



Mid-Columbia Economic Development District

Executive Committee Meeting
Wednesday, September 7, 2022
4:00 P.M.

Via Zoom Only (Information on Reverse)

AGENDA

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Estimated Time</u>	<u>Item</u>
Call to Order, Introductions		
Executive Committee Minutes <i>August 2022</i>	2 minutes	Approval
Policy Updates <i>Background Check</i>	5 minutes	Recommendation
Private Sector Appointments	5 minutes	Recommendation
FY22 Annual Report	5 minutes	Recommendation
Gilliam County Draft Proposal	15 minutes	Recommendation
Staff Reports <i>Deputy Director, Executive Director</i>	10 minutes	Information
Other New Business; Committee Members Updates		
Adjourn <u>for Four Rivers Community Corporation Meeting</u>		

The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. If you have a disability that requires any special materials, services, or assistance, please contact the MCEDD office at 541-296-2266 (TTY 711) at least 48 hours before the meeting.

MCEDD is an equal opportunity lender, employer and provider.

MCEDD is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: MCEDD Executive Committee Meeting

Time: September 4, 2022 04:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82542485496?pwd=NEpYT0Y1bFh3aFZOVGg4MVI0WWZlZz09>

Meeting ID: 825 4248 5496

Passcode: 487882

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,82542485496# US (Tacoma)

+13462487799,,82542485496# US (Houston)

Dial by your location

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Meeting ID: 825 4248 5496

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82542485496?pwd=NEpYT0Y1bFh3aFZOVGg4MVI0WWZlZz09>

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**MID-COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2022
4:00 PM
ZOOM TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE

Attending: Bob Hamlin, Scott Clements, Eric Proffitt, Ken Bailey, Steve Kramer, Leana Kinley, Les Perkins

Staff: Jessica Metta (Executive Director), Lauren Hernandez (Office Administrator) Dana Woods (Finance Manager)

CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS

Bob Hamlin called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. A round of introductions took place.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Steve Kramer motioned to approve the May 2022 Executive Committee meeting minutes as presented. Eric Proffitt seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

FINANCE REPORT

Dana Woods presented the Financials for June 2022. She noted the numbers are preliminary and that as the end-of-Fiscal-Year process happens in preparation for the audit, numbers will change slightly.

Total Cash balance as of 6/30/2022 is \$8,022,957.35. Accounts Receivable balance is \$672,284.32. MCEDD Loans Receivable balance is currently \$1,922,678.58. Three new loans were funded through IRP, EDA CARES, and USDA NSA funds. A fourth loan was approved but the client declined to move forward. There was one payoff in June in the OIB fund. Accounts Receivable seems higher than normal due to quarterly billing. MCEDD was waiting to receive reimbursement from the USDA for a new loan funded, the remaining EDA CARES Planning Grant funds, and reimbursements from ODOT and WSDOT. Since June, those funds have been received. Prepaid Expenses will be adjusted to show on the FY23 Profit/Loss reports. Net Position as of 6/30/22 is \$13,208,675.39.

Steve Kramer left the meeting at 4:07.

On the Budget vs. Actual report, year-to-date revenue is at 58%. YTD expenses are at 55%. There will continue to be clean-up happening in preparation for the audit. Vehicle expenses are over budget for the year as fuel costs are higher than expected. Loan interest is down compared to the budget due to early payoffs. Dana noted she is working on the upcoming FY23 audit and that the transition to Caselle is picking up speed.

Les Perkins motioned to accept the financial report as given. Ken Bailey seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

POLICY UPDATES

Jessica Metta explained MCEDD's Website Privacy Policy and Title VI Policy were both out of date. The Title VI policy also entails updating the Limited English Proficiency Plan. Staff updated the website policy using partner entities as an example, and Jessica confirmed some items with MCEDD's web developer to make sure they were accurate. Jessica noted the FTA requires the Title VI policy, as it outlines MCEDD's process for investigating Title VI complaints related to discrimination.

Ken Bailey motioned to recommend to the board to approve the updates as presented by staff. Les Perkins seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

BROWNFIELD GRANT PROJECT OPPORTUNITY

Jessica Metta explained Wasco County partnered with the City of The Dalles and the Wasco County Economic Development Commission on a Brownfield grant for the City and received \$600,000. The City cannot reapply and asked if MCEDD could apply for funds. Wasco County was agreeable with the application being a regional application. Jessica explained the funds will cover the planning for Brownfield cleanup but not the cleanup itself. If MCEDD is willing to submit application, staff will reach out to partner counties to see if there is any interest in being included. Hood River County partners have already expressed interest.

Discussion: Bob Hamlin noted Skamania County went through one Brownfield grant cycle, which was very productive. It allowed the County to sell some property it otherwise wouldn't have sold as easily. Bob stated that near the end of the grant, the County had to actively look for additional projects, and some landowners were hesitant. Leana Kinley stated the funding was used to fund initial assessment along Columbia Avenue. That information was leveraged to apply for a grant for a feasibility study to relocate the road, which will hopefully lead to additional funding for that project. Bob stated it is worth applying for the funds, but he is unsure if Skamania County will have additional projects. Jessica stated the consultant in The Dalles did a good job of creating interest. Ken Bailey stated the grant will help facilitate economic activities, which is MCEDD's purpose.

Scott Clements motioned to approve moving forward with the regional Brownfield grant application. Leana Kinley seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

NEW STAFF POSITION PROPOSAL

Jessica outlined the changes in MCEDD's transportation staffing that led to the proposal of a new staff position. Former Deputy Director of Transportation, Kate Drennan, resigned. She recommended instead of filling her position, shifting some duties to the Transportation Operations Manager and creating a new position, Field Supervisor. Kathy Fitzpatrick, Mobility Manager, will be promoted to Senior Project Manager and will take on regional pieces. Jessica asked the Executive Committee to approve the salary for the Senior Project Manager, as it was not included in the budget or salary schedule. Some LINK pieces like grant writing and reporting, relationship building opportunities would move to Jesus Mendoza, current Transportation Operations Manager. The day-to-day managing of operations will move to the new position, Field Supervisor. Jessica noted she worked with Kate and Jesus on a job description as well as looked at CAT's description for the same position. Jessica explained that drivers and dispatch would still report to Jesus.

Discussion: Eric Proffitt asked if it will be confusing for employees to have a supervisor but then to report to someone else. It may be confusing not to have a direct chain of command to the supervisor. Jessica replied she felt the supervisory responsibility should stay with Jesus. The Field Supervisor would partner with Jesus on developing staff evaluations. Ken Bailey asked if Jesus has experience with grant writing and if he's comfortable doing it. Jessica replied he took a recently offered grant writing course and that she expects to work closely with him on grant applications. Jessica asked for feedback on the Field Supervisor salary range. Eric Proffitt recommended making step one a step above the last step of the Lead Driver position to ensure there is clear separation. Ken noted the budget should stay on track because although the Field Supervisor position is being added, losing the higher-level position of Deputy Director of Transportation will even things out.

Leana Kinley motioned to recommend changing staffing with the Senior Project Manager salary range presented and adding the new Field Supervisor position, but starting the salary at a step higher than presented by staff. Les Perkins seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

SDIS BEST PRACTICES OPTIONS

Jessica Metta reported SDAO offers the SDIS Best Practices Program to assist special districts with implementing best practices to mitigate risk in areas of high exposure. MCEDD can receive credits on its property/casualty insurance contributions and can take up to 10% off MCEDD's general liability, auto liability, and property insurance contributions for the 2023 policy year. Every year they update the tasks necessary to receive the 10% discount. This year's focus is on the Board and will require Board member engagement to achieve the full 10% discount (a value of \$1,739 on our 2022 policy). The deadline to complete all the below tasks is Nov. 4, 2022. Jessica asked if the Board would like to get the final 2% discount by doing a Board Practices Assessment or asking all Board members to take a webinar.

Discussion: Les Perkins asked if Board members had to attend the Assessment all at once or if they could attend individually. Ken Bailey replied the Assessment has to be held as a board. He noted he recommends the Assessment, as it gives a chance to review practices and to have a discussion with an expert. Jessica stated she will send out a poll to see when most members are available to attend. It was noted that even if members have attended the Assessment before, it is valuable to attend again as the training is geared towards the specific board attending. Ken stated he thinks the training will be more valuable if held in person instead of over Zoom.

STAFF REPORTS; ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

Jessica Metta, Executive Director, reported:

- During the fire in Maupin, she received a phone call asking if The LINK could help evacuate the assisted living center in Maupin if evacuation became mandatory. Jessica called Jesus Mendoza, Transportation Operations Manager, who contacted four drivers who volunteered to help and remained on call until the evacuation level was lowered. Jessica noted she is proud of The LINK for supporting the community.
- In partnership with Regional Solutions, we hosted a meeting of planners or other governmental staff on the topic of the housing crisis with about 28 attendees on zoom on

July 14. We opened with a housing developer in The Dalles sharing his experience and challenges, and then had a roundtable to share what different communities are doing to address the problem. There was interest in a quarterly discussion with a topic focus.

- We held a meeting of the Expansion Task Force Committee on July 26 to review a draft proposal. The group encouraged outreach to a number of partners (Oregon ports and chambers, Condon and Arlington) and some additional research. Jessica noted she will be pulling this information together for the Executive Committee to discuss in depth at the September meeting.
- Jessica attended the end of the One Gorge meeting and stated there was discussion about MCEDD submitting updated comments on the Blumenauer legislation. She noted it did not sound like there was a strong reason to submit new or updated comments, as other counties haven't done so since MCEDD submitted comment.

Discussion: Bob Hamlin noted the meeting was a chance to state that the legislation looks Oregon centric, and Washington needs to be better included before Skamania County asks legislators to sign. Les Perkins stated his staff have been engaging with Blumenauer staff to note that any expansion of designations will require funding for staff so they can manage that area. Jessica summarized that MCEDD will not make updated comments.

- One application has been received for the new forestry seat on the board.
- Several new loans have closed, including one which fully expends the EDA CARES funding.
- Planning has begun for the November 4th Annual Columbia Gorge Economic Symposium. The Symposium usually includes a keynote, an annual report from our local Oregon and Washington economists, and a themed panel often focusing on one of our key industries. Two potential focuses are renewable energy and workforce. The venue is undecided.

Discussion: Bob Hamlin noted workforce would be a timely topic. Eric Proffitt suggested David Gerstenfeld, Worksource Oregon division director, would be a good reach out. Jessica stated the workforce topic should be uplifting and bring new ideas. Eric suggested promoting the culture of businesses, noting wages are important but employees want to feel they are contributing and be treated with respect. Les Perkins suggested combining the topics of workforce and renewable energy, noting potential topics of discussion could be the hydrogen hub and resiliency. Staff will continue to brainstorm topics. The hope is to hold the symposium in person this year.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS/ COMMITTEE MEMBERS UPDATES

No new business.

