

Columbia Gorge Economic Development Strategy 2017-2022

Updated March 2020



Hood River, Klickitat, Sherman, Skamania and Wasco counties

Content

Vision.....	2
Introduction/Background.....	2
Our Region	3
Data Fact Sheets	4
SWOT Analysis	6
Economic Resilience.....	9
Priority Strategies/Actions.....	11
Housing.....	12
Entrepreneurial Environment.....	15
Strategic Target Sectors	15
Workforce.....	21
Regional Infrastructure.....	26
Water/Wastewater	26
Transportation	30
Broadband	33
Regulatory Environment.....	37
Priority Projects.....	40
Evaluation Framework	44
Appendices	46



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VISION

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



INTRODUCTION

What is the Strategy?

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

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

The following sections form the basis of the strategy:

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

What is the Process?

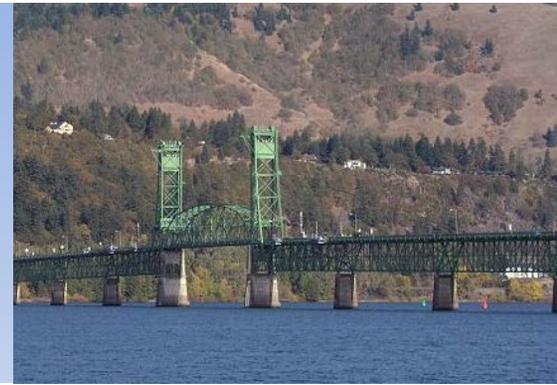
Development of the 2017-2022 strategy began in June 2016 with appointment of a CEDs steering committee. The committee planned and conducted seven regional outreach sessions which rotated throughout the five-county region:

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

In February 2017 the MCEDD Board adopted individual project priorities. The public comment period remained open until May 25, 2017, with formal adoption in June 2017. The plan was revised and reaffirmed by the MCEDD Board of Directors in March of 2018, 2019, and 2020.

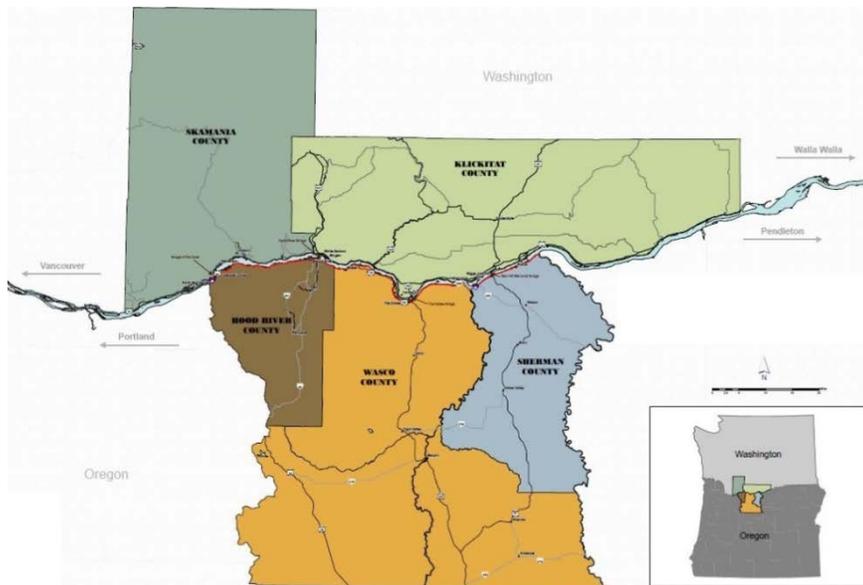
OUR REGION

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



Geography

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



Regional Characteristics

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

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

Economic Foundations

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

DATA FACT SHEETS

Population

Population Estimate:

85,672

Civilian Workforce:

44,319

Growth

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

Data Sources:

US Census
State Employment
Departments
StatsAmerica

SOCIAL CONTEXT

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

The region's population lacks diversity, with 92% of the population in the five county area identifying their race as white-alone.

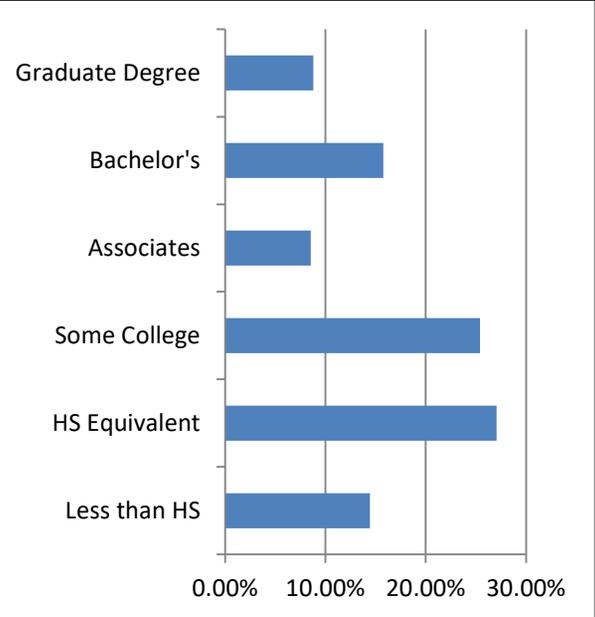
There is a growing Hispanic/Latino population, composing 18.7% of the five county population. Hood River County data shows the Hispanic/Latino population at 32%.

The region's population is **aging**. As of 2018, 20% of the population was 65+. It is projected to grow significantly in the coming years.



The region has a higher percentage of **veterans** (8%) than the averages for the US (6%), Oregon (7%), and Washington (7%).

Educational Attainment (%)



Broadband access in homes has been steadily increasing, ranging from over 74% in Sherman and Wasco counties to 83% in Hood River County.



Mean Travel Time to Work: ranges from an average of 17 minutes in Hood River and Wasco counties to 30 minutes in Skamania County.

DATA FACT SHEETS

Income/ Housing

Poverty

Income disparities remain a significant issue for economic prosperity. The poverty rate has declined, with the regional poverty rate at 12%.

Housing

- Number of housing units in 2017: 38,202; 70% of which are single units
- Built before 1940: 15%
- Units constructed since 2014: 271

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

ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Employment

The unemployment rate is trending down from 5.0% in December 2018 to 3.8% in December 2019. The 12 month average is 4.6%

Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment has slightly decreased in the last year, from 32,195 in December 2018 to 32,005 in December 2019.

