

MEETING: **LANE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE**

DATE: July 10, 2023
(LEC meetings are held on the **2nd Monday** of each month)

TIME: 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

LINK: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82874757098?pwd=NC9CN01KQIRtdklsSUOzU2ZhTjNxZz09>

CALL: +1 253 215 8782 US
Meeting ID: 828 7475 7098 Passcode: 601991

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All individuals are expected to observe respectful behavior and decorum during this public meeting. Please be courteous and respectful.

1. Welcome / Introductions / Changes to the Agenda 11:30
Presenter: Greg Ervin
2. Public Comment 11:35
Presenter: Greg Ervin
3. Comments from Members, Chair, and Staff 11:40
Presenter: Greg Ervin
4. Review Minutes from May 8, 2023 (*action*) 11:50
Presenter: Greg Ervin
Action item: Approve minutes.
5. Legislative Update 11:55
Presenter: Ann Fifield, City of Eugene; All
CEDS Priorities: All
6. Lane Regional Career Technical Education Programs 12:10
Presenter: Shareen Vogel, Regional CTE Coordinator Lane ESD
CEDS Priorities: 2 – Sector Diversification Through Business Development,
3 – Infrastructure Resilience, 4 – Workforce Support
7. LEC Member Survey 12:50
Presenter: Denise Walters, LEC Staff
CEDS Priorities: All
8. Next Meeting Dates:
 - August 14, 2023
 - September 11, 2023
 - October 9, 2023 – Reschedule to Observe Indigenous Peoples Day

July 10, 2023

Lane Economic Committee (LEC)

Agenda Item Summaries

ITEM 5: Legislative Session Update

Presenter(s): Anne Fifield – City of Eugene/Vice-Chair; All

CEDS Priorities: All

With the dust settling from the legislative session, this is an opportunity for members to share information about bills they were tracking, bills they see as impacting the region, and/or opportunities and challenges resulting from legislation.

ITEM 6: Lane Regional Career Technical Education (CTE) Programs

Presenter(s): Shareen Vogel – Regional CTE Program Coordinator Lane Education Service District

CEDS Priorities: 2 – Sector Diversification Through Business Development, 3 – Infrastructure Resilience, 4 – Workforce Support

The CTE team at Lane ESD is central to supporting all CTE Programs in Lane County. These 16 school districts (of which 13 are in rural Lane County) there are 117 CTE Programs of Study. These CTE pathways include Early Childhood Education, Culinary & Hospitality, Business Management, Agriculture/Natural Resource Systems, Arts & Information, Health Sciences, Industrial & Engineering Systems, and Computer Science. For more details visit lanecte.org. Last year, CTE Programs served 37,438 students across Lane County. There is ample data to show that these Programs have proven student success; both for students while in school (whether staying on track and showing up) and walking across the graduation line, but also to help advance student planning and preparation for college and career readiness. CTE Programs empower, prepare and engage students and connect them to their local communities and future possibilities.

ITEM 7: LEC Member Survey

Presenter(s): Denise Walters – LEC Staff

CEDS Priorities: All

This item is a brief share out about survey responses to date. Survey results will be discussed more fully at future meetings.

Lane Economic Committee

DRAFT MINUTES

May 08, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Ervin, Chair (City of Cottage Grove/Government); Anne Fifield, Vice Chair (City of Cottage Grove/Government); Mike Eyster (LCC/Government); Mark Bodie (Business/Finance); Jenna Cusimano (Lane County/Government); Vanessa Ringgold (Education); Jake Clifton (Business); Paul Berger (Business); Matt Michel (City of Veneta/Government); Allie Camp (City of Springfield/Government).

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeremy Caudle (City of Lowell/Government); Kari Westlund (Travel Lane County); Chantelle Meyer (City of Florence/Economic Development/Government), Cindy Perry (Business/Labor); Faye Stewart (City of Cottage Grove/Economic Development/Government); Jude Anderson (Lane County/Government – represented by alternate Jenna Cusimano).

STAFF: Sandra Easdale, Paula Taylor; Denise Walters, Diana Pamir Tisdale.

GUESTS: Justin Peterson (Oregon Cascades West); Cole Haselip (City of Veneta/Government); Anne Whittington (Oregon Cascades West); Dr. Anshuman “AR” Razdan (University of Oregon (UO) Vice President for Research and Innovation).

1. Welcome/Introductions/Changes to the Agenda

Chair Ervin called the Lane Economic Committee (LEC) meeting to order at 11:30 a.m., and introductions were made. A quorum was established. There were no changes made to the agenda.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Comments from the Members, Chair, & Staff

Chair Ervin stated that there would not be a June meeting scheduled for the LEC. A survey would be sent to committee members to get suggestions for future meeting presentations.