ADJOURN

Bob Hamlin adjourned the meeting at 4:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Lauren Hernandez, Office Administrator.

Memorandum

Date: August 24, 2022
To: MCEDD Executive Committee
From: Jessica Metta, Executive Director
Re: Background Check Policy

September Overview

Staff brought this to the April Executive Committee meeting and received feedback for additional edits and information. Specifically, staff confirmed which positions could require a credit check and added details for reviewing driving records (thanks to Leana for the example!). This revised policy is brought for Executive Committee review and recommendation to the Full Board for adoption.

Prior Details

MCEDD's job offers are contingent on passing background checks, and some positions require additional checks (driver records, credit report). SDAO had recently recommended that we have more clear language about what we will and will not accept as prior offenses in background checks. I have not found clear language to model and feel like it is often something to be handled on a case-by-case basis and that having any prior law enforcement interactions should not preclude someone from employment with MCEDD. However, additional language about our practice could be valuable to candidates for employment and MCEDD staff. To that end, I have drafted the attached background check policy using a university model found online and modified for MCEDD's purposes. Any new policies would need to be approved by the MCEDD Board.

Background Check Policy

Mid-Columbia Economic Development District conducts job-related background checks prior to hire in order to ensure a safe and secure work environment in which MCEDD staff, clients, resources, and assets are protected, while protecting the integrity and confidentiality of information gathered during the evaluation. Background checks are normally conducted on the finalist only following the issuance of a contingent offer of employment.

A criminal history does not automatically rule out candidates depending on the job-related nature of the offence.

Types of Background Checks

A standard background check will include a Social Security Number verification, a misdemeanor and felony criminal history check, and National Sex Offender Registry check.

Additional background checks may be required for specific positions based on job-related need, including but not limited to the following:

- Motor Vehicle Record: required for positions where it is anticipated that an individual will regularly drive a MCEDD-owned vehicle, typically only Bus Drivers and the Transportation Operations Manager. See Driver Evaluation Matrix as Appendix A.
- Credit History Check: Conducted only for positions with extensive authority to commit financial resources of MCEDD or with extensive fiduciary responsibility for financial resources of MCEDD; or as required by law, and as appropriate for positions with the following responsibilities:
 - Broad and extensive access to personally identifying information about staff or clients;
 - Direct access to and handling of cash and cash equivalents (i.e., checks, credit card receipts);
 - Note that federal law prohibits discrimination as a result of personal bankruptcy.
 - Typically these positions include Executive Director, Finance and Operations Manager, Loan Fund Manager, Office Administrator.

Processing Time

MCEDD is charged with obtaining background check reports and the initial evaluation of findings in order to ensure that decisions about findings are made consistently and are based on job-related analysis, taking into account the nature and context of the offense.

Background checks are typically completed within three business days.

Candidates for employment who fail to participate fully or who provide inaccurate information in a background check will be eliminated from consideration for the position. Candidates may decline to authorize a background check; in such cases, no background check will be performed, but the candidate will not be considered further.

Evaluation of Results

Candidates and the supervisor are notified by email when finalists have successfully completed the background check process.

If findings are present, the background report will be reviewed by the Executive Director, Finance and Operations Manager, and the position's supervisor based on job-related analysis, taking into account the nature and context of the offense. MCEDD will notify the finalist of a finding (pre-adverse action notification), including providing access to the complete report and advising the finalist of their rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. MCEDD will also ask the finalist to confirm that the report pertains to them and invite the finalist to provide any additional information for consideration.

Following this step, MCEDD will make an initial determination as to whether the finding is sufficiently job-related.

- If findings are determined to not be sufficiently job-related, then MCEDD will consider the background check process successfully completed.
- If findings are determined to be substantially job-related and a decision is made to withdraw the contingent offer of employment, the Executive Director will notify the finalist that they are not eligible to fill the position based on the unsatisfactory results of a background check. MCEDD reserves the right to keep the reason for failure undisclosed. MCEDD will provide the finalist with all required notifications pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act and/or other applicable law(s), including the right to review the report and how to contact agency(ies) that provided the background check results (adverse action notification) through the vendor.

Confidentiality

Information gathered as a result of background screening is considered sensitive, and disclosure is restricted to those individuals who need the information in order to perform their job duties. Records are maintained by the Finance and Operations Manager in accordance with MCEDD's records retention schedule.

Current MCEDD Employees

For current employees, changes in employment will require a background check if the new assignment is designated as requiring a background check or required check(s) was not previously performed.

If a current employee has recently had a background check and is being considered for a new assignment designated as requiring a background check, the findings of the check will be reviewed for relevance to the new assignment.

Appendix A: Driver Evaluation Matrix

The purpose of the Driver Evaluation Matrix is to determine eligibility for an employee when driving is a function of the job. The driver's motor vehicle record will be reviewed using the matrix below to determine whether driving record is clear, acceptable, borderline or poor.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

1. Past driving records are highly predictive of future performance as a safe, dependable driver and statistically, there is a high correlation between recent driving history and future accident frequency. A driver, who had four moving violations, more than three years ago, may be a better risk than a driver who has two violations within the last 12 months. However, do not base any hiring, promotion, or transfer decisions solely on this one factor. Persons with borderline driving records can be advised of their status and coached to improve.
2. Consider the applicability of the individual's past violations to the job the applicant or employee will perform.
3. Review the details of the violations listed on the driving record with the applicant/employee to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist regarding the violation.
4. Most convictions and violations are kept on a driving record for five years from the date of conviction or adjudication. Departmental actions, such as, suspensions, revocations, or disqualifications are kept on a driving record for ten years from final release date. Certain violations appear on a driving record in perpetuity, such as alcohol-related convictions, vehicular assault and vehicular homicide convictions and deferred prosecutions.

Under Washington State law, employers are not allowed to consider violations that occurred more than ten years ago, unless the position involves law enforcement, school districts, or the direct responsibility for children, mentally ill, developmentally delayed, or vulnerable adults. Federal law imposes no similar date restriction but requires employers to take into account the age of the violation, the nature of the violation, and the relationship of the violation to the job.

Authorized drivers should only be allowed to operate a vehicle on behalf of MCEDD if their driving record demonstrates they will be a safe driver. Those possessing an invalid or suspended license are not eligible to operate a vehicle for MCEDD under any circumstances.

Moving Violations (1 pt. ea.)	# of Accidents (at-fault, 2 pts. ea.)			
	0	1	2	3+
0	CLEAR	A	A	P
1	A	A	B	P
2	A	A	P	P
3+	A	B	P	P
Major	P	P	P	P

Only Accidents and Moving Violations in the last three years are considered. (Is there a three year period for major violations?)

A = Acceptable: Those with none or fewer than four points.

B = Borderline: Management should give consideration prior to placing or maintaining this individual in a driving position and may want to provide additional training or other requirements.

P = Poor: Management should give serious consideration to not placing or maintaining this individual in a driving position.

Major Violations include:

- DUI – Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Negligent homicide in the use of a motor vehicle
- Using a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony
- Operating a vehicle without a valid unsuspended license or while uninsured
- Aggravated assault with a motor vehicle
- Grand theft of a motor vehicle
- Reckless driving or speed contest/racing
- Hit and run (bodily injury and/or property damage)

Moving Violations include violations other than Major Violations. These consist of speeding and other moving traffic infractions. Traffic photo enforcement and parking tickets do not appear on driving records as Moving Violations. If multiple citations are issued on the same day, they will be counted as a single violation.

Memorandum

Date: August 25, 2022
To: MCEDD Executive Committee
From: Jessica Metta, Executive Director
Re: Private Sector Appointments

Overview

September is the annual renewal cycle for the private sector members on the MCEDD Full Board as well as the private sector Loan Administration Board members. These two requests are combined in this memo.

1) MCEDD Full Board Private Sector Members

The MCEDD Executive Committee makes appointments for private sector members to the Board. These appointments are ratified by the full Board at their annual meeting in September. There are now eight private sector members serving on the MCEDD Board of Directors:

- Ken Bailey, agriculture
- Scott Clements, housing and private business
- Buck Jones, food and beverage, Native American community
- Robb Kimmes, healthcare
- Eric Proffitt, workforce
- Marta Yera Cronin, higher education
- Ryan O'Connor, high tech
- New vacant position for forestry

Private Sector Board Candidates

I inquired if currently serving Full Board private sector members are willing to continue and all current private sector members are willing to continue in their seats.

We shared the information about the MCEDD Board opening for a forestry seat on our website, newsletter and via press release. We received one application by Garrett Stump with WKO which is included in this packet.

Request

The MCEDD Executive Committee is asked to make an appointment of *eight individuals to fill the private sector positions on the MCEDD Board*. These appointments must then be ratified by the Full Board at the annual meeting.

2) Loan Administration Board

The MCEDD Loan Administration Board is an unpaid committee that meets bi-monthly to make loan policy and all major loan decisions including loan approvals and subsequent loan modifications and foreclosures. The Loan Administration Board is composed of the five county representatives to the MCEDD Board, two private sector representatives and an alternate private sector representative. The terms for these private sector "At-large" representatives expire annually. The primary qualifications for

appointive members are that they have business, legal or financing experience, with at least one of the members having financing experience. At-large members do not need to be MCEDD Board members.

Private Sector Loan Administration Board Candidates

Currently, the private sector MCEDD Loan Administration Board positions are held by Scott Clements, Dillon Borton and AJ Tarnasky. All have expressed interest in seeking reappointment to the MCEDD Loan Administration Board.

We shared the information about the MCEDD LAB seats on our website, newsletter and via press release. We received no new applications.

Request

The MCEDD Executive Committee is asked to make a recommendation to the MCEDD Board of *individuals to serve on the MCEDD Loan Administration Board*. Final appointments are made by the Full Board at the annual meeting.

**MID-COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (MCEDD)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
INTEREST FORM**

The purpose of this form is to assist the MCEDD Executive Committee, Board and staff in evaluating the qualifications of an applicant for appointment to the MCEDD Board of Directors. **Please complete the entire form and return to:**

MCEDD, 802 Chenoweth Loop Road, The Dalles, OR 97058

appointments@mcedd.org

For questions call 541-296-2266.

PERSONAL DATA

Preferred Mailing Address: Home Business

Preferred Title _____ (e.g. Mr, Mrs, Ms, Dr, etc.)