Wages and Income

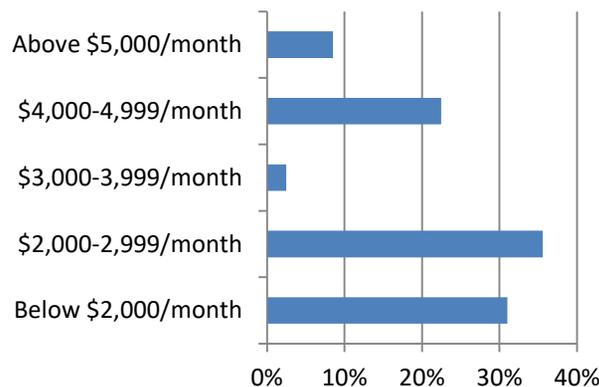
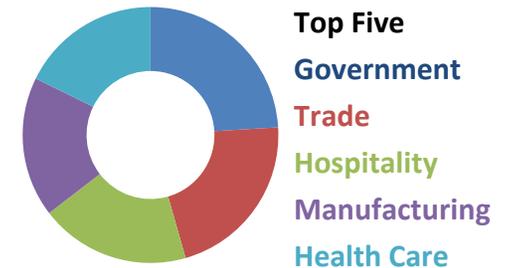
Average 2018 per capita personal income for the region was \$49,407 (vs the US at \$54,446).

Median HH Income (\$)

County	2013	2018
Hood River	56,725	62,935
Klickitat	41,694	54,056
Sherman	42,639	48,056
Skamania	53,712	58,598
Wasco	43,765	50,973

Major Industries By Jobs

The regional industry mix is shifting, with top employment categories in 2018 by Jobs:

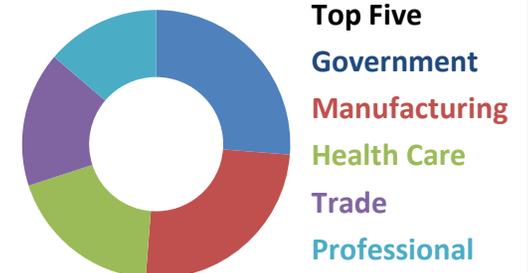


Average Wages

In 2018, over 65% of jobs in the region earned less than \$3,000/month (~\$18/hr), representing the largest share of the job market.

By Payroll

When sorting by payroll, the categories are similar, but the distribution shifts (2018 data).



SWOT Analysis

Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats

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

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

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

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

Economic Resilience

Why Focus on Resiliency?

Regional economic prosperity is linked to resiliency.

Resiliency Attributes

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

Strategy Role

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

Overview

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

Primary Vulnerabilities

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

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

Economic Resilience: What makes us resilient?

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

Current State

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

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

Responsive Initiatives

Examples of responsive initiatives contained in the regional strategy:

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

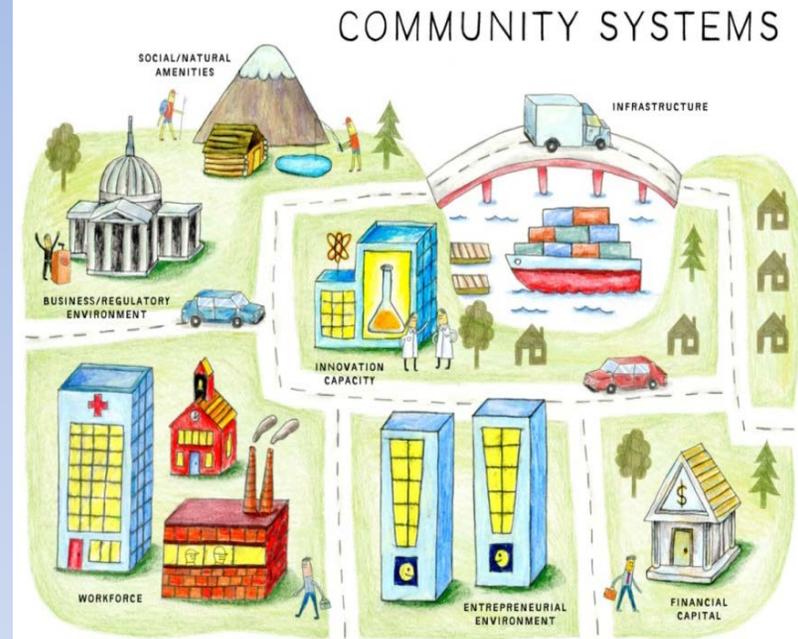
Steady-state Initiatives

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

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

PRIORITY GOALS

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



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

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



HOUSING

Overview

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

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

Challenge:

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

Housing Action Plan

Top Three Priorities

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

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

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



FINANCIAL CAPITAL/ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT

Overview

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

High Tech: *Unmanned Systems*

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

Manufacturing: *Fermentation Science, Value Added*

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

Healthcare

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

Renewable Energy

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

Forest/Wood Products

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

Art/Culture/Tourism/Recreation

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

Financial Capital/Entrepreneurial Environment Action Plan

Priorities

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

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

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

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

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

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



Workforce

Overview

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

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

Workforce Action Plan

Priorities

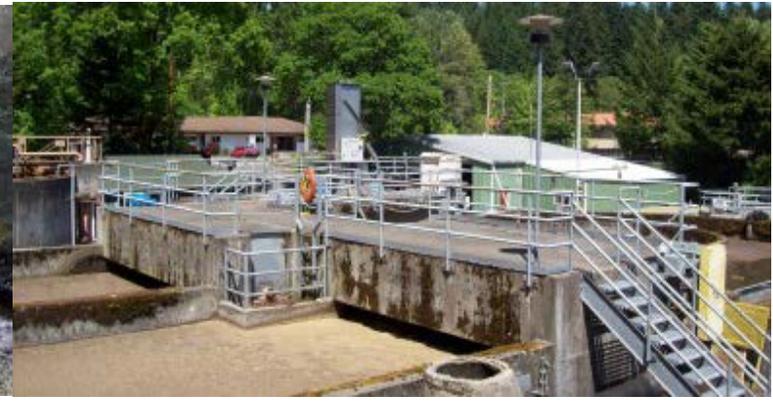
- Increase skill level. Focus on programs tied to key industry sectors (eg food/beverage at Columbia Gorge Community College)
- Develop more paid internship opportunities.
- Enhance regional participation on workforce investment boards.