Ms. Fifield stated that the City of Eugene's Downtown Urban Renewal District was set to expire in December 2023, and City Council had requested an amendment to the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan to extend its life. To do that, the city needed approval from Lane County and the 4J School District. The amendment would increase spending capacity by 50 million dollars, and its primary focus would be on housing within the district, and improvements to right of way pedestrian areas for enhanced walkability. The city wanted to improve walkability to the 5th Street Market area and a create a better connection where the Ferry Street Bridge ended from Whole Foods to the new student housing complex being built across the street.

Mr. Berger asked if the impact on 4J was a positive one.

Ms. Fifield said there would not be a negative impact on the 4J School District. 4J had a permanent levy and a local option levy. Urban renewal would take a fixed percentage of their tax revenue that would normally go into their tax increment district. The state would cover that portion during the life of the urban renewal district. Doing this relieved property tax compression in the education category and

elevated the amount of revenue brought in from the 4J Local Option Levy. The 4J School District would come out ahead by 150,000 dollars.

Mr. Berger asked if there were any anticipated impacts at the University of Oregon (UO) or the City of Eugene regarding the debt ceiling issue.

Ms. Ringgold said it was not her area of expertise within the UO, and she had not heard anything regarding a debt ceiling crisis.

Ms. Fifield said that topic did not fall within the purview of her work at the city.

Chair Ervin said the City of Cottage Grove wrote a letter of support for improvements to Franklin Boulevard near the UO campus. He had not heard anything in response to that letter.

Ms. Fifield said she believed the design for that project was complete.

Mr. Eyster asked if there was any public information about Hynix.

Ms. Fifield replied that STRATACACHE had bought the old Hynix facility in January 2020. STRATACACHE made digital signs using semi-conductor technology. It was a privately held company. They were applying for Targeted Investment Program (TIPS) funding and the City of Eugene was collaborating with them on that.

Mr. Berger asked if STRATACACHE was connected to the Material Sciences Department at the UO.

Ms. Fifield confirmed that they were.

4. Review Minutes from April 10, 2023

MOTION: Mr. Eyster moved, seconded by Paul Berger to approve the April 10, 2023, LEC meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Launch Oregon

Common Education Data Standards (CEDs) Priorities

Presenter: Dr. Anshuman “AR” Razdan, University of Oregon (UO) Vice President for Research and Innovation

Dr. Razdan gave a presentation on the UO research and innovation activities. He had been in Eugene working as the Vice President for Research and Innovation at the UO for 10 months. The three major contributors to the UO research enterprise were life science, education technology, and natural science and engineering. The UO Research and Innovation Department awards 180 million dollars in grants per year. The expenditures for this department were 150 million dollars, and the economic impact to the State of Oregon was 2.6 billion dollars. Federal sources of UO research and innovation funding are as follows:

- National Institutes of Health – 44 percent
- National Science Foundation – 19 percent
- United States Department of Education – 17 percent
- Others – 20 percent

Research and innovation increased its expenditures by 10 percent each year. With this growth comes a growing need for new buildings and lab space. The cost of conducting innovative research was expensive. The following reflects innovation by numbers for the UO Research and Innovation Department during FY 2021–2022:

- 10.3 million dollars in Licensing Income
- 54 Invention Disclosures
- 24 Patents Filed
- 32 Active Start-ups
- 37 Trademarks
- 18 Companies the UO Holds Equity In
- Over 1 million in Awards for Translational Research

The UO did an excellent job of creating disclosures, commercializing ideas, and filing patents. When it comes to making it happen for innovators, the UO pushes start-ups off the cliff, and they are on their own. In part, this was the way public universities are designed. Once a company was formed, most universities wash their hands of them to prevent a conflict of interest. That was not ideal. When Dr. Razdan first came to Oregon, he spoke with the UO Foundation President, Paul Weinhold, regarding how to better commercialize UO intellectual property (IP). Within three days of that discussion, they had received a green light to move forward with a plan, and Launch Oregon, a single member LLC, was born. Because it was created as an LLC outside the realm of the UO, it had more flexibility to do things, could hold confidentiality of its investors, and could help start-ups in a way that the UO could not. The Launch Oregon Board is as follows:

- Paul Weinhold – Co-chair
- Dr. Anshuman Razdan – Co-chair
- Susan Stevens
- Bob Komin
- Bryan Wolf
- Bob Guldberg
- Darren Johnson
- Laura Lee McIntyre