First Name Garret Last Name Stump

Home Mailing Address [REDACTED]

City Carson State WA Zip 98610

County Skamania

Business Name High Cascade Inc (WKO)

Business Address 2022 Wind River Rd

City Carson State WA Zip 98610

Occupation President of High Cascade Inc - Timber and Log Purchasing

Home Phone (____) _____ Business Phone (____) _____ ext _____

Cell Phone (optional) (____) _____ E-mail address [REDACTED]

EDUCATION

Schools attended, including high school. *A current resume may be substituted for this section.*

School	City & State	Dates	Degree/Major
Stevenson High School	Stevenson, WA	1999-2003	General
Santa Clara University	Santa Clara, CA	2003-2007	Accounting/Econ

EMPLOYMENT & EXPERIENCE

Major paid employment & significant volunteer activities. *A current resume may be substituted for this section.*

Dates (from-to)	Employer/Organization	City & State	Title/Position
High Cascade Inc / WKO - 2013 to Current		Carson WA	Various - Current HCI President
Protiviti Consulting - 2007-2013		San Jose, CA / Portland, OR	Manager

INTEREST IN APPOINTMENT

Describe in detail why you are interested in serving on the MCEDD Board. Include information about your background and how you meet the requirements for the position being sought. *You may complete this section on a separate sheet.*

This region is important to me for both personal and employment purposes. I grew up in Skamania County and I am currently living in Skamania County raising three young children. I am also the President of High Cascade Inc and purchase all the logs and timber for the only high production sawmills in the MCEDD region (WKO in Carson, SDS in Bingen, and MHFP in Hood River). Our Companies combine for over 400 full time W2 employees (minimum starting wage is \$20/hr) and contract hundreds more. I am a current CPA with majors in Accounting and Economics. I am vested in the future of the Gorge and think I can be a valuable addition to the Board. Thank you for your consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Do you represent a minority group (please list)? No

Do you represent a labor group (please list)? No

Do you represent a workforce development agency (please list)? No

Do you have any identified conflicts of interest serving on this Board (please identify)?

No

Completed forms must be returned to: **MCEDD, 802 Chenowith Loop Road, The Dalles, OR 97058** or appointments@mcedd.org



**FISCAL YEAR 2022
ANNUAL REPORT**

A WORD FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to the annual report for MCEDD's Fiscal Year 2022! We prepare this report to share a summary of our work with our Board, committees and regional partners. While we still had CARES funding in FY22 that impacted our work, much of our services returned to a pre-COVID level of normal this year. We continued to seek new ways to deliver on our core competencies of high quality technical assistance, business assistance and regional collaboration. Significant milestones and accomplishments in fiscal year 2022 include:

- Completion of the five-year **Columbia Gorge Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy** with adoption of the plan in March 2022 after almost a year of public meetings.
- Deployment of **CARES funding** from the US EDA in support of business websites, our chambers in the region, industry associations, several partners, grant writing workshops, and more.
- Launching a region-wide **broadband speed test** to gather data needed for federal and state grants.
- Providing **technical assistance for our members** accessing federal funding for public works projects across our five counties.
- Launch of the **Gorge Regional Transit Strategy Phase 2** to operationalize the vision for the regional Gorge TransLink public transportation system set in Phase 1.
- Completing the **Wasco County Transit Development Plan** to guide investment and improvements for the next 20 years.
- Providing **direct business assistance** through our loan programs (MCEDD, Mount Hood Economic Alliance, Oregon Investment Board) of almost \$670,000 in funding this fiscal year to businesses.
- **Expanding available business loan funds by \$2.67 Million** for the region through MCEDD, Oregon and Washington Investment Boards.

We invite you to explore this annual report, which provides a snapshot of the resources MCEDD delivered to our service area in fiscal year 2022. The strength and history of collaboration in the Mid-Columbia region that keeps us optimistic for the future of the region. It is only through the support of our members and partners that we are able to accomplish this work, and we are so grateful for your engagement!

Sincerely,

Bob Hamlin
MCEDD Board Chair



Jessica Metta
MCEDD Executive Director

802 Chenoweth Loop Road
The Dalles, Oregon 97058
www.mcedd.org

MCEDD is an equal opportunity
Employer, Lender and Provider.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) was established in 1969 by five counties bordering the Columbia River: Hood River, Wasco and Sherman Counties in Oregon and Skamania and Klickitat Counties in Washington. MCEDD is governed by a Board of Directors representing public and private interests throughout the region.

2022 Board of Directors

Bob Hamlin, Chair

Skamania County

David Griffith

Oregon Ports

Robert Kimmes

Healthcare

Steve Kramer, Vice Chair

Wasco County

Mike Foreaker

Cities of Wasco County

Dr. Marta Yera Cronin

Higher Education

Leana Kinley, Sec/Treas.

Cities of Skamania County

Jan Brending

Cities of Klickitat County

Scott Clements

Private Business

David Sauter

Klickitat County

Mark Zanmiller

Cities of Hood River County

Ken Bailey

Agriculture

Les Perkins

Hood River County

Erik Glover

Cities of Sherman Count

Eric Proffitt

Workforce

Joe Dabulskis

Sherman County

Tonya Brumley

Oregon Chambers

Ryan O'Connor

High Tech

Pat Albaugh

Washington Ports

Jonathan Lewis

Washington Chambers

Buck Jones

Food and Beverage

MCEDD Staff

A professional staff provides business assistance, technical assistance and regional coordination for the five-county bi-state area of the Columbia River Gorge

Jessica Metta, Executive Director

Carrie Pipinich, Deputy Director of Economic Development

Kate Drennan, Deputy Director of Transportation

Dana Woods, Finance and Operations

Ami Beaver, Loan Fund Manager

Jacque Schei, Project Manager

Kathy Fitzpatrick, Mobility Manager

Lindsay McClure, Energy Project Manager

Kristyn Fix, Industry Engagement Project Manager

Sara Crook, Travel Trainer

Lauren Hernandez, Office Administrator

Jill Brandt, Administrative Assistant

Tasha Blaircobb, RARE Project Coordinator

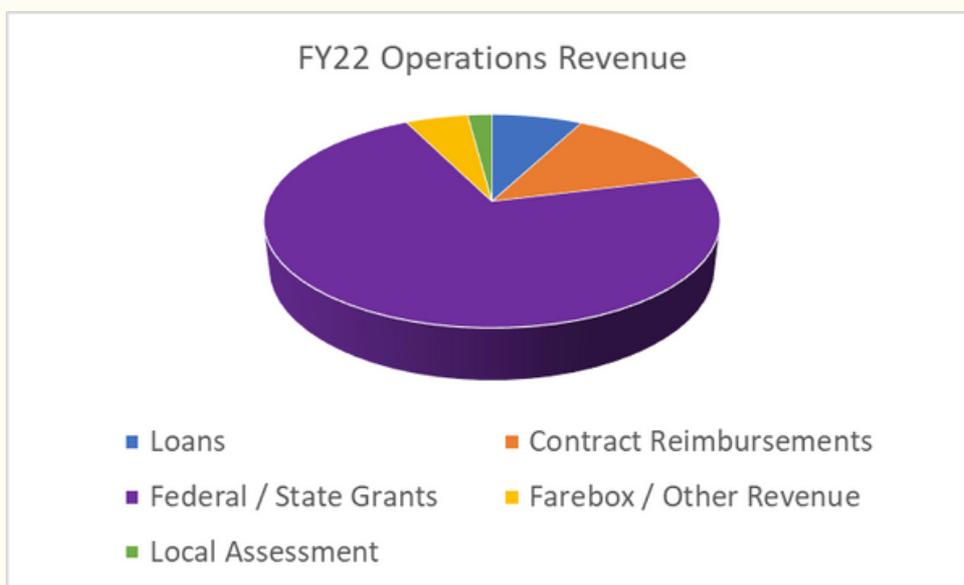
Jesus Mendoza, Transportation Manager

Link Dispatchers: Rena Bowman, Sherry Leon

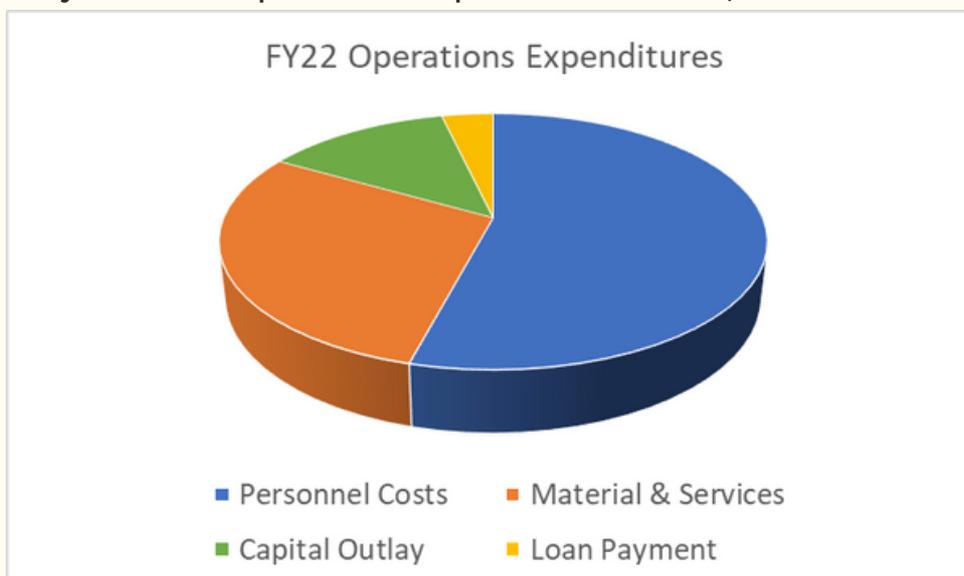
Link Drivers: Gerald Benedict, Fred Bergren, Scott Isaak, Kevin Lohse, Lisa Malcolm, Laura Reed, Margaret Rodriguez-Strickland, Casey Ruiz, Antonio Silva, Shane White Horse, Steve Wilson and Jesse Witkowski

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

MCEDD's financial picture in fiscal year 2021 looked drastically different from prior years as a result of the significant state and federal relief provided for COVID-19, especially for business grants. In fiscal year 2022, the financial makeup returned to more typical levels. Operations Revenue derived from Loans (8%), Contract Reimbursements (13%), Federal and State Grants (72%), Local Dues (2%), and Farebox and Other Revenue (5%). Operations Revenue totaled \$3,838,871 in FY22.



MCEDD's Operations Expenditures are in four categories in FY22: Loan Payments (4%), Materials and Services (29%), Capital Outlay (13%), and Personnel Costs (54%). MCEDD received federal grants to purchase five new vehicles for transit operations, which resulted in the higher capital outlay. The large amount of expenditures of business grants from FY21 is completely absent this year. Total Operations Expenditures were \$3,353,482 in FY22.