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

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

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

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



Water/Wastewater

Overview

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

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

Infrastructure: Water/Wastewater Action Plan

Priorities

	Collaborators	Timeline
4.1 Strategy: Address water and wastewater system constraints to economic development and to increase economic resiliency.		
4.1.1 Inventory water and wastewater systems regionally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Assess current capacity and identify systems with room for growth. b) Provide mechanisms to support public awareness of facility capabilities- eg regional website page. 	Water districts, cities, MCEDD, county ec dev	Mid-term: assess Awareness: Long term
4.1.2 Prioritize and upgrade key water systems to address economic development constraints, focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Systems serving industrial parks. b) Redundancy for systems accessing water through sensitive ecological areas. c) Investments into facilities to keep pace and support growth in key industry sectors, such as food processing. 	Water districts, cities, MCEDD, county ec dev	Annual
4.1.3: Address aging septic systems. Provide technical assistance to small unincorporated areas.	States, local partners TBD	Long term
4.1.4: Provide technical assistance and grant administration to support key water/wastewater system projects. Host regional wastewater conversations to identify opportunities for collaborative management.	MCEDD	Ongoing
4.2 Strategy: Advocate for funding into innovative products and practices in the region and proliferate best practices.		
4.2.1 Support innovation of technologies in irrigation and improving tools to support management of water resource (e.g., scientific irrigation scheduling-Wy'East).	Wy'east, FCA, soil/ water conservation districts, watershed councils, industry	Immediate-long term

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



Transportation

Overview

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

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

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

Infrastructure: Transportation Action Plan

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

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

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

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



BROADBAND

Overview

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

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

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

Infrastructure: Broadband Action Plan

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

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

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



Regulatory Environment

Overview

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

Regulatory Action Plan

Priorities

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

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

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

PRIORITY PROJECTS

Washington Top Ten Priorities

Prioritization Consideration

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

Rank	Project	Description	Goal Areas Addressed
1	Goldendale Pumped Storage Hydro	Pumped hydro energy storage project. Would provide a range of services to the grid to support reliability and resilience. License Application filed with FERC in 12/2019.	Entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector).
2	Stevenson Wastewater System	An upgrade to the wastewater treatment plant would address compliance issues and add capacity to accommodate future growth.	Entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector) and infrastructure (wastewater).
3	Cascades Business Park Feasibility Study	The study would identify the appropriate industry sectors to market the property to now that all planned improvements to site have been completed.	Entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector).
4	Dallesport Industrial Park Improvement Projects	Construct an industrial building at the Dallesport location, move road and bring 13 acres to shovel ready condition.	Entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector).
5	Buck Creek Water System	Replace aging water line that supplies water from Buck Creek to the City of White Salmon. If it collapsed, it would leave the city without water.	Housing, entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector) and infrastructure (water).

PRIORITY PROJECTS

Washington Top Ten Priorities

Prioritization Consideration

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

Rank	Project	Description	Goal Areas Addressed
6	Aviation Maintenance Training Facility	Construct a multi-use flex space and utilities expansion to use for Columbia Gorge Community College’s aviation mechanic training program and other business opportunities.	Entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector).
7	Goldendale Waste Water Treatment Plant Improvements	Improvements to grit removal, solids handling system, aeration system and process configuration system.	Entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector) and infrastructure (waste water).
8	Bingen Point Projects	Three projects including construction of a flex building, property improvement, and construction of street and utilities.	Entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector).
9	Broadband – Klickitat and Skamania	Implementation of strategies from Stevenson and Goldendale Broadband Action Plans to address needs.	Entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector) and infrastructure (broadband).
10	City of North Bonneville Lift Station Replacement	Replace aging lift station that requires constant maintenance to function.	Infrastructure (wastewater).

PRIORITY PROJECTS

Oregon Top Ten Priorities

Purpose of Prioritization

Prioritization is designed to:

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

Rank	Project	Description	Goal Area Addressed
1	Hood River Interstate Bridge	A new bridge is needed to improve and ensure multimodal transportation of people and goods across the Columbia River between the communities of Bingen and White Salmon in Washington, and Hood River in Oregon.	Entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector) and infrastructure (transportation).
2	Workforce Housing Projects	<u>Hood River</u> : Engage in projects and feasibility analysis to develop critically needed affordable and workforce housing in the City of Hood River and Hood River County. <u>Sherman</u> : Created incentives to encourage the construction of new rental housing/ rehabilitation of existing housing. The County continues to look for creative ideas that would solve housing issues.	Housing.
3	Dog River Pipeline Upgrade (The Dalles)	Replace existing pipeline, which transports over 50% of the City's water supply and is a deteriorating wooden pipe, with new ductile iron pipe. Capacity will increase from 8 to 17M gallons per day.	Housing, entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector), and infrastructure (water).
4	Waterfront Stormline Replacement	Relocate a storm sewer line that serves downtown, I84, and the waterfront and bring the storm drainage system into correct operation.	Entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector) and infrastructure (wastewater).

PRIORITY PROJECTS

Oregon Top Ten Priorities

Rank	Project	Description	Goal Area Addressed
5	Broadband – Sherman and Wasco	<u>Cascadia East Interconnection</u> : Develop an interconnection point East of the Cascades in The Dalles, as well as a connection route east to the next major exchange to provide resiliency in the ability to access the internet in the case of a subduction event. <u>Sherman</u> : Improve connectivity throughout the County by exploring strategies for improving service outside of the four cities.	Infrastructure (broadband).
6	Treatment of Waste Water	Address processing of waste. Create additional storage to digest sludge composition. Address the Total Maximum Daily Load issues experienced by Odell Sanitary.	Infrastructure (waste water).
7	Cascade Locks Substation	Purchase the existing Bonneville Power Administration substation and expand it to provide for future power needs.	Entrepreneurial environment (key industry sector).
8	Backup Power/ Emergency Generator Purchase and Integration for Primary Municipal Well	The cities of Moro, Rufus and Wasco have identified the need to install an emergency backup generator for their primary municipal wells to ensure clean/adequate water supplies for sanitation and fire suppression efforts during a grid down scenario. This would help to mitigate the hazards associated with grid down events, such as with a wildfire.	Infrastructure and public safety/healthy communities.
9	Bridge of the Gods Maintenance	Complete 15 year maintenance and preservation of the Bridge.	Infrastructure (transportation).
10	Dufur Waste Water Treatment System Improvements	System is out of compliance on discharge permit. They have completed basic engineering for a design to expand their waste water treatment ponds and add an additional irrigation pivot that will allow them to discontinue discharge into the creek.	Infrastructure (waste water).