The UO Foundation invested a three million dollar venture fund plus operating expenses for Launch Oregon. The venture fund was fund one. Fund two, three, and beyond would soon follow. The board was talking to venture capitalists who were interested in participating in the program. Outside investors would be able to invest directly to a start-up or contribute to the general venture fund. The legal and financial framework for Launch Oregon was still in progress. Launch Oregon expected a return on their investments (ROI) from start-ups, which would go back into the investment pool, or go to the UO Research and Innovation Department. The pipeline for Launch Oregon was called the Translation Opportunity Program (TOP), which functions within the UO. That was where start-ups are formed. From there, they could enter Launch Oregon to kick-start their operations with Launch Oregon investment funds. The three stages a start-up would go through to move from the TOP to Launch Oregon are as follows:

- Learn Stage – UO innovators work with research office to file disclosures, pursue patents / intellectual property, and explore idea viability. Learn about TOP. Innovators could receive 25 thousand dollars in seed funding for exploring ideas.
- Prototype Stage – Innovators begin converting their bench ideas to prototype. Test ideas and learn about entrepreneurship through TOP, and programs such as I-Corps or I-Corps@NCATS.

- Pre-launch Stage – Prototype near completion. Infusion of funds occurs for testing, business, and legal readiness, collecting final data, and transfer to Launch Oregon. A project could receive 250 thousand dollars in seed grant funding to hammer out commercial and technical viability.

Launch Oregon would partner with the UO Business Law Clinic to advise budding entrepreneurs on the legal framework required to form a new company. Innovators were not required to go through the Launch Oregon program. The hope was that Launch Oregon would present itself as a viable option for innovators to take advantage of. The pipeline to Launch Oregon would start as TOP but would eventually open to include UO Student Entrepreneurship, UO Lindquist Center for Entrepreneurship, and possible other University programs within the State of Oregon. The intent is to help create companies that will stay in Oregon, create jobs for the people in Oregon, and retain technical talents within the State of Oregon. On May 8th and 9th, 2023, final interviews would take place for the Launch Oregon Managing Director position. There were three candidates being considered.

Mr. Berger said not every invention or development IP would lead to a venture-driven company, like a company producing school safety materials, for example. He asked how he may be able to collaborate with Dr. Razdan and his team to get prevention science programs launched, and if Dr. Razdan thought that area of science deserved attention.

Dr. Razdan suggested approaching a company that was already established and offering to license the technology or material through them. Part of the learning phase of TOP was to self-evaluate and determine what the viable path was. As a start-up, you had to decide which route you wanted to take. You could apply for grants, but there was no guarantee that funding would be approved. Grant funding sometimes took six months. In the technology field, he could lose the market advantage in a six-month period. Therefore, he would rather license the technology or start a new company with alternate funding. If someone had an invention, he would be happy to talk with them about the best way to take it forward. If you looked at the bigger picture, Launch Oregon is a bit of a culture change that would hopefully bring societal impact to Oregon, not just an economic impact, and hopefully provide support to faculty. We want what is discovered to be used in the field, not just be in published papers. He said he would be happy to have a conversation about something specific if Mr. Berger had something in mind.

Mr. Berger said it would be good to connect businesses in Eugene with Launch Oregon to create a good income for the people in the community and royalties for the UO.

Ms. Fifield asked when the Managing Director for Launch Oregon would be hired.

Dr. Razdan said hopefully by the beginning of June 2023. Separately, he noted that one of the things that needed to happen between Launch Oregon, the City of Eugene, the City of Springfield, and the Chamber of Commerce, was a collaborative effort to think of ways to make this area start-up friendly.

Chair Ervin noted that there were people in attendance who represented rural areas of Lane County. He acknowledged his excitement for the Launch Oregon program and the opportunities it could potentially bring to the small City of Cottage Grove.

Mr. Eyster wondered how important quality of life was to attracting businesses, and asked Dr. Razdan how the quality of life in Eugene compared to other areas throughout the country that he had lived.

Dr. Razdan said Oregon was a beautiful state, but noted the housing situation in Eugene was not the greatest, and the costs were high. He said the UO had lost three faculty members in 2023 because they compared the cost of living in Eugene to other places that were less expensive. This situation could make it difficult to attract new businesses to the area or keep businesses in the area.

Ms. Easdale asked Dr. Razdan to elaborate on Oregon having higher research costs than other states.

Dr. Razdan said as he understood, because of legislators creating a shortfall in the Oregon pension program, costs had been passed to the universities. Because of that, the UO salary fringe rate was 80 percent. If a faculty member at the University of Utah got a 100,000 dollar grant from the National Institute of Health (NIH), they would be able to take the grant money further than a faculty member at UO.

Chair Ervin said the housing issue was a reoccurring theme throughout Lane County.