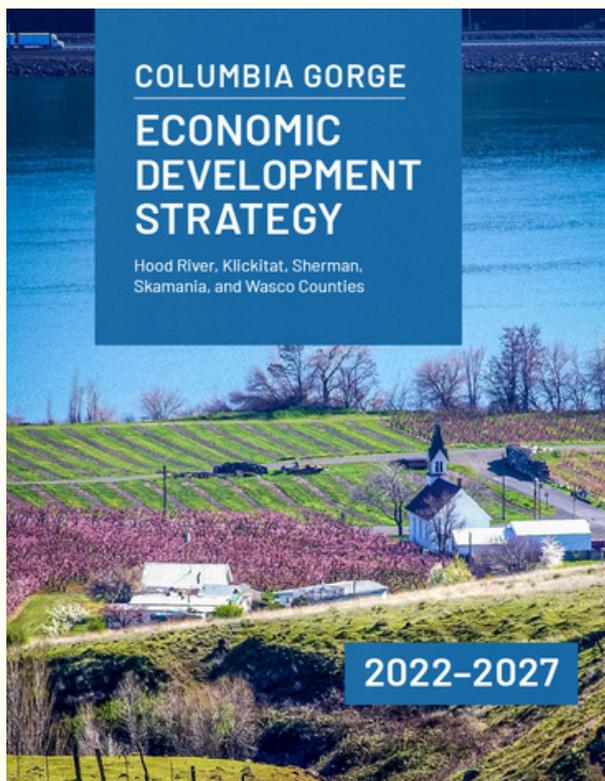


REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Completing the Regional Strategy

MCEDD continued convening monthly meetings with regional partners to complete the next five-year economic development strategy, with a focus on resiliency and equitable outcomes. Started in early 2021, this process concluded with adoption of the strategy in March 2022 by the MCEDD Board of Directors. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is 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 Strategy is presented on an interactive website at www.gorgeeconomy.org, including a shorter summary in English and Spanish.



The cover features a local photographer's springtime image near Maryhill, WA.

Columbia Gorge Economic Symposium

MCEDD hosted the Columbia Gorge Economic Symposium in November 2021, again in a virtual format. The event featured presentations from regional Oregon and Washington economists plus leaders in local business, attainable housing and workforce development sharing innovative models for economic development. MCEDD also used the forum to present the draft 2022-2027 CEDS.

Vision

A bi-state Mid-Columbia region with a resilient, thriving, sustainable, rural economy that supports equitable access to diverse business opportunities that act in harmony with the area's unique qualities, values, cultural and natural resources.

Goal Areas

- Strong Businesses
- Robust Workforce
- Resilient Infrastructure
- Powerful Regional Collaboration

Join us for the next Columbia Gorge Economic Symposium on November 4th, 2022 in The Dalles! Details at mcedd.org/strategy

ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

With a second year of support from a CARES grant through the US Economic Development Administration (EDA), MCEDD continued its work on supporting our businesses and communities recover from COVID-19. Some of our projects included:

- **Business Spotlights:** MCEDD interviewed regional business owners to learn about resources they used to start their business, be successful, and prepare for unexpected economic shocks. The resulting profiles highlight the businesses and provide insight for other business owners to learn from.
- **Business Websites:** We enabled 17 businesses across the region to develop robust websites to enhance their online presence and access to customers. Additionally, we worked with the Breweries in the Gorge and Columbia Gorge Winegrowers Association to boost their online presence to support these industries that were harder hit by the pandemic closures.
- **Childcare Businesses:** We developed a template business plan for potential childcare businesses to support the work of the Klickitat County Childcare Committee and participated in the planning group for a Child Care Center Feasibility study at Columbia Gorge Community College.
- **EDA Regional Diversification Summit:** We supported the Central Klickitat County area in hosting an EDA Regional Diversification Summit in the fall. We continued coordination with the leadership organizations throughout the year to keep momentum toward a shared vision for economic resilience in the Goldendale area through increased collaboration and progress on key projects.
- **Grant Writing Training Series:** We offered this series that highlighted grant prospecting, narrative drafting, budgeting, and grant management. 27 participants came from entities across the region and provided positive feedback on the experience.

MCEDD AND REGIONAL PARTNERS PRESENT

GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP

FOUR WEEKLY SESSIONS
MAY 4 ,11, 25 & JUNE 1
10AM - 12PM

May 4th – Grant Planning & Finding Grants
May 11th – Grant Narrative
May 25th – Grant Budgeting & Management
June 1st – Grant Evaluation

Cost: \$100
Location TBD, The Dalles
TICKET PRICE INCLUDES ALL FOUR SESSIONS
Refreshments will be provided

Virtual attendance options will be available!

REGISTER AT
[HTTPS://BIT.LY/GRANT-WRITING-REGISTRATION](https://bit.ly/grant-writing-registration)

Presentations by Paul Lindberg of Hat Creek Consulting, Ltd, MCEDD staff and regional partners.

EVENT PARTNERS
  

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Broadband

MCEDD places a core focus on increasing broadband access throughout the region as essential economic infrastructure. Key projects this year included:

- **Speed Tests:** MCEDD worked collaboratively with other economic development districts for access to a broadband speed test platform and to create an outreach campaign around “Faster Internet Oregon.” This effort will gather similar data for our Oregon Counties as is available in Washington through the State Broadband Office. We also developed a survey to gather some additional information around broadband needs along with the speed information. Results will come in the next year but the platform should provide strong data to show where our communities have access to broadband in preparation for federal and state funding that is expected to be available in the coming years.
- **Broadband Action Team:** In collaboration with the Wasco County Economic Development Commission and Q-Life, MCEDD staff also supported the formation of a Wasco County Broadband Action Team that is meeting regularly to work towards local broadband goals.



Electric vehicle carshare programs and solar panels at the middle school are some of the ways Hood River County is meeting its energy goals.

Renewable Energy

MCEDD coordinates the **Columbia Gorge Bi-State Renewable Energy Zone**, focusing this year on support for the regional priority Goldendale Pumped Storage Hydro project and sharing legislative information.

MCEDD also provides project management assistance to the **Hood River County Energy Council**, which supports development of energy projects that increase economic and physical resilience. Projects included the following:

- The Energy Council drafted and **adopted its 2022-2025 Work Plan**. The Work Plan outlines priority projects that align with the Hood River County Energy Plan’s established goals.
- The Energy Council launched a project that aims to identify and address barriers to accessing **solar, solar + storage, and energy efficiency among low-moderate income and Latinx communities in Hood River County**. This project is funded by a grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust and is being undertaken in collaboration with a number of nonprofit partners.
- Supported development of **FEMA application** for City of Cascade Locks

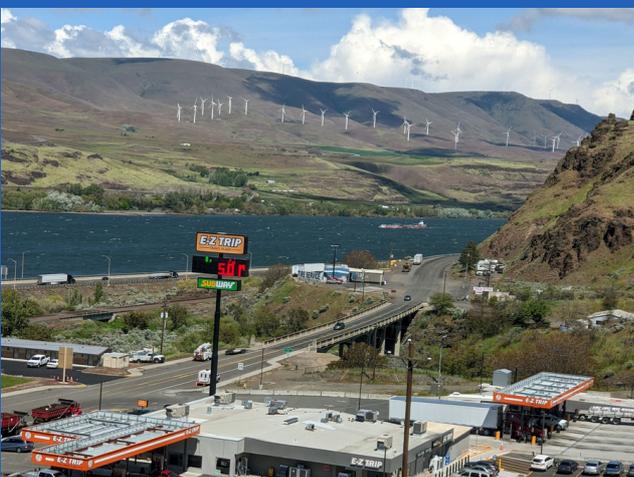
Community Economic Development

MCEDD worked with communities across the region to support economic development projects that enhance the resilience of our economy and communities. This year we:

- Worked to **identify funding for infrastructure assessments or feasibility studies** for the Cities of Rufus and Grass Valley. We explored funding options with the Dallesport Water District for consolidation of smaller systems. We supported development of initial engineering of feasibility studies for the Port of Skamania's docks, a sewer system in Carson, and the Cascadia East Interconnection Co-location facility in The Dalles.
- Administered Sherman County's four **housing grant programs** for development of new rental and owner-occupied housing, rehabilitation of existing housing, and property clean-up to prepare for new housing.
- **Provided technical assistance** to find and apply for grants or develop business plans for the Wasco Event Center, Mid-Columbia Community Action Council's Navigation Center, and for parks owned by Dufur Park District and Wasco County.
- Participated in and supported the leadership group for the Wasco County-The Dalles **Brownfield Coalition** that implemented a grant allocating \$600,000 in funds for brownfields assessment projects. We also supported the City of Rufus in accessing brownfield funding from Oregon to assess hazardous building materials in their Community Center.
- Supported the **Wasco County Economic Development Commission** in updating its five-year Strategic Action Plan.

Project Highlight: Biggs Service District

The Biggs Service District has undertaken a project to develop a water system for their service area. To date, the area has been served by private wells, but a new water system will allow for more growth in the community of Biggs Junction and sufficient flows to support fire suppression. MCEDD supported the District in securing USDA Rural Development funding and provides grant management. The project entails drilling a new well, construction of a 400,000+ gallon reservoir, and installation of all water lines, fire hydrants and water meters. Construction will cost approximately \$3.8 million, with Sherman County supporting a portion of the costs. The project is expected to be complete by the end of 2022.



The community of Biggs Junction



Water line installation under the bridge.
Photo credit: Anderson Perry

Infrastructure Development

MCEDD places a priority on ensuring adequate infrastructure for business and community success. Our staff provided **technical assistance** to secure funding and move projects toward construction, including support to Hood River County on a successful **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application** for a kitchen rehabilitation project at the Adult Center and the Port of Skamania on an Economic Development Administration American Rescue Plan application.

Grants Management

MCEDD offers administration of federal grants, including assisting in record keeping, labor standards compliance, and reporting. We provide pooled technical assistance for small communities without the capacity to administer grants with complex state and federal requirements. Projects this year included:

- **Biggs Service District water system:** Labor standards and grant administration support for USDA Rural Development grant and loan.
- **Crystal Springs Water District water project:** Labor standards and grant administration support for two Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund projects, support in requesting an increase in funding to cover cost increases post-application.
- **Cascade Locks wastewater:** Labor standards and grant administration support for a USDA/Clean Water State Revolving Fund interim, CDBG, and Business Oregon Water-Wastewater program funding.
- **City of Hood River stormwater line replacement:** Labor standards and grant administration support for a Clean Water State Revolving Fund, Business Oregon Water-Wastewater program, American Rescue Plan funded project, support in securing congressional appropriated funding and training of city staff on grant administration/labor standards procedures.
- **City of The Dalles Dog River water pipeline replacement:** Labor standards and grant administration support for a Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund and Oregon Water Resources Department funded project.
- **Sherman County bus barn project:** Project planning, labor standards and grant administration support for an Oregon Department of Transportation funded project.

Infrastructure Support in Pictures



Reservoir site in Biggs Junction



Federal and state dollars at work in Cascade Locks



Ground breaking at the Dog River water pipeline replacement

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

MCEDD Loan Client Spotlight: Cafe Genevieve's



Café Genevieve's opened in Goldendale, WA in January 2022 as a breakfast and lunch café with a coffee house atmosphere offering wifi and informal seating. The location is convenient to downtown and the new County Services building. When owner Kristeen McGreal Loy moved to Goldendale with her husband, Nathan, and their two children in 2016, they noticed a need in the town and decided to make it happen! Named after Nathan's Grandma Genevieve, Loy plans to continue her grandmother's family tradition of providing a place to gather and connect over excellent coffee, delicious food and great service.



