarding regional/local priorities</li> <li>● Shrinking local government budgets reduces the ability to invest in local economic development priorities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Streamlining processes</li> <li>● Housing innovation. We have the opportunity to become leaders in attainable housing through our innovations in funding programs as well as the fact that we are at the forefront of policy development.</li> <li>● Healthcare</li> <li>● Leverage presence of a nearby National Laboratory for R/D</li> <li>● Enhance infrastructure</li> <li>● Education partnerships</li> <li>● Short sea shipping</li> <li>● Community land trusts or land banking</li> <li>● National environmental leaders</li> </ul>	<p><b>Additional Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Poverty; wage stagnation</li> <li>● Commodity prices</li> <li>● Retaining local property ownership: outside ownership and increase in non-local property owners</li> <li>● Aging population</li> <li>● Drugs/legalized marijuana</li> <li>● Railroad safety</li> <li>● Pollution</li> <li>● Overuse of natural resources and “loving the Gorge to death”</li> <li>● Transition of economy to rich, vacation play zones</li> <li>● Need for more incentives/packages to entice business development</li> <li>● Youth out-migration</li> </ul>

## Klickitat County 2018 Priority Projects

<i><b>PRIORITY</b></i>	<i><b>SPONSOR</b></i>	<i><b>PROJECT</b></i>	<i><b>TOTAL COST</b></i>
1	City of White Salmon	<p><b><u>Slow Sand Filter Water System</u></b>            Currently, the White Salmon water district serves approximately 30% of county residents. A new water system would add capacity to accommodate future growth.</p>	\$8.5 M
2	Port of Klickitat	<p><b><u>Bingen Point Projects:</u></b>  <b>Task 1: Bingen Point Flex Building</b>            Port of Klickitat seeks \$1.4 million of \$2.9 million needed to construct a 15,000 sq. ft. flex building at Bingen Point.  <b>Task 2: BPBP Property Acquisition/Improvement</b>            Acquire seven acres on Bingen Point and bring to shovel ready condition.  <b>Task 3: Maple Street Project</b>            Construct street and public utility improvements for targeted properties at Bingen Point Business Park.</p>	\$2.9M
3	Port of Klickitat	<p><b><u>DIP Improvement Projects</u></b>  <b>Task 1: Cornerstone Building</b>            Port of Klickitat seeks \$1.8 million of \$3.3 million needed to construct an approximate 20,000 sq. ft. light industrial building at the Port's Dallesport location.  <b>Task 2: DIP Dow Road Realignment</b>            Move Dow Road North, and bring 13 acres (Lot 35) to shovel ready condition.</p>	\$3.3M
4	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport	<p><b><u>Airport Projects</u></b>  <b>Task 1: Rehabilitation of Runway 7/25</b>            Airport is seeking funding to rehabilitate runway 7/25 in order to accommodate increased traffic.  <b>Task 2: Runway Lengthening Project</b>            Airport seeks \$4 million to lengthen existing primary runway to 5,500 ft. to accommodate increased volume of larger aircraft.</p>	\$5M
5	City of Goldendale	<p><b><u>Municipal Airport Improvements</u></b>            The Municipal Airport is in need of a card-lock fueling system to improve the usability of the airport.</p>	\$250,000

<b><i>PRIORITY</i></b>	<b><i>SPONSOR</i></b>	<b><i>PROJECT</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL COST</i></b>
6	Klickitat County	<b><u>John Day Pool Pump Storage Project</u></b> Resolve brownfield and environmental study issues.	\$1.1 M
7	Klickitat County	<b><u>Broadband</u></b> Broadband access is critical to business development in Klickitat County, however, that access is not available in many rural parts of the County. Significant barriers such as dispersed population and challenging terrain, make this infrastructure investment costly. Working with communities, local ISP's, County staff, and MCEDD, Klickitat County seeks to identify and implement opportunities to improve access in communities throughout the County.	TBD
8	Fire District #6	<b><u>Fire District #6</u></b> The Dallesport Fire Dept. is seeking help in locating funds for a new fire station to be located at the Columbia Gorge Regional Airport.	\$2 M
9	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport	<b><u>Airport Terminal Building Design</u></b> Klickitat County is seeking funding for design/engineering as the first phase in development of a modern facility to replace the aging Columbia Gorge Regional Airport Terminal Building in Dallesport, WA.	\$150,000