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Evaluation Areas

Metrics

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

Milestones

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

Meaningful Impact

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

Metrics: Regional Economic Health

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

TARGETS

Income

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

Labor Force

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

Businesses

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

DATA

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

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

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Metrics: Priority Areas

HOUSING

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

ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT

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

WORKFORCE

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

INFRASTRUCTURE

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

REGULATORY

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

Meaningful Impact

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

APPENDICES

A. 2012 Strategy Outcomes

B. Detailed SWOT Analysis

C. Project Lists

D. Participant List



Appendix A: 2012 Summary Outcomes

Overview of the 2012 Strategy Objectives

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

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

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

The Result

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

2012 Outcomes: Facilitated Increased Access to Capital

Increased Locally Managed Business Financing Options

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

Provided Financing to Grow Local Businesses

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

Deployed the Agora Investment Platform

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



Sample Businesses Supported:

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

2012 Outcomes: Expanded Broadband Capacity

Established a Regional Gorge Broadband Consortium (gorgebroadband.org)

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

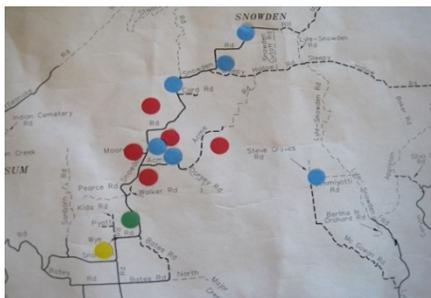
Secured Funding for Broadband Expansion

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



Bridging the Rural Digital Divide

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



2012 Outcomes: Increased Regional Attention to Housing Constraints

Advanced Attainable Housing as a Regional Priority

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



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

2012 Outcomes: Increased Regional Public Transportation Options

Enhanced Regional Connections

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

Expanded Services

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

2012 Outcomes: Facilitated Investment Into Water/Wastewater Systems

Supported Water/Wastewater System Construction

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

Provided Technical Assistance

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



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

Infrastructure

2012 Outcomes: Completed Regional Priority Public Works Projects

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

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



Investing in our Future

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

2012 Outcomes: Accelerated STEM Education

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

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



STEM Benefits Students

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

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

2012 Outcomes: Advanced Regional Industry Sectors

Furthered Growth of Existing Industry Sector Alliances

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

Developed New Industry Alliances to Support Value Added Agriculture and Fermentation

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



Learn more about industry sector activities:

Gorge Tech Alliance: crgta.org

Gorge Cider: gorgecidersociety.com

Gorge Wine: columbiagorgewine.com

Renewable Energy: cgbrez.org

Arts/Culture: gorgeculture.org

Appendix B SWOT Detail

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

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

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

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

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

high visibility locations, especially along the Columbia River corridor

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

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

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

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

Appendix C. Project Lists

Klickitat County 2020 Priority Projects

Priority	Project Sponsor(s)	Description
1.	Klickitat County	<p><u>Goldendale Pumped Storage Hydro</u> Project is a proposed \$2 billion pumped-hydro energy storage project. Using existing pumping infrastructure from an old aluminum smelting facility, the closed-loop system would include three variable-speed reversible pump-turbines for a total generating capacity of 1200 MW and a total pumping capacity of 1552 MW. The project would provide a range of services to the grid to support reliability and resilience in addition to specifically balancing variable wind generation. A preliminary permit for the project was issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in March 2018.</p>
2.	Klickitat County Port of Klickitat City of Bingen City of White Salmon	<p><u>Hood River Bridge Replacement</u> Replace bridge connecting Washington and Oregon</p>
3.	Port of Klickitat	<p><u>Dallesport Industrial Park</u> Task 1: Cornerstone Building Port of Klickitat seeks funding to construct approximately 20,000 sq. ft. industrial building Task 2: Dow Road Improvement Move Dow Road north and bring 13 acres (lot 35) to shovel ready condition</p>
4.	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport	<p><u>Aviation Maintenance Training Facility</u> Project would include construction of a multi-use flex space and utilities expansion in airport business park. Airport has tenant identified to use half of the flex-space for Columbia Gorge Community College's aviation mechanic training program. The other half could be utilized as permanent or transient jet hangar rental space.</p>

5.	City of Goldendale	<p><u>Waste Water Treatment Plant Improvements</u></p> <p>Project includes grit removal, solids handling system, aeration system and process configuration system improvements.</p>
6.	Port of Klickitat	<p><u>Bingen Point Business Park</u></p> <p>Task 1: BPBP Improvement Bring up to an additional 5 acres to shovel ready condition</p> <p>Task 2: Flex Building Construction of a 15,000 sq. ft. flex building</p> <p>Task 3: Maple Street Improvements Construct street and public utility improvements for targeted properties</p>
7.	City of White Salmon	<p><u>Buck Creek water distribution line replacement</u></p> <p>Replace 7 miles of deteriorating water main</p>
8.	Klickitat County	<p><u>Broadband</u></p> <p>Project to address the lack of Broadband access in many parts of County</p>
9.	City of Goldendale	<p><u>Municipal Airport Improvements</u></p> <p>The present runway is 3,491-feet long and 40-feet wide and needs a runway extension to 5,000-feet length and 60-foot width and full-length taxiway to accommodate jet planes. It also needs a helicopter landing pad to accommodate helicopters used for firefighting purposes, as well as a jet fuel tank.</p>
10.	City of Goldendale	<p><u>Water Supply Improvement Project</u></p> <p>Replacement of an aging water transmission line including an Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Project, with a peak hydropower of 500 kW.</p>