MCEDD Lending

Since the inception of our business loan program, MCEDD has made 320 loans to businesses totaling nearly \$19.5 million. This year, the loan program funded more than \$470,000 in new loans in support of:

- Equipment for a new children's clothing business.
- Opening of a new restaurant in Goldendale (see sidebar).
- Expansion of a gardening product developed in Stevenson.
- Equipment purchase for a well digging operation.
- Expansion of a towing, windshield repair and automotive services business near Odell.
- Expansion of a wine bar in The Dalles.
- Working capital for an outdoor equipment outfitter and jewelry studio in Maupin.

MCEDD also received a grant through Oregon Community Foundation, supporting a series of entrepreneurship networking events known as **PubTalks** in the Oregon counties as well as making improvements to our loan application.

MCEDD Loan Administration Board

Scott Clements, Chair * Bob Hamlin, Vice Chair *
Joe Dabulskis * Les Perkins * Dave Sauter * Steve
Kramer * Dillon Borton * AJ Tarnasky

Mount Hood Economic Alliance

MCEDD administers Mount Hood Economic Alliance (MHEA), a gap financier covering Clackamas, Hood River and Wasco Counties. With support from MCEDD, MHEA this year:

- Adopted a Revolving Loan Fund plan that opened loan eligibility to clients without US Citizenship.
- Funded a loan for the start-up of GRIT MMA, a fitness and competitive training gym in Milwaukie. GRIT (an acronym that stands for Grueling Resolve and Innovative Techniques) is a mixed martial arts studio for MMA competitors and fitness enthusiasts at all levels.

Oregon Investment Board

Project funding awarded through the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Oregon Investment Board helps strengthen and diversify the regional economy. New lending in FY22 included:

- A new yoga studio in Hood River (see sidebar).
- The build out and provided working capital for a seafood forward fine dining restaurant in Hood River.
- A lingerie boutique in The Dalles that serves mastectomy patients and others.

MCEDD also successfully applied for a **USDA Rural Business Development Grant for \$1.9 Million** to supplement the existing revolving loan funds for the Oregon and Washington Investment Boards. These new revolving loan funds will be provided to small businesses in all counties within the National Scenic Area boundaries.



From a \$4 million allocation and revolved funds, the OIB has approved more than \$10 million total in grants and loans which have:

- Leveraged over \$15.6 million in private funds.
- Leveraged more than \$13.4 million in public funds.
- Directly created or retained approximately 750 jobs.

Industry Sector Support

MCEDD has targeted development of opportunities in strong regional industry sectors including High Tech. **The Gorge Technology Alliance** (GTA) contracts with MCEDD for project management assistance. The local tech industry continues its strong performance and MCEDD staff assisted the GTA in completing an update of their **Strategic Plan** to provide a strong foundation for the organization as they come out of the pandemic's challenges with gatherings.

MCEDD also supported the initial planning stages for the **Wasco County Innovation Initiative** through development of a basic digital economy ecosystem assessment and strategy. The group also developed branding and began hosting an Innovator Drinks series with two successful events in The Dalles highlighting innovative entrepreneurs in Wasco County.

OIB

Members:

Chair Craig Bowder,
Vice-Chair Doug Roof, Sec./Treas.
Jorge Barragan,
Jill Amery, Kirk Wright, Gil Kelley,
Jamie Kranz

OIB Loan Client Profile



Chelsey Moss found her way to yoga by way of a doctor's recommendation after a breast cancer diagnosis in her early 30s. She came to understand and love the practice and credits yoga in part for her 10 year remission. She completed her 500-hour certification to teach and opened her own studio, Big Buddha Yoga, in Hood River with the help of a loan from the OIB.

Moss noted there were challenges to opening the studio during the COVID-19 pandemic, but she hopes the studio will help the community heal emotionally from the trauma of the pandemic and reinvest in their wellness.

TRANSPORTATION



The Go Vets Columbia Gorge grant program supported by MCEDD funds the following transportation needs in our region:

- Access to any healthcare or wellness resources
- Dial-A-Ride services (Hood River, Wasco, Sherman Counties)
- Connectivity to the Disabled American Veterans Van
- Hospital Shuttle to the VA in Portland
- Annual GORge Pass
- One-on-One Travel Training Assistance
- Travel Tools (noise-canceling headphones, etc.)

Gorge TransLink Alliance

MCEDD staff manages this alliance of regional transportation providers. This year staff worked to support:

- Implementation of the **GORge Pass**, an annual transit pass for all regional fixed route services for a low-cost annual fee. Engaged in major marketing effort with TV and radio interviews, ads, social media videos and posts, and partnership with local businesses throughout the Gorge.
- Kickoff of the **Gorge Regional Transit Strategy Phase II**, a region-wide project to implement the vision identified in Phase I. The project considers regional priorities, coordination, governance, and future technologies.
- Continued **grant-writing support** to serve schoolkids, veterans, and other groups. Supporting COVID-19 response and recovery services and working closely with state and local organizations to lift community efforts.

The Link Public Transport

MCEDD operates The Link, Wasco County's public transportation service, and continues to find ways to better serve the community through:

- Completing a **20-year Transit Development Plan** to guide investment and improvements to transit in Wasco County
- Introducing a **new service to Mosier, Hood River** 4x per day on weekdays.
- Distributing free GORge Passes and Dial-A-Ride tickets for low-income riders through the **Transit Connect program**.
- Creating a **travel training program** to connect individuals, employers, and organizations to free training on how to use the transit system.
- Operating a **summer route** with free rides to The Dalles Aquatic Center and The Dalles Farmers Market.



The Link in FY22:

- Total Passenger One-Way Trips: 20,676
- Elderly/Disabled One-Way Trips: 7,584
- Revenue Service Hours: 14,269
- Revenue Service Miles: 170,445

Memorandum

Date: August 31, 2022

To: MCEDD Executive Committee

From: Jessica Metta, Executive Director

Re: Draft Proposal for Gilliam County Addition

History and Process

Gilliam County has requested joining the MCEDD district and leaving their current district. The MCEDD Board formed an Expansion Task Force Committee to consider the request and bring information to the Executive Committee for recommendations to the Full Board. The following is an overview of the work to date and future process.

- December 2021 and January 2022: Committee met to discuss options.
- February 2022: Washington members met to discuss support opportunities.
- March 2022 MCEDD Board meeting: Board informed of work to date. Board expressed its interest in continuing this process through a vote, and in adding a Forestry private sector rep to the Board.
- April, May: Outreach to Governors' offices to explore support. Oregon Regional Solutions is supportive. Gov. Inslee's office has accepted the information but not expressed an opinion.
- June 2022 MCEDD Board meeting: Board approved bylaws amendment that added Forestry private sector rep to the Board. Other task force next steps put on hold with the amount of other MCEDD business at the June Board meeting.
- July 2022: Expansion Task Force met and requested additional outreach for Executive Committee consideration.

At the September 2022 Executive Committee meeting, the Committee is asked to help move a draft proposal forward to the Board for discussion at the September 2022 Full Board meeting. Following that:

- October, November: Support Gilliam County in crafting a resolution that outlines the changes in economic conditions and their desire to join the MCEDD Board. Gilliam County passes resolution.
- December 2022 MCEDD Board meeting: Board vote on adding Gilliam County.
- If the addition is approved: Work with GEODC on their approval. Work with both Governors' offices for letters. Submit all information to EDA. No changes would occur until approved by EDA.

Additional Information and Draft Proposal

When MCEDD's Expansion Task Force Committee met in July to consider additional information regarding Gilliam County's request to join the MCEDD District, they asked staff to conduct additional research to partners in the MCEDD district and Gilliam County. Feedback is presented below in relation to the proposed new structure.

Draft Proposal for Adding Gilliam County to the MCEDD Board

1. Board would expand to add a seat for a Gilliam County rep. This seat would be held by a Gilliam County Commissioner but would also report on the activities of the Cities of Gilliam County. Cities would be added to contact lists for all MCEDD Full Board meetings but would not have an official Cities rep on the Board.

More information: Staff reached out to Condon and Arlington about this. Condon was supportive and Arlington did not fully understand the request. Judge Farrar was going to do more outreach to Arlington.

Gilliam County rep would automatically join the MCEDD Executive Committee as is usual for County reps. Gilliam County rep would only join the Loan Administration Board once MCEDD's lending area is revised to include Gilliam County. The MCEDD Board would vote to expand the lending area, which would need to be approved by EDA and USDA.

More information: GEODC confirmed they would not want to retain lending in Gilliam County if the county left its district.

2. Oregon Chambers rep would expand to include Gilliam County chamber.

More information: The Dalles, Hood River and Maupin Chambers were not concerned about the addition.

3. Oregon Ports rep would expand to include a rotation to the Port of Arlington.

More information: The Ports of The Dalles, Hood River and Cascade Locks did not express concern with the addition, especially if the Port of Arlington did not have large projects in the works that would overshadow the Hood River Bridge replacement.

4. Bylaws would be changed as shown in attachment.

Additional Details:

- Financial Assessment: Given additional upfront costs, Gilliam County would receive a higher one-time assessment to cover administrative, legal and other costs. The long-term annual assessment would match MCEDD's local dues policies. Discussion point: what upfront rate seems reasonable?

More information: Staff confirmed no dues are currently paid to GEODC. Judge Farrar thought the dues would not be a hurdle and that the County would cover the cities and port as well as the unincorporated area. FY23 assessment is \$0.81 per capita, which would be about \$1535 for Gilliam County (unincorporated and cities combined), plus the Port assessment of \$3119. Staff estimates approximately \$1600 has been spent in staff time in 2021 and 2022 thus far on this concept, which could be passed on to Gilliam County if their proposal is approved by all parties.
Options:

- A. *One-time flat fee of an amount determined by the Board.*
- B. *One-time fee based roughly on staff expenses.*
- C. *One-time fee that is some proportion of their typical local dues, such as 1.5 times the assessment rate. *

- Any additional services by MCEDD would be offered on a fee-for-service basis.
- Economic Development Strategy: Gilliam County would be incorporated into the CEDS beginning in 2024 with a minor update to the project list, and 2027 with the full update.

MCEDD Board Composition Overview as of June 2022:

- 5 county seats (3 OR, 2 WA)
- 5 cities seats (3 OR, 2 WA)
- 2 chambers (OR/ WA)
- 2 ports (OR/ WA)
- 8 private sector reps (OR/ WA balanced)

22 Total

Request

The Executive Committee is asked to make a motion to move a draft proposal to the MCEDD Board for discussion only at their September meeting. The Committee is also asked to provide feedback on an initial fee to Gilliam County.