Dr. Razdan said one of the reasons for moving to a place like Eugene was having access to all the natural beauty of the area. He did not know if vertical housing was the answer because people may not want to live in a high-rise apartment, when a big part of the appeal was being closer to nature. The UO lost a faculty member to the University of California because they were able to get a 3.25 percent interest rate on a mortgage loan up to a million dollars.

Dr. Razdan said he took a team from the UO to visit Arizona State University (ASU) to see how they were managing economic development in their area. They collaborate with Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), which helps keep graduating students of technology in the Phoenix metropolitan area. UO should collaborate with local companies to help keep graduating students in this area. Oregon and Eugene need to market themselves better, especially internationally.

Mr. Berger said the county, the city, and the outlying governments needed to explore the possibility of an economic development agency or consortium to do initiative-taking marketing for this area. LEC should also be working toward marketing the region.

Dr. Razdan said if everyone worked together, boosting the economy in this area could be an achievable aspiration.

Chair Ervin thanked Dr. Razdan for his time.

There were no other comments or questions.

6. Next Meeting Dates

Chair Ervin noted that the June 12, 2023, meeting was cancelled.

- July 10, 2023
- August 14, 2023

There were no other comments or questions.

7. Adjourn

Chair Ervin adjourned the meeting at 1:01 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Diana Pamir Tisdale)



Priority Area 1: Regional Collaboration & Partnerships

Description: A regional economic development strategy is most effective when it considers and incorporates the interests and strengths of all jurisdictions in the region. By leveraging the strengths and capabilities of each county towards a wider economic strategy, the region can become more prosperous, resilient, and cohesive.

CWEDD's Role: As a regional coordinating body, the District is well positioned to facilitate collaboration. **Over the next five years,** the District will foster cross-regional relationships and seek to align efforts around regionally significant projects.

Approaches <i>What will guide regional economic development?</i>	Implementation Ideas <i>How can the strategies be implemented?</i>
Build relationships and collaboration through project-based regional initiatives.	Convene economic development practitioners from across the region quarterly or semi-annually to brainstorm, revise, and prioritize a list of regionally significant projects.
Integrate the priorities captured in the CEDS into existing local- and regional-scale initiatives.	<p>Economic development practitioners who are familiar with the CEDS should engage economic development practitioners who are new to the region or the CEDS in a CEDS overview/onboarding process.</p> <p>City and County economic development staff should deliver an annual CEDS overview and update to elected officials.</p>
Increase CWEDD's staff capacity so CWEDD can provide more support to regional initiatives.	<p>Seek funding to add at least 1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff support position to CWEDD.</p> <p>Create a regional economic development organization chart that clearly identifies the linkages and roles of all economic development agencies in the CWEDD region (house on CWEDD website).</p>
Increase representation of currently underrepresented business, workforce, and education interests on the CWEDD Board and CEDS project working groups by including more perspectives from Tribes, Latino/a/x communities, Black communities, immigrant communities, rural communities, and low-income communities.	Review CWEDD Board representation and recruit new members that can speak to the perspectives of underrepresented groups, including but not limited to: Tribes, Latino/a/x communities, Black communities, immigrant communities, rural communities, and low-income communities.



Priority Area 1: Regional Collaboration & Partnerships, cont.

Approaches, cont.

What will guide regional economic development?

Invest in continuity of operations planning for all economic development support providers so these entities can continue providing response and recovery assistance post-shock.

Foster a coordinated approach to economic resilience and recovery planning efforts across the region.

Implementation Ideas, cont.

How can the strategies be implemented?

Work with emergency managers to create inventories of local businesses capable of providing services, material, equipment, and workforce in the event of a disaster. Then develop pre-approved contracting with these businesses to allow for immediate access post-shock.

Ensure representation for business interests emergency preparation, mitigation, response, and recovery planning processes by requesting space on planning committees for economic development practitioners and business representatives.

Form economic recovery teams that include business representatives and convene regularly to create regional economic recovery plans.

Develop local recovery ordinance model language that jurisdictions can adopt.



Priority Area 1: Regional Collaboration & Partnerships, cont.

Indicators

Collaboration: Presence of cross- and multi-jurisdictional economic development projects

Equity & Inclusion: Representativeness of CWEDD Board & Working Groups

Resilience: Incorporation of resilience considerations into regional and local economic development strategies

Key Partners

- ❖ Economic development staff across the region
- ❖ CWEDD Board
- ❖ Business Oregon
- ❖ Regional Solutions
- ❖ University of Oregon EDA University Center

Key Considerations

Equity & Inclusion

How will these strategies build a more equitable and inclusive region?

