

## Join Us for Connect Mid-Columbia!

In 2016, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District convened partners through Connect Mid-Columbia, a regional discussion to enhance the Mid-Columbia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy with a more robust conversation around our regional transportation priorities and needs. MCEDD is refreshing the conversation this year, with goals including:

- Inventory and prioritize transportation project needs and regional issues;
- Develop regional consensus and provide a mechanism to jointly advocate for regional priorities;
- Provide a space to inform and educate about projects, funding options and upcoming issues;
- Enhance the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as a tool to promote high priority transportation projects or issues to state/ federal funders.

### Why now?

- This process would integrate well with the five-year update of the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and Gorge Regional Transit Strategy, both of which are underway.
- The process would set the region up well for the anticipated increases in federal infrastructure funding.

### Who should participate?

Federal, state and local entities that engage with our transportation system, including roads and highways, bridges, rail, air, water and transit modes.

### Process:

The following may need to adapt after the first meeting:

- **August 18, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.**, via zoom: Intro to process, review of plans to consult for top needs, review of funding opportunities, discussion of prioritization process, discussion of other high priority transportation issues to highlight for policy proposals, identify others to invite.
- **September 22, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.**, zoom or location TBD: summary of top regional projects and issues as submitted by partners, draft ranking based on prioritization categories.
- **October 20, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.**, zoom or location TBD: final ranking, discussion of next steps on advocacy and support for funding requests, connection to Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

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