Skamania County 2020 Priority Projects

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>	<i>Project</i>
1	City of Stevenson	<p><u>Stevenson Wastewater System</u></p> <p>The City of Stevenson is in need of a wastewater treatment plant upgrade. The plant is currently receiving more waste than permitted and is under an administrative order to mitigate the issue, which includes infrastructure improvements.</p> <p>The public portion of the project is to bring the treatment plant into compliance and to allow for future growth. It also includes upgrades to the collection system to reduce inflow and infiltration and better manage the increased capacity. Using grant/loan funds from the Department of Ecology, the City has drafted a final design for the treatment plant and collection system. They have an application in to the EDA for supplemental disaster funding that, if awarded, will fund a portion of the construction costs. They also have an application in to USDA RD to cover the matching costs to the EDA grant.</p> <p>The private portion of the project is for pretreatment of sewer for high-load commercial users, such as breweries, cider producers, distilleries and other industrial beverage producers.</p>
2	Port of Skamania	<p><u>Cascade Business Park Feasibility Study</u></p> <p>Cascades Business Park is one of the few large remaining industrial sites in the Columbia River Gorge NSA that's within a one-hour drive of Portland. In 2019, the Port completed the infrastructure required to allow development of the 32-acre parcel. A feasibility study would identify appropriate industry sectors to market the property to. The Port will be submitting a CERB application after July 2020 for funding for the study.</p>
3	Skamania County PUD	<p><u>North Bonneville Substation & Feeder Replacement</u></p> <p>The PUD is looking to replace an aging substation in the City of North Bonneville, upgrade existing feeder lines, and add a new feeder to serve the Port industrial land south of SR 14. Improvements will increase capacity throughout the City to allow for more growth, improve existing voltage issues, and significantly increase reliability to the area by improving the tie with adjacent substations. The project is in the feasibility stage and the PUD was awarded \$7.4 mil from the EDA disaster supplemental funding that, along with match funds, will allow them to complete design and construction.</p>
4	Stevenson Downtown Association	<p><u>Stevenson Park Plaza</u></p> <p>Develop town plaza in the existing courthouse lawn. The City and County have agreed on a design concept. The Stevenson Downtown Association has an agreement with the County for pre-engineering work; archaeological and geotechnical tasks are being completed. Next steps are to look for funding sources, targeting the RCO and local funds.</p>
5	City of Stevenson	<p><u>First Street Traffic Calming & Sidewalk Pedestrian Path Connection</u></p> <p>The City is looking to improve the appearance of First Street and will begin by installing a pedestrian overlook near the intersection of First Street and Columbia, connect a pedestrian footpath leading to the Columbia River Waterfront under the BNSF rail line, extend the sidewalk along the south side of First Street, provide streetscape</p>

		enhancements in keeping with the enhancements to 2 nd street, and realign Columbia Street. This project is in the planning stages. The city has received some funding and is still looking for additional grants or local support to cover the remaining costs.
6	City of North Bonneville	<u>City of North Bonneville Lift Station Replacement</u> The city's current lift stations experienced issues in the fall of 2017 and continue to need constant maintenance and patching to function without the funds for complete replacement. The city raised the sewer rate by 10% in February of 2019, and will be performing a water rate study to evaluate a reasonable water rate increase to be more competitive for grant funding possibilities.
7	City of Stevenson	<u>Stevenson - Russell Avenue Upgrades</u> The project involves rehabilitation of water, sewer, and storm water lines. It also includes undergrounding of power and communication lines, sidewalk rehabilitation, paving the entire street, new street lights and landscaping. The city has received all necessary funding for this project.
8	Skamania County	<u>High Bridge Park</u> Improvements for the park. The County is targeting RCO as a funding source.
9	City of Stevenson	<u>Industrial Park Feasibility Study</u> Conduct a feasibility study for a piece of land near the transfer site. City will work with the County to apply for CERB funding, using Brownfield funding as match, to support this project.
10	Port of Skamania	<u>Stevenson Shoreline Restoration/Enhancement</u> This Project will construct a new public access to the Columbia River in the City of Stevenson, WA. In-water construction and a new waterfront trail, landscaping, and public river access is complete. The Stevenson Shoreline Restoration and Enhancement Project will stop bank erosion and restore aquatic habitat along 1,105 feet of Columbia River bank. The project entails extending the shoreline on average 78 feet to the south. The Port will use an estimated 18,730 cubic yards of rock and soil to restore the shoreline and enhance aquatic and riparian habitats. The shoreline will be re-vegetated with native tree species to increase riparian canopy cover by 25%.

Other projects on Community Action Team list:

- Cascades Business Park Grading & Enhancements
- Stevenson Fire Station
- Stevenson Broadband Project
- Wind River Boat Launch Improvements
- Brownfield Assessment and Redevelopment
- Buildable Lands and Housing Needs
- Skamania County ADA Project
- Kanaka – Stevenson Elementary Sidewalk Connection

Hood River County 2020 Priority Projects

Rank	Project Name	Description (as submitted by Project Sponsor)
1	Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge Replacement	The existing bridge is nearly 90 years old, structurally obsolete and seismically deficient. A new bridge is needed to improve and ensure multi-modal transportation of people and goods across the Columbia River between the communities of Bingen and White Salmon in Washington, and Hood River in Oregon. Total project cost is \$350M.
2	Bridge of the Gods Maintenance	Maintenance of the Bridge of the Gods. Total cost: \$78,670,000. (Include \$600,000 in Bridge Fix-It funds over six years). Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) WaNaPa and Toll Booth Road intersection traffic circle \$1,690,000. (Signalized intersection if \$2,709,000.) b) Design and construction of Pacific Crest Trail link across the river adjacent to the Bridge. \$28M.
3	Housing	Engage in projects and feasibility analysis to develop critically needed affordable and workforce housing in the City of Hood River and Hood River County.
4	City of Hood River Waterfront Storm Line Replacement	Relocate a storm sewer line that serves downtown, I84, and the waterfront and bring the storm drainage system into correct operation.
5	Treatment of wastewater	Address the Total Maximum Daily Load issues at Odell Sanitary. Work with regional group to plan for future - processing of sludge and land application of biosolids.
6	Port of Cascade Locks 26 Mile Multi Use Travel project	Parking lot and restrooms.
7	Cascade Locks Substation	The City of Cascade Locks is on the brink of rapid expansion in the Port of Cascade Locks Business Park. The City is able to provide the power for the first few new industrial customers. For the longer term the City needs to purchase the existing Bonneville Power Administration substation and expand it to provide the power needs for 2017 and beyond. We anticipate receiving an 80% matching grant from the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Agency in 2020 for the first \$3 million phase of the project. Total project cost: \$6.3 million
8	Hood River Lot 1	Lot 1 is the largest remaining light industrial property in Hood River. A significant infrastructure investment- specifically, water, sewer, and public streets - is necessary to prepare the site for industrial development to meet long term job creation and economic development goals of the community. Total Project Cost estimate: \$8,319,050
9	City of Hood River Intersection Improvements	Reconfiguration and signalization at Cascade Avenue and Rand Road intersection; Construct traffic signal at the intersection of 2nd Street and Oak Street (Historic Highway 30) in Hood River.
10	City of Cascade Locks City Hall Refurbishment	City Hall needs to have all electrical and lighting systems, all heating/air conditioning systems, all windows, all plumbing and the roof replaced and brought up to the current building code requirements. This would also include the seismic upgrade of \$2.5 million. Total project cost: \$5 million

Additional projects submitted for consideration of ranking

The following projects were also submitted for consideration of ranking and are presented in no particular order, with an opportunity to include all or part of those listed as “additional priority projects.”