## Skamania County 2018 Priority Projects

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
1	Port of Skamania	<p><b><u>Stevenson Shoreline</u></b>            This project will construct a new public access beach to the Columbia River in the City of Stevenson, WA. The design and engineering for this project is complete, all permits have been received, and most of the in-water work is complete as of March 2018. Upland work has also been started.</p>	\$708K-1M
2	City of Stevenson	<p><b><u>Stevenson Wastewater System – Public Infrastructure</u></b>            The City of Stevenson is in need of a wastewater treatment plant upgrade. The plant is currently receiving more waste than permitted and is under an administrative order to mitigate the issue, which includes infrastructure improvements.</p> <p>This portion of the project is to bring the treatment plant into compliance and to allow for future growth. It also includes upgrades to the collection system to reduce inflow and infiltration and better manage the increased capacity.</p>	\$17.3M
3	City of Stevenson	<p><b><u>Stevenson Wastewater System – Private Infrastructure</u></b>            The City is in need of a wastewater treatment plant upgrade. The plant is currently receiving more waste than permitted and is under an administrative order to mitigate the issue, which includes infrastructure improvements.</p> <p>This portion of the project is for pretreatment of sewer for high-load commercial users, such as breweries, cider producers, distilleries and other industrial beverage producers.</p>	\$711K
4	City of Stevenson	<p><b><u>Stevenson - Russell Avenue Upgrades</u></b>            The project involves rehabilitation of water, sewer, and storm water lines. It also includes undergrounding of power and communication lines, sidewalk rehabilitation, paving the entire street, new street lights and landscaping.</p>	\$1 - 3.15M
5	Skamania PUD	<p><b><u>Stabler Feeder Upgrade</u></b>            The Stabler Feeder Upgrade Project will upgrade 7.9 miles of electrical line to improve electrical service to the Wind River Business Park that is currently undergoing redevelopment. As of the fall 2017, the design was complete and the engineer was developing estimates.</p>	\$1.55M

6	Port of Skamania	<p><b><u>Cascades Business Park Grading &amp; Enhancements</u></b></p> <p>Will complete phase 3 of site infrastructure to provide the largest contiguous "shovel ready" industrial development site in Skamania County 32-acre+/- . The Port and City of North Bonneville have completed zoning, master plans and preliminary design for the site. This project is almost complete. As of December 2016, work still to be completed is to (1) secure an easement from the Corps of Engineers to complete the road connecting Coyote Ridge Road to Fort Cascades Drive and (2) install street lights.</p>	\$375,000 (\$250,000 grant; \$125,000 Port)
7	City of North Bonneville	<p><b><u>City of North Bonneville Lift Station Replacement</u></b></p> <p>The City's current lift stations experienced issues in the fall of 2017. The City needs to raise rates to be more competitive before seeking grant funding. The city will do a income study and water and sewer rate study in 2018. The project is in the feasibility stage.</p>	\$700K
8	Stevenson Downtown Association	<p><b><u>Stevenson Park Plaza</u></b></p> <p>Develop town plaza in the existing courthouse lawn. Three concept designs have been developed and are currently available for community feedback.</p>	\$5M (Burlington Northern SF has contributed \$50K)
9	City of Stevenson	<p><b><u>Fire Station</u></b></p> <p>New Fire Station for City of Stevenson/Fire District 2 (shared facility). Project is in the feasibility stage.</p>	\$2-4M
10	Skamania County PUD	<p><b><u>North Bonneville Substation &amp; Feeder Replacement</u></b></p> <p>The PUD is looking to replace an aging substation in the City of North Bonneville, upgrade existing feeder lines, and add a new feeder to serve the Port industrial land south of SR 14. Improvements will increase capacity throughout the City to allow for more growth, improve existing voltage issues, and significantly increase reliability to the area by improving the tie with adjacent substations. The project is in the feasibility stage and the PUD will be seeking funds to complete design and construction.</p>	\$4-6M