Representation – by including and involving a more representative set of perspectives from the communities served by CWEDD in CWEDD committees and initiatives, economic development projects have a better chance of meeting the needs of everyone in our region, not just those who traditionally held the most power and influence over decision-making and resource allocation.

Resilience

How will these strategies build regional resilience?

Internal Coordination – economic development efforts in the CWEDD region have not been well coordinated in the past, leading to missed opportunities for collective impact. When we begin to align our efforts, collaborating around resources rather than competing over them, we can spread the benefits of economic development more broadly, building a region that is less vulnerable to economic downturns.

External Communication – lack of internal coordination leads to confusing, ineffective communication to businesses and workers. Increasing collaboration among economic development supporters will foster a more unified, streamlined message to the business community and our workforce, aiding our ability to respond quickly and effectively to economic crises.



Priority Area 2: Sector Diversification Through Business Development

Description: Our region’s businesses are the beating heart of our economy. In order to thrive, the region must support and retain existing businesses while also cultivating new businesses that will help diversify our economy and generate job growth. With macro-level economic changes – from globalization to shifting market structures – the regional economy will require a continued influx of fresh energy from new and existing businesses.

CWEDD’s Role: The District has an opportunity to offer resources and coordination that will support local-level business retention and expansion efforts and entrepreneurial ecosystems builders. **Over the next five years**, the District will provide research capacity, serve as an information hub, and facilitate important connections between business support providers.

Approaches <i>What will guide regional economic development?</i>	Implementation Ideas <i>How can the strategies be implemented?</i>
<p>Provide support to entrepreneurship and business retention and expansion efforts by serving as a clearing house for regional data and resources.</p>	<p>Create and promote a database of incubators, accelerators, capital sources, and business support services available in the region.</p> <p>Assist with identifying and pursuing funding that would increase capacity of business incubators and accelerators.</p> <p>Develop a business registration or tracking system that will allow the collection of more and better data about businesses’ needs.</p> <p>Establish a network of local and regional staff who can help businesses navigate through permitting and other processes.</p> <p>Develop and publicize educational opportunities about the advantages of international trade for regional businesses that are interested in expanding into new markets.</p>
<p>Facilitate connections between business development centers and business incubators and accelerators to create an obvious bridge of support between the start-up and growth phases of new businesses.</p> <p>Facilitate connections between educational institutions (both K-12 and higher education) and business incubators and accelerators to foster a culture of entrepreneurship.</p>	<p>Facilitate annual meetings with representatives from business development centers and incubators/accelerators to discuss the process referrals between support providers.</p> <p>Facilitate annual meetings with representatives from educational institutions to build connections between regional needs and academic course offerings.</p> <p>Organize a forum on regional innovation networking.</p>



Priority Area 2: Sector Diversification Through Business Development, cont.

Approaches, cont.

What will guide regional economic development?

Work to ensure that the demographics of business owners and entrepreneurs are representative of the race and gender distributions in the region.

Provide start-ups and existing businesses with resources and incentives to develop, test, and implement continuity of operations plans.

Develop emergency recovery revolving loan funds and other creative financing options before shocks so that businesses can immediately access financial assistance post-shock.

Implementation Ideas, cont.

How can the strategies be implemented?

Assess the demographic distribution of business owners and entrepreneurs who are accessing services and develop or support programs specifically targeted to demographic groups that are underrepresented. Intentionally seek out grassroots efforts that may already be occurring to support these businesses and offer to collaborate.

Work with Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), incubators, and accelerators to develop low-effort business continuity of operations planning resources.

Discuss potential shocks, threats, disasters and risk reduction strategies at local chamber or business association “Lunch and Learn” events to encourage businesses to create continuity of operations plans.

Incentivize investments in business resilience for businesses that have business continuity plans (e.g. reduce business license fees; 1% reduction in property taxes (or other tax) for businesses that have an employee preparedness training program; expedite plan review for hazard retrofit/mitigation projects).

Utilize external funding (such as the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and Community Development Block Grants) to leverage local funds for business-related mitigation activities.



Priority Area 2: Sector Diversification Through Business Development

Indicators

Collaboration: Presence of referrals between business support providers

Equity & Inclusion: Representativeness of business owner demographics

Resilience: Presence of continuity of operations plans

Key Partners

- ❖ Economic development staff
- ❖ Small Business Development Centers
- ❖ Oregon RAIN
- ❖ Chambers and other business associations

Key Considerations

Regional Collaboration

How will a regional approach to these strategies support economic prosperity?

Coordinated industry cluster development requires teamwork. Businesses within a cluster have supply chains and relationships that cross jurisdictional boundaries. Business development support is therefore most effective when it acknowledges the interconnected nature of industry clusters. Economic developers must work together across jurisdictional lines to support a regional business environment that supports the growth and expansion of key industries.