Bylaws of the
Mid-Columbia Economic Development District

ARTICLE I
THE ENTITY

Section A. Area of Operation:

The area of operation of the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) shall be within the corporate boundaries of the Oregon counties of Gilliam, Hood River, Sherman and Wasco, and the Washington counties of Klickitat and Skamania. (The MCEDD shall hereafter be called the District.)

Section B. Establishment:

The District was formed by representation from the five counties in 1969 and was designated an “Economic Development District” by the Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, on June 10, 1970. Bylaws were adopted and the District established pursuant to the laws of the States of Washington (RCW 39.34) and Oregon (ORS 190) and by agreement of its members. The District was amended to add Gilliam County by the Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, on XXXX, 2023.

Section C. Mission and Goals:

The District’s mission is to promote the creation of family-wage jobs, the diversification of the economic base, and the growth, development and retention of business and industry within the five-six-county district. The primary goals are:

1. Creation of employment opportunities and the diversification of the area’s economic base through business expansion and the development of new business and industry.
 - a. Provide financing packaging assistance along with a variety of financing program options to promote business and industrial development.
 - b. Provide support to existing community marketing and business assistance programs.
 - c. Help retain existing employers in the area by assisting in the removal of obstacles to growth and/or continued operation in the area.
2. Provide planning and coordination of economic development related activities and act as a liaison between appropriate Oregon, Washington and Federal interests.
3. Administer local, state or federal programs which have economic benefit within the five-six-county area.

ARTICLE II
MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

Section A. Membership:

Any general purpose district (city or county) or special purpose district or any organization founded for or involved in economic development, within the boundaries of the five-six counties, shall be eligible to become participating members of the District. The governing body of each county of government may approve membership from other districts, organizations, or associations.

Section B. Public Sector Representation, Board of Directors:

The elected governing body of each member county shall designate one of its members to represent it and serve at the pleasure of the county governing body as a voting member of the Board of Directors.

The governing body of each member county, except Gilliam County, shall also appoint one voting representative to the Board of Directors from any city (who is a member of the District) within the county, and shall appoint that representative selected by the city upon receiving a written request designating the individual to be appointed. If more than one city within a county has become a member of this Agency, the governing body of that county may rotate the appointment of the voting representative between such cities within the county. The voting representative appointed is to serve at the pleasure of the designating county. The city representatives from the Oregon counties shall serve a two-year term which shall expire on odd numbered years, while the representatives from the Washington counties shall serve a two-year term that expires on even numbered years.

The member Port Districts shall select voting representatives to the Board of Directors from their elected commissioners or a senior staff level person for two-year terms. Oregon Ports shall select one representative whose position shall expire on even numbered years. Washington Ports shall select one representative whose position shall expire on odd

numbered years. Port representatives should rotate among the member Ports in each state upon expiration of the current term.

Section C. Private Sector Representation, Board of Directors:

The Executive Committee shall select eight voting Private Sector representatives from regional business sectors. Appointments will be for a one-year period which may be renewed. These selections will be made after the other voting representative positions have been filled. Nominations for these positions may be submitted by the interests to be represented or by other Board members. Appointments shall be ratified by the Board. "Private Sector Representative" is defined as an individual in a responsible decision-making position in a for-profit organization, or that individual's representative. In addition, representatives from an institution of post-secondary education or workforce development or labor group are eligible to serve in these positions.

The Chambers of Commerce shall select voting representatives to the Board of Directors for two-year terms. Oregon Chambers shall select one representative whose position shall expire on even numbered years. Washington Chambers shall select one representative whose position shall expire on odd numbered years. Chamber representatives should rotate among the Chambers of Commerce in each state upon expiration of the current term.

Section D. Removal:

A Board member may be removed for missing three consecutive regular Board meetings without reasonable cause approved by a majority of the board membership. After two absences by a Board member, he or she will be notified that an absence at the next meeting will be cause for consideration of their removal from the Board and a letter will also be sent to the appointing body. Following three consecutive absences, the Board member may be removed upon a majority vote of the other members present at a regular or special meeting. The member being considered for removal may appear and be heard at such meeting before a vote is taken. If a Board member is removed, then a new member will be appointed by the appointing body. The Board may take action to excuse a board member from attendance requirements.

A Board member formally charged with fraud, dishonesty or embezzlement will be immediately suspended from the Board. A Board member may be removed for conviction of fraud, dishonesty, embezzlement, or other good cause upon the vote of a majority of the other members present at a regular or special meeting. The meeting shall be held not less than ten (10) days after a notice setting forth the intended action, a statement of the reasons therefore, and the date of the meeting when the matter will be acted upon, has been sent by certified mail to the member being considered for removal. The member being considered for removal may appear and be heard at such meeting before a vote is taken.

A selecting entity may replace its representative(s) at any time and the position may be filled with a representative appointed by the selecting entity for the unexpired term.

Section E. Voting Control:

At each meeting of the Board of Directors of the District, each Board member shall be entitled to vote in person and shall have one vote. All questions, except as otherwise provided by law or herein, shall be determined by a majority of the members of the Board present at any duly called meeting. Proxy votes will not be allowed.

Section F. Member Resignation/Termination:

Member organizations of the District may resign their membership by giving notice to the District at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the District's fiscal year.

Non-payment of dues or not making approved arrangements by July 1 within the fiscal year of MCEDD shall be grounds for termination of membership. When a membership is terminated any member of the Board of Directors representing or appointed by that membership shall be removed.

Section G. Dissolution:

This organization shall be dissolved at any time when less than four of the governing bodies of the ~~five~~six counties remain as members of the District. After payment of all outstanding financial commitments, any remaining funds shall be forthwith distributed to the District members in the same proportion as such members contributed to the District in its last fiscal year of operation.

ARTICLE III
MEETINGS

Section A. Annual Meetings:

The regular annual meeting of the members shall be held in September of each year, at such place within the ~~five~~six

counties as is specified in the notice of the meeting.

The regular annual meeting shall be held to elect officers and/or appoint Board members and transact such other business as may come before the meeting.

Failure to hold the annual meeting at the designated time shall not work a forfeiture to dissolution of the District. If the annual meeting is not held at the designated time, the Chairperson or Board may call the annual meeting at a time fixed by the Board not more than sixty (60) days after such designated time. If the annual meeting is not held at the designated time or during the sixty-day period thereafter, the annual meeting may be called by members having one-fifth of the votes entitled to be cast at the meeting.

Section B. Regular Meetings:

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held quarterly or as needed, at a specified place, day and hour at a location within one of the ~~five-six~~ counties.

Section C. Special Meetings:

Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the Chairperson, or by a quorum of the Executive Committee, and it shall thereupon be the duty of the Chairperson to cause notice of such meeting. The Chairperson or Executive Committee members calling the meeting shall fix the place, day, and hour of the meeting, and shall state the purpose or purposes for which the meeting was called. The meeting shall be held within the ~~five-six~~-county area.

Section D. Notice of Meetings:

Notice of the place, day and hour and purpose of any regular or annual meeting of the Board shall be delivered, by U.S. mail, e-mail, or given to each member entitled to vote at such meeting not less than five (5) days nor more than fifty (50) days before the date set for the meeting either personally or by mail (special meetings require ten (10) days prior notice or telephone notification). If notice of a meeting is mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail, with postage fully prepaid thereon, addressed to the members at their most recent address as they appear on the records of the District. If notice is delivered by email, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered if not returned to sender within twenty-four (24) hours. Notices will also be posted/ advertised in accord with the open meetings laws for any Board or Committee meeting.

Section E. Quorum:

At any properly called meeting of the Board or Committee, a majority of the voting representatives shall constitute a quorum for conducting business.

Section F. Organization:

The Chairperson, and in his or her absence, the Vice-Chairperson, shall preside at each meeting of the Board and shall act as Chairperson thereof. The meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order.

ARTICLE IV
RIGHTS AND LIABILITIES OF DIRECTORS

Section A. Liability of Members and Representatives of Debts:

Individual voting members and the private and public property of the members and their representatives shall be exempt from execution or other liability for any debts of the District nor shall they be liable or responsible for any debts or liabilities of the District.

Section B. Loans to Board Members:

No personal or private loans may be made by the District to its Board members or their immediate families as provided in 13 CFR 302.3 and in ORS 65.364. No member of the Board or their immediate families may be an officer, director, or owner of a small business concern receiving financial assistance from the District.

ARTICLE V
OFFICERS

Section A. Number and Qualifications:

The officers of the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District shall be a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and a Secretary-Treasurer. They shall perform such duties as may be designated by the Board. A member may not hold more

than one office.

Section B. Election and Term of Office:

The officers shall be Board members elected annually by the Board at their regular annual meeting. If the election of officers shall not be held at such meeting, such election of officers shall be held as soon thereafter as may be convenient. Each officer shall hold office for terms of one (1) year or until his or her successor shall have been elected. A vacancy in any office shall be filled by the Board for the unexpired portion of the term. A nominating committee appointed by the Chairperson shall meet prior to the annual meeting.

Section C. Chairperson:

The Chairperson: (1) shall be the principal presiding officer of the District Board of Directors and shall preside at all meetings of the members and at all meetings of the Board at which he or she is present; (2) may sign any instruments authorized by the Board to be executed, except in cases in which the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board or by these bylaws to some other officer or agent of the MCEDD, or shall be required by law to be otherwise signed or executed; and (3) shall, in general, perform all duties incident to the office of the chairperson and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board from time to time.

Section D. Vice-Chairperson:

In the absence of the Chairperson, or in the event of his or her inability or refusal to act, the Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall also perform such other duties as from time to time may be prescribed by the Board.

Section E. Secretary-Treasurer:

The Secretary-Treasurer shall: (1) keep the minutes of the meetings of the Board in one or more books provided for that purpose; (2) see that all notices are duly given in accordance with these bylaws; (3) be custodian of the MCEDD records; (4) keep general charge of the books of the MCEDD; and, (5) in general, perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary-Treasurer, and such other duties as from time to time may be prescribed by the Board, or may assign these duties to staff.

Section F. Removal of Officers:

Any officer elected may be removed by a majority vote of the Board whenever in its judgment the best interests of the District are not being served by the officer.

Section G. Resignations and Vacancies:

Any officer may resign at any time by giving notice in writing to the Chairperson and the Board, and unless otherwise provided herein, each resignation shall be effective upon receipt of the notice. A vacancy in office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause may be filled from the Board for the unexpired portion of the term by a majority vote of the Board.

ARTICLE VI
DIVISIONS

Section A. Economic Development Division:

The Economic Development Divisions provides Business Assistance, Technical Assistance, and Regional Coordination for Economic Development issues. This work includes the provision of planning, grant writing, grant administration and coordination services to communities and organizations where needed within the realm of economic development, as well as oversight of the MCEDD Revolving Loan Funds, loan packaging assistance and any other program directly providing assistance to small businesses (may include "small business incubators"). The Loan Administration Board established in Article VII, Section B. will be responsible for the operation of MCEDD's Revolving Loan Funds in accordance with approved management plans.