Project Name/ Sponsor	Description
City of Cascade Locks Wastewater Facilities Improvement Project	This project has been funded by a \$1.1 million grant/loan from the Oregon Business Development Department Infrastructure Finance Authority and a \$4.7 million grant/loan from the USDA Rural Utility Services. The City will be seeking a Community Development Block grant of \$2.5 million in 2020 to help offset some of these costs. Total project cost: \$5.7 million
Railroad Quiet Zone (City of Cascade Locks)	Upgrade the Herman Creek Lane at grade crossing to meet Federal Standards and apply for Train Horn Quiet Zone status through Federal Railway Administration. We do have a Small City Allotment Grant of \$100,000 for this project. Total project cost: \$200,000
Wetlands Bank	Form of a wetland bank in Hood River, using a linear concept combined with spot mitigation areas. There is potential to leverage additional types of credits such as flora and fauna habitat, forest and recreation needs and incorporate those into linear locations. Following creation of a steering committee, work with a third party consultant versed in wetland bank legal structures and physical needs may be hired to carry out the Scope of Work. Estimated cost for pre-feasibility TA: \$50K
Multi-use Facility (Performing Arts Initiative)	The Performing Arts Initiative’s mission is to lead the development of a multi-use facility that will be a destination for outstanding performing arts in the Gorge. Land (for lease) has been identified for the location of the construction of a 600-seat, state-of-the-art theatre in Hood River. The PAI is seeking seed funding of approximately one million dollars to help support the next phase of the project to include architectural designs and fund development.
Solar and battery backup resilience microgrids for critical facilities (Hood River County Energy Council)	Complete feasibility and secure funding for up to 10 solar-plus-storage microgrid systems to increase the resilience of critical facilities. These systems reduce disruptions for critical services and medically vulnerable populations by providing continuous power that can be cost effective to manage once installed. Status: Feasibility studies are fully funded and analysis process is underway for some sites. Partial system funding opportunities identified and Hood River County Energy Council is working with Emergency Management to identify other funding avenues.
Transportation Improvements (City and Port of Cascade Locks)	<p>City of Cascade Locks submitted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forest Lane Reconstructions: The City needs to rebuild Forest Lane from WaNaPa Street to I-84 overcrossing (10,000 feet) with sidewalks on at least one side, curbs and gutters, bike lanes, signage, and paving. Total Project Cost: \$10 million 2. Gravel Pit Road Rebuild: Rebuild Gravel Pit Road from Forest Lane to the UPRR at grade crossing including upgrading the crossing. The road would include sidewalk on the west side, curbs and gutters for a full width (24 foot) Street. Total project cost: \$1.75 million 3. Herman Creek Lane Rebuild: Rebuild Herman Creek Lane from Forest Lane to Attwell Lane (865 feet) with a sidewalk on the west side, curbs and gutters for a full width (24 foot) Street. Total project cost: \$650,000

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Build Atwell Lane: Construct Attwell Lane from Herman Creek Lane to the Gravel Pit (540 feet) with sidewalk on one side, curbs and gutters for a full width (24 foot) Street. Total project cost: \$400,000 5. WaNaPa/Tollhouse Road Roundabout: Upgrade the intersection of WaNaPa Street and Tollhouse Road for aesthetic welcome to the City and safety improvements reducing speed of vehicles coming off of east bound I-84. Total Project Cost: \$2 million 6. Forest Lane/WaNaPa Roundabout: Upgrade the intersection of WaNaPa Street and Forest Lane for aesthetic welcome to the City and safety improvements reducing speed of vehicles coming off of west bound I-84. Total Project Cost: \$2 million 7. I-84 Full Interchange Access: A complete interchange at the east end of town would facilitate easier access to the Business Park. The estimate is to build a complete new interchange where Forest Land crosses I-84. A cheaper alternative would be to add a westbound on ramp and an east bound off ramp at Exit 47. Total project cost: \$120 million 8. Cascade Locks Truck Route Improvements: This project seeks to add a west bound on ramp at this intersection allowing trucks to easily come into and out of the Business Park and access I-84 heading west, as well as widen and rebuild Forest Lane/Frontage Road from Cramblett Way to Exit 47 for trucks. East bound trucks on I-84 would also be able to come through the State Weigh Station, access the frontage service road immediately south of I-84 and travel to the Cascade Locks Business Park with this project. Additional improvements would be incorporated on surface streets to accommodate these access points effectively and safely. Total project cost: \$20 million <p>Port of Cascade Locks submitted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Frontage Road Improvements (Exit 47, Herman Creek Road) \$14,270,000. 2. Diamond interchange at Wyeth \$28,000,000. 3. Forest Lane street improvements \$10,000,000. 4. Forest Lane and Cramblett Way intersection \$4,598,000. 5. Emergency community escape route in case of fire or other disaster- \$2,000,000. 6. Marine Park Pedestrian Overcrossing \$5,000,000.
Recreation Facilities and Enhancements (Port of Cascade Locks)	Enhancements to the Business Park to serve the growing recreational facility needs and to meet the demand of ever increasing tourists and recreationalists. Includes hiking, biking, nature center, fishing areas, marina, sailing facilities, parking areas, disc golf etc. Total cost: \$2 million.
Historic Preservation (Port of Cascade Locks)	Historic preservation enhancements to historic buildings in Marine Park. Total cost: \$1 million
Historic Columbia River Highway Urban Connection (City of Hood River)	In partnership with ODOT, this project anticipates the completion of the Historic Columbia Highway Trail through Hood River. The project would involve high-level planning and alternatives for the urban connection of the Historic Columbia River Highway including gateway concepts, connections through the City and parking considerations for users of the trail. The project also includes of the transportation facility design, including revisiting the street cross-section.

Sherman County-2020

Priority	Applicant	Project	Readiness to Proceed	Federal State Assistance	Total Project Cost
1	Sherman County	<p><u>Work Force Housing</u> The housing stock in Sherman County is lacking the quantity and quality necessary for new employees to find a place to live in the County. Sherman County has created incentives to encourage the construction of new rental housing (\$10,000 grant per unit) and the rehabilitation of existing housing (up to \$20,000 per house). The County continues to look for creative ideas that would solve the housing issues.</p>	Partnering with MCEDD to establish work force rental housing.	200,000 County contribution	500,000
2	Sherman County	<p><u>Fiber Project</u> Sherman County and its four cities have invested in robust connectivity within each community. The next step to improve connectivity throughout the County rural area and explore strategies for improving that service. The project would identify an approach to addressing this need in conjunction with public and private partners.</p>	The 4 cities have been connected to fiber. A 820,000 grant was utilized.		1,900,000
3	Cities of Moro, Rufus, Wasco	<p><u>Backup Power/Emergency Generator Purchase and Integration for Primary Municipal Well</u> These 3 cities have identified the need to install a 3-phase emergency backup generator for their primary municipal wells. A backup power source would help to ensure clean/adequate water supplies for sanitation, and fire suppression efforts during a grid down scenario. This would help to mitigate the hazards associated with grid down events, such as with a Wildfire.</p>	Need identified The City of Moro has received a quote for 100,000 and is researching grant funds		100,000- City of Moro Rufus, Wasco, To be determined