## Hood River County 2018 Priority Projects

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
1	Hood River County	<p><b><u>Hood River County Workforce Housing</u></b>  Collaboratively work together with partners, including Regional Solutions, Mid-Columbia Housing Authority and others, to engage in initiatives to develop critically needed affordable and workforce housing in the county. Opportunities include, but are not limited to: updating respective workforce housing plans and strategies or additional feasibility studies; exploring opportunities to relocate City and County maintenance facilities; conducting site suitability analysis and planning to relocate existing ODOT facility on Cascade St. to a city owned parcel; and evaluating the construction excise taxes collected to date.</p>	---
2	Port of Cascade Locks	<p><b><u>Bridge of the Gods Maintenance</u></b>  Complete 15 year package for maintenance and preservation of the Bridge. Work to add additional bicycle/pedestrian capacity. Total cost: \$600,000 for annual maintenance, \$25 million for pedestrian/bicycle crossing structure. Port of Cascade Locks is working to submit a Federal Lands Access Program grant application.</p>	\$57M
3	City of Cascade Locks	<p><b><u>WaNaPa Reconstruction</u></b>  Add ADA ramps and crosswalks to increase pedestrian safety and accessibility as well as reconstruction of street surface. Funds received from the state transportation package.</p>	\$750K
4	City of Hood River	<p><b><u>Cascade and Mount Adams Intersection</u></b>  Signalization or roundabout at Cascade and Mt Adams. The City is requesting assessment and evaluation of the best option in order to proceed to construction.</p>	\$4M (roundabout); \$400K (signal)
5	Hood River County	<p><b><u>Parkdale &amp; Odell Treatment of Biosolids/Sludge</u></b>  Create additional storage to digest sludge composition-they are interested in exploring an MBR treatment solution. This project is in the feasibility phase, and is looking for technical assistance to determine the best approach.</p>	
6	Port of Hood River	<p><b><u>Confluence Business Park Infrastructure</u></b>  This is the largest remaining area of light industrial zoning in the City of Hood River and is located directly on the waterfront. Construction of infrastructure - specifically, water, sewer, and public streets - is necessary to prepare the site for industrial development.</p>	\$5.535M
7	City of Hood River	<p><b><u>I-84 Exit 62/Cascade Ave Improvements</u></b>  Construct second westbound lane from Mt. Adams, to I-84 eastbound terminal.</p>	\$1.306M

8	City of Hood River	<p><b><u>I-84 Exit 63 Interchange Improvements</u></b>  Miscellaneous improvements to facilitate access to growing light industrial area at the waterfront and downtown Hood River. 2nd street improvements plus westbound and eastbound ramp improvements</p>	\$10.043M
9	Port of Cascade Locks	<p><b><u>Marine Park Overcrossing</u></b>  Complete the overcrossing to provide bike and pedestrian access via a bridge over UP railroad tracks.</p>	\$4M
10	Port of Hood River	<p><b><u>Hood River Interstate Bridge</u></b>  A new, replacement bridge is needed to improve and ensure multi-modal transportation of people and goods across the Columbia River between the communities of Bingen and White Salmon in Washington, and Hood River in Oregon. The Port of Hood River is seeking funding to complete the final engineering for a replacement bridge. The Port received \$5 million in the state transportation package to conduct its EIS. This will be a process that occurs over several years.</p>	\$250M

## Sherman County-2018 Priority Projects

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
1	<b>Biggs Service District Sherman County</b>	<b><u>Water System</u></b> Design and construction for a municipal water system in Biggs. Currently several wells serve the service district. Work to include the upgrade of two existing wells, drill a new well, new reservoir, pump station, and distribution system. Future development is limited due to the lack of a water system. Fire protection is limited.	\$2,112,000
2	<b>South Sherman Fire and Rescue</b>	<b><u>New Fire Hall</u></b> The current fire hall shares a space with the Grass Valley City Hall. The fire department has long outgrown this space to store and maintain equipment and secure patient files and drugs for the EMS which is required for HPPA and state standards. The fire department also needs space for training the volunteers. An income survey for Block Grant funding determined that the district does not qualify for the grant.	\$1.3 million
3	<b>Sherman County</b>	<b><u>Work Force Housing</u></b> The housing stock in Sherman County is lacking the quantity and quality necessary for new employees to find a place to live in the County. Sherman County has created incentives to encourage the construction of new rental housing (\$10,000 grant per unit) and the rehabilitation of existing housing (up to \$20,000 per house), as well as offering a housing construction loan. The County continues to look for creative ideas that would solve the housing issues.	\$500,000
4	<b>Sherman County Fair board</b>	<b><u>Event Center</u></b> The fair board is researching the concept of a multipurpose event center to replace several aging barns and current show arena. The building could be utilized year round to host events at the county fairgrounds. Current barns need substantial repairs to them. Rather than putting money towards aging structures that have outlived their usefulness, the board feels it is time to upgrade the facilities for future long range planning and make the fairgrounds more viable.	\$2 million
5	<b>Sherman County</b>	<b><u>Last Mile Broadband</u></b> Sherman County and its four cities are interested in brining last-mile broadband to the homes and businesses in Biggs Junction, Grass Valley, Rufus and Wasco. A collective RFP has been released to determine the feasibility of this joint project and the public funds possibly needed to subsidize private investment to spur completion. This project would connect with public fiber projects the County has already completed.	\$600,000