Section B. Transportation Division:

The Transportation Division provides Technical Assistance and Regional Coordination for Transportation issues. This work includes Mobility Management services and the provision of planning, grant writing, grant administration and coordination services to communities and organizations where needed within the realm of transportation, as well as operation of The Link Public Transit.

ARTICLE VII
COMMITTEES

Section A. Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee shall consist of at least ~~seven~~-eight members. Each county (geographic area) within the District shall be represented by a Public Sector Board member on the Executive Committee. At least two Private Sector representatives will be appointed by the full Board at the Annual Meeting. Additional Public Sector and/or Private Sector representatives may be appointed at the discretion of the full Board at the Annual Meeting. The Officers of the MCEDD Board of Directors will each fill one of the Executive Committee positions. Vacancies occurring during the year will be filled by Board action at a regular or special meeting of the MCEDD Board.

The Executive Committee shall have the same powers and authority as the Board of Directors and may take any action(s) on behalf of the Board. The Executive Committee may meet monthly, or as needed to conduct all operations of the District. Significant policy decisions will be referred by the Executive Committee to the full Board of Directors for consideration during a regular or special meeting.

Section B. Loan Administration Board:

A Loan Administration Board shall be selected in accordance with requirements of the approved Revolving Loan Fund Plan governing Economic Development Administration and US Department of Agriculture grant funds and shall serve a term of one year. The Loan Administration Board shall have the authority to make all loan decisions and take any required action on behalf of the MCEDD Board.

Section C. Nominating Committee:

A Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the Chairperson to meet prior to the annual meeting to nominate a slate of officers for the next year and to nominate at least two Private Sector representatives to the Executive Committee.

Section D. Committees:

The Board of Directors or Chairperson may provide for or appoint other committees to assist the Board of Directors in the management and affairs of the District.

Section E. Committee and Loan Administration Board Authority and Reports:

Minutes of the Committee and Loan Administration Board meetings will be maintained at the MCEDD offices. A report of Committee and Loan Administration Board activities will be made at the next regular MCEDD Board meeting.

ARTICLE VIII
STAFF

Section A. Executive Director:

The Executive Director shall be hired by the Executive Committee with the concurrence of the majority of the full Board of Directors upon such terms and conditions as the Board may determine, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board.

Section B. Executive Director, Power and Duties:

The power and duties of the Executive Director are:

1. To act as the chief executive officer of the District and to direct and implement the business and affairs of the District, under the policy guidance of the Board of Directors.
2. To have general charge of the property of the District and to supervise and control all employees of the District.
3. To hire, upon the advice of the MCEDD Executive Committee, all employees and agents of the District and fix their titles, terms of employment, powers, duties and compensation, in accordance with District Policy and Committee recommendations; and to discharge any employee or agent within the guidelines established by District policy.
4. To act in the name of, and on behalf of, the District in regard to such commitments of the District as permitted by Regulatory Agencies and which are appropriate and consistent with the purposes stated herein as the Board may from time to time determine.
5. To sign and countersign all drafts, notes, orders or other undertakings for the payment of money by the District, as authorized by the Board of Directors or Executive Committee.

6. To sign all records and documents whereunto the signatures of the Executive Director shall be lawfully required.

ARTICLE IX
FUNDS, CHECKS AND DEPOSITS

Section A. Program and Budget:

Annually, and before July 1 of each year, the Board of Directors shall propose a program and adopt a budget for the District for the ensuing year. At this meeting, the Board shall further vote an assessment of dues to member organizations for the purpose of providing the necessary funds to accomplish the program as approved by the Board. On or after July 1 of each year, but prior to March 1 of the same fiscal year, each member organization shall forthwith pay to the District the amount of said dues assessment. Failure to pay the assessed dues within the allotted time may result in the termination of membership.

Designated dues, donations, grants, contract funds, etc., will be used solely by the Division so designated, in accordance with approved budgets and management plans.

Section B. Gifts and Grants-In-Aid:

The Board of Directors or Executive Committee may accept on behalf of the District any contribution, gift, bequest or devise for the general purposes or any special purpose of the District, and the Board of Directors and Executive Committee are specifically authorized to accept grants to aid on such conditions as may be approved by the Board of Directors from the United States, the states of Oregon and Washington, or any bureau or agency thereof, as well as from any other lawful source, public or private.

Section C. Deposits:

All funds of the District shall be deposited to the credit of the District in such banks, trust companies or other depositories that meet funding agency requirements as the Board of Directors may select.

Section C. Disbursements:

Upon budget approval by the Board of Directors, disbursements on accounts and expenses provided for in the budget may be made under the authority of such officer or officers, agent or agents as shall from time to time be authorized by resolution of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE X
FISCAL YEAR

Fiscal Year: The fiscal year of the District shall commence July 1 of each year.

ARTICLE XI
AMENDMENTS

Amendments: Amendments to these bylaws, except revisions made to 13CFR302.3, which shall modify these bylaws on the revision date, may be proposed at any regular meeting of the Board when a quorum is present and shall take effect when the amendment receives the concurring vote of a majority of voting representatives.

Amended this 18th day of July, 1990.

Amended this 16th day of January, 2002 /s/ Joan Frey, Chairperson MCEDD Board of Directors

Amended this 14th day of December, 2005 /s/ Dan Ericksen, Chairperson, MCEDD Board of Directors

Amended this 19th day of July, 2006 /s/ Les Perkins, Chairperson, MCEDD Board of Directors

Amended this 10th day of September 2009 /s/ Barbara Briggs, Chairperson, MCEDD Board of Directors

Amended this 15th day of December, 2011 /s/ Don Stevens, Chairperson, MCEDD Board of Directors

Amended this 13th day of September, 2012 /s/ Don Stevens, Chairperson, MCEDD Board of Directors

Amended this 19th day of September, 2013 /s/ Don Stevens, Chairperson, MCEDD Board of Directors

Amended this 19th day of March 2015 /s/ Mike Smith, Chairperson, MCEDD Board of Directors

Amended this 23rd day of June 2022 /s/ Bob Hamlin, Chairperson, MCEDD Board of Directors

Amended this xx day of xxxx 2023 /s/xxxxxx, Chairperson, MCEDD Board of Directors



Economic Development Division Report
Prepared for the September 2022 Executive Committee Meeting

County Economic Development

- Staff continue to get regular calls about the Sherman County housing grant programs. One new application has been received in the last month. Three projects have also been completed since the end of July and requests for payments were submitted to the County.
- Staff have been working with the Kids Zone to research grant opportunities and outline requests for support for their work starting in 2023.
- Staff worked with business in Grass Valley to set up a site assessment provided by Pacific Power to determine if EV charging stations can be installed at the business. Staff are now working with the business to submit a grant application to Pacific Power's Oregon Electric Mobility Grant program for the installation costs. Applications are due August 31 and awardees will be announced in November.
- Mapping for the water system in Rufus took place the third week of August with support from RCAC. This will help the City digitize information about the components of the water system and create a record for future staff. RCAC will return to do the same for the wastewater system.
- The City of Dufur approached the EDC about updating the community vision we worked with the Port of The Dalles to support developing in 2016. Staff has worked to develop materials for review of the Steering Committee formed with a plan to meet in early September.
- Staff developed and posted an RFQ for a consultant to support applying for additional EPA brownfield assessment funding on a regional basis based on feedback at last month's Executive Committee meeting. The RFQ closes later in September.

Rural Capacity Building Grant Projects

The Oregon State Legislature and The Ford Family Foundation have provided some resources to Economic Development Districts in Oregon to support rural capacity building, grant research and writing, and grant management for a variety of types of organizations in small communities. Projects being supported with these funds will have updates reported in this section during the duration of the funding.

- Staff are working with Business Oregon to schedule a One Stop meeting for the City of Shaniko to discuss funding for water system improvements. The City recently completed a feasibility study on the water system.
- Staff have been approached by Business Oregon with a request to possibly support the Sportsman's Park Water Association in applying for and managing state funding that is currently available. The funding would support additional filtration of their water, as they have had arsenic show up in recent testing.
- Staff researched grant opportunities to assist the Dufur Fire Department in purchasing a new ambulance and additional equipment. Staff identified three potential funding sources and will work with Dufur officials to explore them further.
- Staff continued grant research for two projects for Hood River County. The first is a park master plan for Tucker County Park as well as resources for improvements such as boat

ramps and infrastructure improvements, although county officials indicated they currently do not have the bandwidth to move forward with the project. Staff continued communications with county officials regarding the needs for seismic testing for the County Administration Building.

- Staff had meetings with Visit Hood River/Hood River Chamber of Commerce Executive Director regarding a plan to have all media assets translated into Spanish. Staff reached out to Mt. Hood/Columbia Gorge RDMO, the Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance and Travel Oregon to discuss possible grant opportunities for these services, including sustainable planning for future translation services.
- Staff also met with Mt. Hood/Columbia Gorge RDMO and the Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance to discuss grant opportunities through the Google Data Center Community Grants Program that would supplement work being done through an Oregon Cultural Trust grant to identify the economic impact of performing arts and culture organizations on rural communities.

Broadband

- The [Mid-Columbia Broadband Speed](#) Survey launched in late June to gather additional information on speed test gaps as well as access, utilization, and adoption of broadband in our communities. We have received just over 300 responses to the survey as of the end of August and will close it out shortly.
- We are still encouraging people to continue to take the relevant speed test for their location. For Washington (<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/washington-statewide-broadband-act/speedtestsurvey/>) and Oregon (<https://www.fasterinternetoregon.org/>).
- Staff has finalized the agenda for the Gorge Broadband Consortium Meeting September 9 at 1pm! We will have an in-person location in The Dalles as well as a virtual option for those that cannot make it in person. We have representatives from both State and Federal programs that are attending to share updates as well as from ISPs that serve the region and communities engaging around broadband.

Industry Clusters, Entrepreneurship and Innovation

- Staff attended virtual meetings with Business Oregon, Sightline Applications, and Pendleton UAS Range representatives to discuss findings and funding opportunities for an I84 UAS/UAV economic impact assessment and needs identification study next steps.
- Staff collaborated with AUVSI Cascade Chapter staff to plan and manage the Fall Symposium and Tech Showcase in Hood River scheduled for September 28, 2022. The event will feature uncrewed vehicle demonstrations and discussions throughout the day, followed by networking, a keynote address from Insitu's VP of Engineering, and the Tech Showcase featuring GTA companies.
- Staff has been working on marketing opportunities for the GTA. Staff has connected with East Cascade Works to appear on their podcast Work Chatter as a guest discussing GTA, Tech Showcase, workforce opportunities, and more. Additionally, staff has been working with employees from SIGMA Designs to create a new promotional video for GTA filming scheduled for early September.
- The Wasco Innovation Initiative continues to make progress. The group has completed several business interviews, hosted a second Innovators Drinks event, and has a third event scheduled. Staff is working to aggregate information provided in interviews.