4	City of Grass Valley	<u>Waste Water Study</u> The City is researching the concept of a waste water for the community. The council has put out an RFP for a feasibility study and are currently reviewing the results for hire. A grant will be applied for to pay for the study.	RFP's sent out and responses received.		\$50,000
5	Sherman County Fair board	<u>Event Center</u> The fair board is researching the concept of a multipurpose event center to replace several aging barns and current show arena. The building could be utilized year round to host events at the county fairgrounds. Current barns need substantial repairs to them. Rather than putting money towards aging structures that have outlived their usefulness, the board feels it is time to upgrade the facilities for future long range planning and make the fairgrounds more viable.	The board has retained an architect who has developed a schematic design of the proposed event center. A preliminary estimate has been determined and the board is researching ways to bring the costs down to stay within budget.	50,000	1,000,000 - county 5,500,000- Total
6	Kent Service District	<u>Kent Well</u> The current system does not allow for any future development. A 2016 study to find a new water source within the district did not locate one. The closest water supply was located a mile away which would be cost prohibitive. Another option would be to add a reservoir to store water.	Need identified		To be determined
7	City of Rufus	<u>Well #1 Rehab</u> Plans to rebuild the well house with updated wiring and add a metered chlorine system that will allow the use of this Well during peak season. Primary Well will not keep up with demand during the summer months.	Need identified	20,000 for study	150,000 total cost
8	City of Wasco	<u>Road Resurfacing Project</u> Resurface/repair most of the roads in the city.	The city applied for and received an ODOT grant for \$100,000. They still	\$100,000	

			need to determine the final costs for the project.		
9	Wasco Events Center	<u>Exterior Building and Paint Project</u> The Wasco Events Center is seeking to update the center and adjacent buildings by replacing the windows, shore up the walls and paint the exterior of the building, This needs to be done to protect the integrity of the structures. They are currently researching several grant options	Need identified	356,000- grants	148,000- county funds Total: 504,000
10	City of Moro	<u>Water System/Telemetry Upgrade</u> The City of Moro is currently looking to install PLC's (Programmable Logic Controllers) on their water system. A new PLC would help eliminate malfunctions from decades old system, facilitate increased water conservation and provide monitoring capability.	Project identified, Quotes obtained		65,000
11	City of Moro	<u>Main Street Façade/Streetscape Funding</u> The City of Moro intends to facilitate community revitalization that will lead to private investment, job creation or retention, establishing or expanding viable businesses or creating a stronger tax base. The city has joined the Oregon Main Street Program and intends to apply for Main Street Revitalization Grant.	Grant identified and will be applying in 2021 for grants.		60,000- local match 200,000- total project cost

Wasco County 2020 Community Enhancement Projects

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Project Sponsor</i>	<i>Project</i>
1	City of The Dalles	<p><u>Dog River Pipeline Upgrade</u> In the past year the City shared the scope of the project for public review for a second time and conducted further analysis of the pipeline’s potential impacts based on the feedback they received. The U.S. Forest Service has also conducted an environmental assessment of the project, the results of which will be presented in June 2020 for public comment. Total estimated costs for this project are between \$9-10 million. The City has \$5 million in reserves to dedicate towards this project and plans to apply for \$4 million in additional funding from Business Oregon.</p>
2	City of Mosier, Mosier Fire District	<p><u>Mosier Center</u> Plans for a joint-use facility have garnered a large amount of local support in the community, with significant participation in planning meetings and positive responses to community surveys. The City is working with an architect who has developed a draft master plan for both the facility and the remaining portion of the site that the City anticipates making available for commercial development. Estimated total project costs are between \$3.5-4 million. Energy Trust Oregon has committed \$55,000 towards the project as an incentive to build a certified net-zero building. The City received \$500,000 for the project from their Union Pacific agreement and \$500,000 from the State legislature. The City will begin pursuing foundation grants in 2020 and is planning an additional legislative request in 2021.</p>
3	City of Dufur	<p><u>Waste Water Treatment System Improvements</u> The City is currently out of compliance with their discharge permit from DEQ into 15 Mile Creek. They have completed basic engineering to expand their waste water treatment ponds and add an additional irrigation pivot that will allow them to discontinue discharge into the creek. The total project cost is estimated at \$4.3 million. The City is pursuing a combination of Water/Waste Water and USDA Rural Development funding with DEQ providing interim financing. They anticipate raising their waste water rates to \$66 per month to support the project with this funding package and are exploring additional grant opportunities to reduce this.</p>
4	Deschutes Rim Clinic Foundation	<p><u>Medical Clinic Expansion</u> Deschutes Rim Clinic has been conducting a “We Care” Campaign to raise funds for an expansion and upgrade of the current facility since 2017. They wish to build a neighboring 7,440 square foot facility which will give space for increased services. Estimated total costs for this project are \$2.5 million. In addition to approximately \$75,000 of local fundraising, the Clinic was awarded \$1,000,000 in State funding through the Legislature in 2017 and has been awarded grants from OCF, Randall Charitable Foundation, and the Maybelle Clark MacDonald Fund, and with additional requests pending to Wasco County and the Ford Family Foundation. They are also pursuing USDA financing for the remainder of the project. The USDA financing was initiated in spring of 2019. Ground breaking is anticipated for Spring 2020 depending on the length of USDA application process.</p>