6	<b>Sherman County</b>	<b><u>911 Call Center</u></b> Sherman County is exploring the need of establishing a 911 call center in Rufus. This would include the Counties of Sherman, Klickitat, Wasco and possibly Grant County. The center would provide around 90 jobs.	\$500,000
7	<b>City of Rufus</b>	<b><u>Well #1 Rehab</u></b> Plans to rebuild the well house with updated wiring and add a metered chlorine system that will allow the use of this Well during peak season. Primary Well will not keep up with demand during the summer months.	\$150,000
8	<b>City of Wasco</b>	<b><u>Wasco school Events Center Paint Project</u></b> The City of Wasco and the Wasco School Events Center board would like to update the school by painting the exterior of the building. The roof was recently redone and they can take the durable roofing down the side of the building a few feet to preserve the exterior. However the rest of the building as well as the outbuildings will need to be painted to protect the integrity of the structures.	To be determined
9	<b>Kent Service District</b>	<b><u>Kent Well</u></b> The current system does not allow for any future development. A 2016 study to find a new water source within the district did not locate one. The next step is an additional study to determine the feasibility of piping water from a well outside of the district.	To be determined
10	<b>City of Moro</b>	<b><u>Moro Infrastructure Projects</u></b> The City of Moro has a number of projects planned to improve its water system and the look of the town. Water system elements include telemetry upgrade and fencing around the water tower. Street projects include resurfacing and repairs of all the streets and also a “dead” area that will be left in front of the fire department from their paving upgrade. Other improvements include sidewalk repairs, recycling center improvements and a new splash pad in the park.	\$470,000

## Wasco County 2018 Priority Projects

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>Deschutes Rim Clinic Foundation</b>	<p><b><u>Medical Clinic Expansion</u></b> Deschutes Rim Clinic Foundation has completed their feasibility study, and is moving forward with fundraising efforts to expand the health clinic in Maupin. The Clinic received \$1 million in funding from the Oregon State Legislature for the project and substantial local donations.</p>	\$2M
<b>2</b>	<b>Wasco County SWCD</b>	<p><b><u>Mosier Well Repair</u></b> This project seeks to repair the co-mingling wells in the area around Mosier. Study of the problem continues as local property owners allow SWCD to scope wells to identify issues. Additionally, in partnership with one of the two largest water users, the SWCD supported boring a new deep well to replace old, comingling well. However, this project came in significantly over budget and the SWCD has used most of the resources they received to address the two largest users for this first attempt.</p>	\$2.5M
<b>3</b>	<b>City of Mosier/ Mosier Fire District</b>	<p><b><u>Joint Fire Hall/City Hall Development</u></b> The City of Mosier and the Mosier Fire District received \$500,000 for facility as well as the land the site through their negotiations with Union Pacific Railroad. They were also successful in receiving \$500,000 from the Oregon Legislature for the project. This will provide a strong foundation for continued resource development moving forward.</p>	\$5.5 to 7M
<b>4</b>	<b>City of Maupin/Q-Life Network</b>	<p><b><u>Maupin Fiber Network</u></b> The Maupin Fiber Project will bring gigabit speed internet access to homes and residents throughout the City of Maupin in addition to supporting improved wireless access throughout South Wasco County. With approximately \$900,000 invested or committed into bringing connectivity to Maupin, another \$500,000 is still needed to build out to residents, businesses, and community institutions.</p>	\$500K
<b>5</b>	<b>City of The Dalles</b>	<p><b><u>Dog River Pipeline Upgrade</u></b> City of The Dalles staff applied for grant funding from Oregon Water Resource Department to help fund the pipeline. The EDC was able to provide a letter of support for the project as well as some support during application development. However, they were not awarded funding by OWRD. The City has continued to move through the permitting process for the project and is still seeking funding.</p>	\$8M
<b>6</b>	<b>Columbia Gorge Community College</b>	<p><b><u>Campus Housing and Workforce Training Skill Center</u></b> Reginal employers need skilled workers in wide-ranging fields. CGCC will respond through a workforce pipeline program emphasizing short-duration career-tech training with focus on high school to post-secondary transition and the incumbent workforce. Instructional programming will be informed by data, guided by industry, and physically supported by a Skill Center on The Dalles Campus with on-site workforce housing.</p>	\$14.6M