Equity & Inclusion

How will these strategies build a more equitable and inclusive region?

Access for existing businesses – barriers to entry and promotion in business have been higher for some demographic groups than others, resulting in business ownership and leadership that is not representative of the general population.⁹ Programs and policies targeted at supporting groups that are underrepresented in business ownership and leadership will help bring representation back into balance.

Access for entrepreneurs – start-ups require significant upfront resources and are more likely to gain traction if the entrepreneurs can leverage relevant social and investor networks. Some demographic groups and entrepreneurs in rural areas may have more limited access to resources and networks. When economic developers work specifically to assist underrepresented groups, they create a more representative pipeline of new business owners.

Resilience

How will these strategies build regional resilience?

Diversification of industries – encouraging business growth, particularly growth into new sectors, will help the region weather shocks by ensuring the region does not have “all of its eggs in one basket.”

Pre-disaster planning for response & continuity – encouraging and supporting the development of continuity of operations plans for businesses will better prepare businesses to withstand shocks.

Internal Coordination –facilitating connections between incubators, accelerators, and traditional business development support providers will lead to a better alignment of resources.

⁹ In 2018, 11% of Oregon’s small businesses (businesses with fewer than 500 employees, which make up 99.4% of all Oregon businesses) were minority-owned, according to the [2018 Small Business Profile](#) from the US Small Business Administration. In 2019, 25% of Oregon’s population was not white alone and not Hispanic or Latino (American Community Survey, 2019: ACS 1-Year Estimates Data, Table DP05).



Priority Area 3: Infrastructure Resilience

Description: Large infrastructure projects, particularly those of regional significance, often exceed the capacity and technical expertise of local municipalities. Further, they often involve multiple partners, public-private partnerships, complex regulatory systems, and strategic stakeholder engagement. In order to effectively achieve needed infrastructure improvements in the region, technical support will be required.

CWEDD’s Role: The District is uniquely positioned to support regional infrastructure projects. **Over the next five years,** the District will provide technical assistance and connect specific projects with other resources (e.g. Regional Solutions Teams, University-based programs, state and federal agency partners, etc.).

Approaches <i>What will guide regional economic development?</i>	Implementation Ideas <i>How can the strategies be implemented?</i>
Identify and prioritize projects of regional importance that will (1) improve quality of place for residents and (2) increase diversity and redundancy in the region’s infrastructure (particularly critical infrastructure related to transportation, energy, communications, and fuel).	Survey regional partners annually to develop a project list and convene a conversation about how to ensure these projects support resilience and are coordinated across the region. Work with property owners and businesses located within hazard zones to develop strategies to harden, elevate, re-locate or otherwise mitigate / prevent damage from natural hazards. Encourage local practitioners to support the update of the economic development sections of comprehensive plans by encouraging resilience considerations for employment land.
Coordinate regional efforts to expand broadband availability in areas with the least access.	Increase collaboration around broadband development by convening regional economic development practitioners to discuss efforts and share resources.
Incorporate equity assessments during infrastructure planning to ensure the benefits and potential negative impacts of development are equitably distributed across the population.	Develop an equity checklist to apply during project planning; the checklist can help identify project shortcomings and encourage modifications that will lead to a more equitable distribution of impacts.
Promote available services and funding sources that can be accessed via CWEDD to support infrastructure development.	Create a section on the CWEDD Website to list current funding opportunities for local jurisdictions that includes grant deadlines, eligibility information, and connections to current and planned projects.
Increase the capacity and resources available to support grant writing and technical project development for infrastructure projects.	Create a section on the CWEDD Website to serve as a library of past funding applications that be used as a resource for developing successful new funding applications. Increase staff time at COGs dedicated to helping with preparing funding applications and providing technical assistance on infrastructure project development.





Priority Area 3: Infrastructure Resilience, cont.

Indicators

Collaboration: Presence of cross- or multi-jurisdictional infrastructure projects

Equity & Inclusion: Presence of projects explicitly considering equity

Resilience: Presence of projects explicitly considering resilience and redundancy

Key Partners

- ❖ Economic development staff
- ❖ Business Oregon Infrastructure Finance Authority
- ❖ Local & county emergency managers

Key Considerations

Regional Collaboration

How will a regional approach to these strategies support economic prosperity?

Although many infrastructure projects occur at a local scale, it is always important to consider regional connections, particularly when planning for diversity and redundancy. By keeping a finger on the pulse of many local projects, economic development practitioners can encourage regional considerations during conversations about infrastructure development.

Equity & Inclusion

How will these strategies build a more equitable and inclusive region?