- Staff met with representatives from Maupin and South Wasco County to collaborate for an upcoming event, South County Connect. Staff will host the Economic Resilience Pub Talk as a panel during this event in South Wasco County focusing on 2-3 businesses in the area along with discussion of resources such as access to capital and small business development. This event is scheduled for September 24, 2022.
- Staff wrote the Regional Innovation Hub Planning Grant Request for Proposal for a consultant to complete the scope of work MCEDD was awarded by Business Oregon in July. It has been posted with a deadline of early September for responses.

Energy:

- Staff and partners have continued to work on the “Creating Equitable Access to Energy Efficiency Resources and Improving Homes” project, which is focused on identifying and addressing barriers to accessing solar, solar + storage, and energy efficiency among low-moderate income and Latinx communities in Hood River County. Digital and paper surveys in English and Spanish are being distributed throughout the community. The Next Door held two focus groups, one in English and one in Spanish, in late July. Takeaways from these outreach actions will combine with energy service provider interviews to inform a summary report at the conclusion of this project.
- Staff and project partners from the Next Door, Solar Oregon, and Energy Trust of Oregon have launched Solarize Hood River County, a campaign that aims to support homeowners with learning about and installing solar and solar + storage. The campaign includes five educational workshops that are taking place throughout the month of September. Residents can sign up for installation through the end of October. This campaign is making significant efforts to provide all campaign materials in both English and Spanish and to reach residents with low-moderate income who have not been served by previous campaigns.
- MCEDD received five responses to our Request for Proposals to develop a website for the Energy Council. Staff is prepared to move forward with a contract and is planning a kick-off meeting for mid-September.
- Staff has prepared a scope of work and identified a contractor to support the Energy Council in moving forward with its DEI efforts. Goals for this work include helping the Energy Council develop a shared understanding of DEI concepts, incorporate a DEI framework into the group’s planning, and develop a list of next steps in its DEI journey. Two hourlong trainings will be convened to help the Council achieve these goals.
- Staff supported the Hood River County School District with an application to the Environmental Protection Agency’s Clean School Bus Rebate program. The school district submitted their application in August. If successful, the rebate program will fund an electric school bus and necessary charging infrastructure.

Infrastructure:

- **Biggs Water Project:** The project is still waiting on the reservoir. No major updates.
- **Crystal Springs Water District:** Still working on completing both the Westside and South Reservoir projects. No major updates.
- **Cascade Locks Wastewater:** The issue with the pipe being in the wrong place has been corrected and the contractor has been able to continue work on the construction of the grit removal system at the treatment plant site. They have also been working on inspection and cleaning of the collection piping throughout town. Staff continues to review payroll reports, conduct worker interviews, and draft disbursement requests for the project.

- **City of Hood River:** The LID redesign for Phase 2 is close to complete. Staff is working with the City to make sure all of their environmental review requirements have been completed and approved by the funder. The City will also need to secure some drainage easements before any construction can start. Work to draft the bid documents will start soon. The City is still planning on a fall bid advertisement.
- **Dog River Pipeline:** Timber removal continues on the project site but should be done within the next few weeks. The pipeline construction is moving forward as well. No major updates.
- **Sherman County Bus Barn:** Staff met with the County and engineer to review preliminary design options. The group discussed costs and acknowledged that the project may cost more than what the County has allocated. Staff will work with the County to research additional funding options.
- **Hood River County - Adult Center Kitchen Rehab:** Staff continue working with the County to complete CDBG requirements (environmental review, Section 3 plan, LEP plan, etc.). Staff is also helping the County draft a contract with the architect for work on the bid documentation and construction oversight.



Executive Director's Report
Prepared for the September 2022 Executive Committee Meeting

Regional Work and Outreach

- Our RARE Natasha Blaircobb completed resiliency profiles for each of the counties before her appointment expired. They are posted to [our website here](#), and used a methodology developed by the University of Oregon's Institute for Policy Research and Engagement.
- Associations: As President of Oregon Economic Development Districts Association, I presented an overview of the EDDs to the Governance and Revenue Committee of the Association of Oregon Counties. We are planning an in-person meeting of the association in October in Bend. I am overseeing the association's consultant who is updating and implementing the work plan. There will be a virtual gathering of the Washington EDDs in early September.
- We issued an RFP for the Regional Innovation Hub planning grant consultant and an RFQ for the EPA Brownfields Assessment consultant, with early to mid-September deadlines.
- Planning continues for the November 4 Annual Columbia Gorge Economic Symposium. We have secured The Dalles Civic Auditorium and most panelists. The Workforce keynote speaker is still in development. We have sent out a Save the Date. ***Board members that would like to attend should let Jill know.***
- I engaged in regional outreach with meetings with Oregon Rep. Bonham, staff for Oregon Senator Bentz, East Cascades Works, Washington Dept. of Commerce, staff for Governor Inslee.

Business Assistance

- We closed several loans in August: Gorges Brewing for MCEDD and OIB, 230 Clearwater from the MCEDD Attainable Housing Fund, Red Letters Enterprises for MCEDD and Yo Treats for Mount Hood Economic Alliance.
- There are five requests in the pipeline ranging from \$400,000 to \$10,000 request that we would spread across all three lenders.
- We are continuing to struggle with USDA on getting approval for the first loan through the USDA Rural Business Development Grant for the Scenic Area, which the OIB approved in April. We have gotten approval from SHPO to move forward with no adverse effect to the historic building and now we wait for the final word from USDA. USDA also provided a training on their environmental review process.
- I recruited applicants for the OIB and MHEA, but was only successful in OIB applicants for all three Oregon Scenic Area counties. The Counties are moving forward with the process to recommend appointment by Governor Brown. I continue to look in Hood River and Clackamas County for MHEA.
- We are planning a Pub Talk-style entrepreneurship networking event in Maupin on Sept 24 in coordination with the Maupin 100 event. We are recruiting businesses for the panel and working with the local partners to promote the talk.
- Business Oregon has announced several programs that could support our lending and offered webinars in early September. These include a Loan Loss Reserve and a few programs they were awarded from the US Treasury for a [State Small Business Credit Initiative](#). We will learn more and possibly bring a request to the Executive Committee for applications.

The LINK Transportation

- We interviewed for the Field Supervisor position and have made a job offer. I will announce the candidate at the meeting.
- The Link is struggling with staffing levels from drivers and dispatchers being out sick or on vacation, as well as several open driver positions. We have had to reduce service for our summer shuttle to The Dalles Aquatic Center as a result. We also were only able to offer one shuttle to the Wasco County Fair.
- We will be hosting a meeting of the Wasco County Public Transportation Advisory Committee in September to start the discussions for the next round of biennial grants that support The Link.
- Columbia Area Transit terminated early our contract to provide weekday service between Hood River and The Dalles, citing their own financial needs. This will result in a deficit of roughly \$75,000 in The Link budget. We will be assessing whether we can fill all open driver positions.
- We held a meeting with Vice-Chair Steve Kramer and reps from the Tygh School Community Center transportation to discuss how we can support public transportation in South Wasco County. We are planning to increase our South County Shuttle to twice per week and to expand its route to Pine Grove/ Wamic as a result.

Mobility Management and Regional Transportation

- The five transportation providers of the Gorge TransLink Alliance are currently exploring opportunities to coordinate on public transportation projects as they seek funding from the new cycle of ODOT and WSDOT grant programs.
- Mt Adams Transportation Services has adopted a new technology that allows riders to track their bus in real time on a map. See it in action here by clicking on "Track My Bus" on the pages that show the MATS routes: <https://gorgetranslink.com/routes/white-salmon-to-hood-river-loop-monday-friday/>
- The Alliance has adopted a new SMS program that allows riders to sign up for bus alerts from just one or all of the providers. Providers can instantly send out an alert to their riders about sudden schedule disruptions as they happen--anything from freeway closures, weather-related issues, or mechanical breakdowns. Riders can sign up here to receive these text messages on their phones: <https://gorgetranslink.com/>
- Travel Trainer Sara Crook has been focused on outreach to the North Wasco County School District and the Hood River Valley School District to high school students, faculty, and staff, as the schools prepare to reopen for the new school year. Sara has also been assisting with pass distribution and travel training education for the Native Americans living at the Treaty Fishing Access Sites along the Columbia River and will be attending the large annual Native American Back to School event at Celilo Village hosted by many community partners including One Community Health and the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission. The LINK has prepared a special creative activity for the students and families which involves painting a bus.
- Gorge Pass Marketing: As we move into fall, the Gorge Pass Marketing project has shifted some of the outreach focus to educating local residents about how to use the regional bus system with a series of Travel Training videos. Each video will focus on some of the most common challenges that riders encounter: how to make a bus transfer, how to use the Google Trip Planner, how to read a bus schedule, how to put your bike on the bus bike rack. These videos will be shared on the Gorgepass.com and will also live on the Gorgetranslink.com's new Travel

Training page (not yet launched). These are evergreen products that were prioritized by the Gorge TransLink Alliance.

- Gorge Regional Transit Strategy, Phase II: MCEDD hosted a successful first Stakeholder Advisory Committee (STAG) meeting on August 3rd. There was good bistate representation, with a diversity of organizations attending, including state and federal agencies and representatives, county and city staff and electeds, human service organizations, and nonprofits. The group was enthusiastic and had valuable input to give to the consultants and MCEDD on the work to date, which included Draft Memo 2: Existing Framework Memo, Operations, and the Planning Context memo and Draft Memo 3: Regional Travel Patterns, Transit Gaps, and Opportunities Analysis. The next STAG meeting will be October 5th.

Facilities, Trainings and Operations

- We held a Nominating Committee meeting in August. The Committee will present their recommendations to the Board at the September meeting for the Officers and the Private Sector Board Members on the Executive Committee.
- I applied for a Technical Assistance grant from the Ford Family Foundation of \$5000 for a consultant to support MCEDD in developing a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan. We have selected Hyland Solutions for the work and are waiting to hear the grant application outcome.
- Our 2022-2027 CEDS has been selected for an Innovation Award from NADO! We will do a larger press release on the acknowledgement once we have some additional details from NADO.
- I attended the CIS Conference in Salem in August, which provided trainings on human resources skills, ergonomics and new offerings in our health benefits. I have registered for the annual NADO conference in October, held in Pittsburgh this year, where they have also asked me to present.
- We invited OSHA out to assist with ergonomics assessments in early September.
- The Office Admin position is posted with a September 6 deadline. We have a handful of applicants thus far. It was advertised as 32 hours per week with full benefits.
- Dana and I met with the City of Mosier to discuss possible support for financial management.