5	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport	<p><u>Fuel Farm Upgrades</u></p> <p>With increasing use of the Airport’s facilities there is not enough capacity to store Jet A fuel, the equipment for refiling tanks is not adequate, and the Airport is interested in moving them above ground to be proactive about reducing opportunities for environmental contamination. Installing a fuel farm is a priority because reliable fuel access is critical for use as an airbase for firefighting apparatus that can support addressing regional fire events quickly. Without sufficient capacity for fuel it will also be more of a challenge for the airport to attract additional aviation-related industries. This project is estimated at \$1.2 million. At this stage the airport is seeking the support of state and local agencies and exploring the potential for private investments as well.</p>
6	Tygh Valley Rural Fire Protection District	<p><u>Tygh Valley Fire Station Improvements</u></p> <p>The TVRFPD Fire Hall is in need of significant improvements to support the District’s volunteer fire fighters. The station does not have adequate insulation and weatherization to support keeping their apparatus filled and ready for calls in the winter, many of their systems are not commercial grade so do not meet needs for the regular use the building gets, and there is additional storage needed to support their apparatus and equipment. Total project cost is estimated at \$28,000. They have raised \$3,700 from local fundraisers, \$5,000 from the Wy’East Fire Recovery Fund and a \$9,240 matching grant from the Ford Family Foundation.</p>
7	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport	<p><u>Aviation Maintenance Training Hangar</u></p> <p>Columbia Gorge Regional Airport is partnering with Columbia Gorge Community College to construct a training hangar for the College’s Aviation Maintenance Program. This project would be mutually beneficial for both the airport and the college, generating greater use of the airport’s facilities and creating the opportunity to attract students to the area who are interested in the aviation industry. Total estimated costs for the building and construction of site infrastructure are \$1 million.</p>
8	Wamic Water and Sanitary Authority	<p><u>Waste Water Treatment System Improvements</u></p> <p>The WW&SA is conducting an alternatives analysis to address their waste water system’s infill and infiltration issues that result in the District having to irrigate outside of their regular DEQ permit to avoid their treatment lagoons overflowing in the winter. The study will identify a preferred alternative that the WW&SA will move forward to funding agencies to address this critical compliance issue.</p>
9	North Wasco Park and Recreation District	<p><u>Mill Creek Greenway Segment 2</u></p> <p>The Mill Creek Greenway is a riparian corridor that follows Mill Creek as it flows past a school, residential neighborhoods, a retirement community/senior center complex, a shopping area, and Thompson Park within The Dalles before draining into the Columbia. Several years ago, the City initiated an effort to connect and enhance existing trail segments in the Greenway that would allow for residents, seniors, and children to travel between the senior complex (at the south end) and Thompson Park (at the north end) without crossing a street. The Park District and City plan to construct a paved path through the Greenway to allow for greater accessibility and safety. Approximately \$400,000-\$550,000 will be needed to complete this segment of the trail.</p>

10	Maupin Chamber of Commerce, Maupin School District	<p><u>Deschutes River Athletic Complex</u></p> <p>Maupin is in the planning stages of developing a multi-purpose athletic facility at South Wasco County High School called the Deschutes River Athletic Complex that will replace the current, egg-shaped track. The new, state-of-the-art complex at the High School will include track and field facilities, a football field, and related spectator facilities that will accommodate a wide range of uses with opportunities for significant local impacts. The project will also include relocation of the teaching butterfly garden for the school. The project has begun its fundraising efforts with donations from several community members as well as hiring consultants who have successfully completed similar projects in other communities to manage the project moving forward. Additionally, several entities have agreed to partner with Maupin to achieve this project. The National Guard is coming to Maupin in the spring of 2020 to level and add fill to the site before facility construction begins. Maupin’s goal is to complete construction of the DRAC by 2021 in time for the World Track and Field Championships in Eugene in order to attract a greater scope of track and field athletes and professionals to the new facility.</p>
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Priority Issue:

The Dalles Urban Growth Boundary/Urban Area Boundary Expansion Process: The Dalles has developed significantly since the National Scenic Area was passed in 1986 with no shifts to its urban area boundary. With pressures to support attainable housing for the workforce in the community as well as provide employment lands for local companies to start or expand businesses, ensuring that there is a clear path to urban area expansion when needed is critical for the long term economic opportunity in The Dalles.

Additional Projects Not Ranked:

Streetscape Improvements and City Beautification	City of Dufur
City Welcome Signs	City of Dufur
Kaiser Park Improvements	City of Maupin
Mt. Fir Park Improvements	City of Maupin
City Park Boat Ramp Improvements	City of Maupin
Donkey Trail Enhancements for Pedestrian and Emergency Service Access Improvements	City of Maupin
Facilities Plan Update and Design of a Tertiary Treatment Wetland	City of Mosier
City Park Improvements	City of The Dalles
Thompson Park Improvements	City of The Dalles
Downtown Utility Undergrounding	City of The Dalles
Discovery Center Roof Replacement	City of The Dalles
Pine Hollow North Boat Ramp Restrooms	South Wasco Park and Recreation District

Appendix D: Participant List

Listed below are the organizations that attended the CEDS regional outreach sessions in 2016 and 2017.

Agriculture Business	Gorge Owned
Association of Oregon Counties	Gorge Tech Alliance
Azure Standard	Gorge Tourism Alliance
Bicoastal Media	Gorge Towns To Trail
Business Oregon	Gorge TransLink Alliance
	High Tech Manufacturer
Community Enrichment for Klickitat County	Historic Columbia River Highway
Cherry Orchardist	Hood River County Planning
City of Bingen	Hood River County Chamber of Commerce
City of Cascade Locks	Hood River County Commission
City of Hood River	Hood River News
City of Maupin	Hood River School District
City of Moro	Impact Washington
City of Mosier	Independent Contractor
City of Rufus	Key Bank
City of Stevenson	Klickitat County Economic Development
City of The Dalles	Klickitat County Commission
City of Wasco	Legislative Specialist/Consultant
City of White Salmon	MCEDD
Columbia Cascade Housing	Mid-Columbia Council of Governments
Columbia Gorge Community College	Mid-Columbia Health Foundation
Columbia Gorge Regional Airport	Mid-Columbia Housing Authority
Columbia River Gorge Commission	Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce
Columbia River Insurance	NBI
	Next Door, Inc
Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission	North Central Regional Solutions
Columbia State Bank	North Wasco County School District 21
Economic Development Administration	Office of Congressman Walden
Economic Development Services	Office of Representative Herrera-Beutler
Financial Planning Business	Office of Senator Cantwell
Insurance Business	Office of Senator Murray
Financial Services Business	Orchardist
Fresh Starts	Oregon Employment Department
Goldendale Chamber of Commerce	Oregon Investment Board
Goldendale Performing Arts Complex	Oregon State University
Gorge Grown Food Network	OSU Extension
Gorge Nonprofits	People For People

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

State of Oregon
State Representative
SWCD Klickitat

The Dalles Chamber of Commerce
The Dalles Mainstreet
The Link
Travel Oregon
Tri-County Hazardous Waste
Unmanned Aircraft System Business
US Bank
US Forest Service

USDA Rural Development
Utilities representative
Wasco County Planning
Wasco County Commission
Wasco County Economic Development
Commission
Washington State Employment
Washington State University
White Salmon Enterprise
Worksource Oregon



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