Access – research shows that lower-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately impacted by the negative externalities of infrastructure development (like pollution from industrial development and displacement by highway construction), while these same communities don’t always see the full benefits of projects.¹⁰ Considering equity during the planning process for infrastructure projects can help mitigate these trends. It is also important to remember that equitable benefit is different than equal benefit – to address past discrimination and lack of access, some projects will require more investment in some communities compared to others.

Resilience

How will these strategies build regional resilience?

Infrastructure redundancy and resiliency – focusing on projects that create redundant infrastructure (back-up systems that will take over if the primary system fails) and resilient infrastructure (systems that can withstand disruption for either natural or human-created incidents) will put CWEDD in a strong position to bounce back quickly from disruption.

Equitable access – developing broadband and other critical infrastructure in underserved communities will uplift areas that have suffered economically because they lacked access to high-quality essential services.

Internal Coordination –working collectively across the region to identify important projects will ensure a more coordinated and collaborative approach to seeking funding.

¹⁰ Glover Blackwell, Angela and Anita Cozart. “How Smart, Targeted Infrastructure Investment Can Pave the Way for an Equitable Nation.” Urban Institute, 1/23/18. <https://www.urban.org/infrastructure/how-smart-targeted-infrastructure-investment-can-pave-way-equitable-nation>



Priority Area 4: Workforce Support

Description: Many businesses in the region report that they are struggling to find qualified employees for a range of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled positions, in part because of training, and in part because of livability factors like lack of affordable housing options. There is also an ongoing need to support existing workforce training efforts and to coordinate and align the efforts of the various Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) in the region.

CWEDD’s Role: Over the next five years, the District will help link education, training, apprenticeships, and career planning to the employment needs of existing and emerging business sectors. The District will also advocate for policies that will help enhance workers’ quality of life.

Approaches <i>What will guide regional economic development?</i>	Implementation Ideas <i>How can the strategies be implemented?</i>
Support deliberate coordination between businesses, Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), and educational institutions to help identify and provide for current employer needs.	Facilitate annual meetings between representatives from educational institutions, WIBs, and key business sectors to (1) identify current and predicted workforce skill needs and (2) consider curriculum changes that will support the development of these skills. Partner with local workforce development programs, including WIBs, to increase participation of local businesses in apprenticeships, internships and On-The-Job-Training programs, in order to build pathways to employment for persons entering the workforce.
Attract and retain younger talent by promoting the region’s livability and access to exceptional nature and outdoor recreation opportunities.	Work with Destination Marketing Organizations to prepare marketing material specifically geared towards attracting new workers to the area and demonstrating the region’s benefits to recent graduates.
Investigate and support policies and projects that will increase the availability of affordable housing, affordable transportation options, the quality and accessibility of recreation, access to broadband, access to healthcare, and other factors that enhance quality of life.	Encourage practitioners to participate in discussions at the local and county levels related to affordable housing, transportation, recreation, and healthcare access – ask to have representation for economic development practitioners and business representatives on committees and working groups. Work with statewide economic development groups like the Oregon Economic Development Association (OEDA) and Oregon’s Economic Development Districts (OEDD) to have a state and national lobbying presence advocating for policies that will increase the availability of and access to affordable housing, transportation, recreation, health care, and broadband.



Priority Area 4: Workforce Support, cont.

Indicators

Collaboration: Level of coordination between EDOs and WIBs

Equity & Inclusion: Percentage of cost-burdened households

Resilience: Level of coordination between education/worker-training programs and businesses

Key Partners

- ❖ Economic development staff
- ❖ Workforce Investment Boards
- ❖ K-12 & higher education representatives
- ❖ Local & county planning staff

Key Considerations

Regional Collaboration

How will a regional approach to these strategies support economic prosperity?

Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) are critical economic development partners. The CWEDD region overlaps with three different WIBs, making regional coordination particularly important. CWEDD can play a role in aligning the efforts of our region's WIBs with the needs of our businesses and the capacity of our educational institutions.

Equity & Inclusion

How will these strategies build a more equitable and inclusive region?

Access – many residents in the CWEDD region struggle to stay afloat amid high living costs. With economic inequality on the rise,¹¹ CWEDD must support efforts to ensure residents have options for earning a living wage and affordable access to housing, transportation, recreation, broadband, and health care. Making headway on these issues will play a key role in reducing economic inequality.

Resilience

How will these strategies build regional resilience?

Workforce flexibility – pushing for more strategic connections between our workforce development sector and our educational institutions will help better align the skills of our workers with the needs of our businesses. By better aligning efforts, we give our workforce an appropriate and transferrable skill that will allow the region to pivot quickly into new sectors as our economy adapts to new technology and consumer demands.