7	<b>City of Maupin/ South Wasco County Library</b>	<b><u>South Wasco County Library and Civic Center</u></b> The City Council in Maupin made an official decision to pursue the joint building and have purchased a site located next to the park in their downtown core for the development. They made a legislative request in the 2018 Short Session and are continuing to work toward identifying resources to complete this project.	\$1.7M
8	<b>Port of The Dalles</b>	<b><u>Gorge Works Regional Internship Program</u></b> Gorge Works is a regional paid internship program in its pilot phase, supported by regional employers seeking skilled workforce, and regional economic development agencies. The Port is seeking \$25,000 to help fund added staffing capacity and marketing initiatives to fully establish the program. They are hoping to prove the value of this program to employers and job seekers over a two-year pilot period.	\$45K
9	<b>City of Mosier</b>	<b><u>Well #5 Development and Eastside System Upgrades</u></b> The City of Mosier participated in a one-stop meeting with the various water system funding agencies to identify a path for financing this project as well as their Eastside Distribution System Improvements. They are currently working toward an application to USDA RD for funding of these two projects.	\$800K
10	<b>Dufur School District</b>	<b><u>Solar4Schools Project</u></b> Dufur School District seeks to participate with Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) in implementing the solar4schools program at the main campus in Dufur, OR. Total project cost is estimated to be \$65,000 with \$15,000 in matching funds required. This project will include the installation of a 5 kW Solar PV system at the main campus in Dufur, OR. BEF will provide staff and assistance to provide education, project monitoring, and support to school administration for 10 years. This will provide an opportunity for students in Dufur to gain hands on experience with green technology and renewable energy.	\$65K

## Appendix E: Participant List

Agriculture Business  
Association of Oregon Counties  
Azure Standard  
Bicoastal Media  
Business Oregon

Community Enrichment for Klickitat County  
Cherry Orchardist  
City of Bingen  
City of Cascade Locks  
City of Hood River  
City of Maupin  
City of Moro  
City of Mosier  
City of Rufus  
City of Stevenson  
City of The Dalles  
City of Wasco  
City of White Salmon  
Columbia Cascade Housing  
Columbia Gorge Community College  
Columbia Gorge Regional Airport  
Columbia River Gorge Commission  
Columbia River Insurance

Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission  
Columbia State Bank  
Economic Development Administration  
Economic Development Services  
Financial Planning Business  
Insurance Business  
Financial Services Business  
Fresh Starts  
Goldendale Chamber of Commerce  
Goldendale Performing Arts Complex  
Gorge Grown Food Network  
Gorge Nonprofits  
Gorge Owned

Gorge Tech Alliance  
Gorge Tourism Alliance  
Gorge Towns To Trail  
Gorge TransLink Alliance  
High Tech Manufacturer  
Historic Columbia River Highway  
Hood River County Planning  
Hood River County Chamber of Commerce  
Hood River County Commission  
Hood River News  
Hood River School District  
Impact Washington  
Independent Contractor  
Key Bank  
Klickitat County Economic Development  
Klickitat County Commission  
Legislative Specialist/Consultant  
MCEDD  
Mid-Columbia Council of Governments  
Mid-Columbia Health Foundation  
Mid-Columbia Housing Authority  
Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce  
NBI  
Next Door, Inc  
North Central Regional Solutions  
North Wasco County School District 21  
Office of Congressman Walden  
Office of Representative Herrera-Beutler  
Office of Senator Cantwell  
Office of Senator Murray  
Orchardist  
Oregon Employment Department  
Oregon Investment Board  
Oregon State University  
OSU Extension  
People For People  
Port of Cascade Locks  
Port of Hood River

Port of Klickitat  
Port of Skamania  
Port of The Dalles  
Private Citizen  
Real Estate  
Restaurant Business  
Retail Car Sales  
Rural Development Initiatives  
Sanitation Services Business  
Saving Skamania County  
Sherman County Court  
Sherman County Health District  
Skamania County Chamber of Commerce  
Skamania County Commission  
Skamania County Economic Development  
Commission  
Skamania Pioneer  
Sky Blue  
Skyline Hospital  
Small Business Development Center  
South Central Workforce Council  
South Wasco Alliance  
Southwest Washington RTC  
State of Oregon

State Representative  
SWCD Klickitat  
  
The Dalles Chamber of Commerce  
The Dalles Mainstreet  
The Link  
Travel Oregon  
Tri-County Hazardous Waste  
Unmanned Aircraft System Business  
US Bank  
US Forest Service  
  
USDA Rural Development  
Utilities representative  
Wasco County Planning  
Wasco County Commission  
Wasco County Economic Development  
Commission  
Washington State Employment  
Washington State University  
White Salmon Enterprise  
Worksource Oregon



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