Equitable access – supporting policies that ensure basic needs are met (like access to affordable housing and high-speed internet) removes stressors from the lives of our workers, allowing them to focus their energy on contributing to our region's businesses.

Internal Coordination – in part because of the mis-aligned geographies of WIBs and EDDs, our region has sometimes struggled to coordinate efforts related to workforce development. By intentionally focusing on building stronger coordination between WIBs and other economic development practitioners, we can create a more coherent system of support for our region's workforce.

¹¹ Hauser, Daniel and Juan Carlos Ordóñez. "Income Inequality in Oregon Notched New Record Prior to COVID-19 Crisis." Oregon Center for Public Policy, 10/1/20. <https://www.ocpp.org/2020/10/01/income-inequality-oregon-new-record/>



Priority Area 5: Rural Vitality

Description: Rural communities have unique economic strengths and challenges. While training and educational opportunities exist in the region, distance and other challenges can prevent rural communities from accessing those services. Lack of basic services can make rural areas less attractive to prospective residents and employers. Therefore, ensuring equitable access to basic services for residents and businesses in rural areas is a critical strategic opportunity.

CWEDD's Role: As a regional body that can work with Counties and other districts that cover unincorporated areas and smaller towns, the District plays an important role in directing resources towards rural areas. **Over the next five years**, the District will advocate for high-quality service provision to rural areas and support projects that enhance economic opportunity and resilience in rural communities.

Approaches <i>What will guide regional economic development?</i>	Implementation Ideas <i>How can the strategies be implemented?</i>
Prioritize strategies that support the growth of tourism and value-added natural resource industries (including ecotourism, marine-related activities, sustainable farming, and local food and beverage production) to enhance economic opportunities in rural areas.	Work with local Main Street programs to identify and secure funding for downtown revitalization projects. Work with Destination Marketing Organizations and the Willamette Valley Visitors Association to develop and market local value-added products. Develop/sustain business retention and expansion programs in rural communities with a particular emphasis on succession planning for businesses at risk of closing.
Support efforts to provide high-quality K-12 education in rural areas.	Meet regularly with K-12 school administrators and Education Service District representatives to understand students' needs and lend support to projects aimed at meeting these needs.
Support efforts to increase health care and telehealth care access in rural areas.	Meet regularly with health care providers and public health officials to understand rural patients' needs and lend support to projects aimed at meeting these needs.
Emphasize infrastructure self-sufficiency in rural areas to ensure communities can sustain themselves in the event a disaster cuts off access to transportation systems and urban centers.	Develop a self-sufficiency checklist to apply during project planning; the checklist can help identify project shortcomings and encourage modifications that will ensure rural areas can sustain themselves without outside help.



Priority Area 5: Rural Vitality, cont.

Indicators

Collaboration: Presence of multi-jurisdictional projects in rural areas

Equity & Inclusion: Access to health and education services

Resilience: Presence of rural infrastructure projects explicitly considering self-sufficiency

Key Partners

- ❖ Economic development staff
- ❖ Regional tourism staff
- ❖ Rural school districts and education service districts
- ❖ Health care providers
- ❖ Local & county emergency managers

Key Considerations

Regional Collaboration

How will a regional approach to these strategies support economic prosperity?

Our region’s rural areas must work together to increase access to basic services and cultivate promising new economic sectors. While each community has unique needs and identities, far more unites our rural areas than divides them. County and other regional economic development practitioners should facilitate collaboration and sharing among rural communities. This will help coalesce multiple communities behind funding proposals and projects, increasing the likelihood of their success.

Equity & Inclusion

How will these strategies build a more equitable and inclusive region?

Access – many public services are concentrated in urban areas, making them difficult to access for residents of rural areas who do not have reliable transportation or high-speed internet connections. By highlighting the needs of rural residents and advocating for systems of service provision that are accessible in rural areas, economic developers can bring attention and resources to an underserved population.

Resilience

How will these strategies build regional resilience?

Diversification of industries/economic sectors – Oregon’s rural economies have experienced significant decline in part because they lacked economic diversity. Encouraging the diversification of the industries that support our rural areas will increase rural areas’ ability to withstand and bounce back from future economic shocks.

Infrastructure redundancy and resiliency – building out self-sufficient infrastructure in rural places will decrease dependency on far-away support systems. Since many disasters may cut off access to these support systems, self-sufficient and back-up infrastructure will be critical to survival.

Internal Coordination –coalescing rural communities around specific funding proposals will increase competitiveness since many funders prioritize collaborative efforts. While a single community on its own may have trouble competing with the comparatively vast resources available in urban areas, pooling rural communities’ resources and voices will increase their likelihood of gaining attention and traction.