

LANE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

AGENDA

January 8, 2024

(LEC meetings are held on the **2nd Monday** of each month)

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85993092847?pwd=AcePAxKUS0aBi96mg9nmky2EKHCkVH.1>

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Meeting ID: 859 9309 2847

Passcode: 709199

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

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| 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 December 11, 2023 | 11:45 |
| Presenter: Greg Ervin | |
| Action Item: Approve minutes. | |
| 5. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update | 11:50 |
| Presenters: Justin Peterson and Denise Walters | |
| CEDS Priority(ies): All | |
| 6. 2023 CEDS Progress from LEC Member Perspectives | 12:00 |
| Presenter: Denise Walters | |
| 7. 2024 Member and Stakeholder Presentations | 12:20 |
| Presenter: Denise Walters | |
| CEDS Priority(ies): All | |
| 8. LCOG Loan Program Overview | 12:30 |
| Presenter(s): Sandra Easdale | |

CEDS Priorities: 2- Sector Diversification Through Business Development, 4 – Workforce Support, 5 – Rural Vitality

Next Meeting Dates:

- February 12, 2024
- March 11, 2024
- April 8, 2024

ITEM 5: 2024 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update Process

The current CEDS covers the 2021-2025 time period signaling the beginning of an update process in 2024. The LEC will hear any available information about the process as of the January 8th meeting.

Preparation: LEC members are asked to think about how well the current CEDS has met their and communities' needs, any additional priorities, strategies, or metrics you would like to offer for consideration, and/or any additional information you think is needed to assist in these considerations.

ITEM 6: 2023 CEDS Progress from LEC Member Perspectives

In 2023 LEC members responded to a survey and indicated the following in terms of **priority alignment**:

Priority Area 1 – Regional Collaboration and Partnerships: 75% (8) responded Area 1 completely aligns with your current needs and opportunities, 25% (2) said it mostly does.

Priority Area 2 – Sector Diversification Through Business Development: 75% (8) responded Area 2 completely aligns with your current needs and opportunities, 25% (2) said it mostly does.

Priority Area 3 – Infrastructure Resilience: 57% (4) responded Area 3 completely aligns with your current needs and opportunities, 29% (2) said it mostly does, and 14% said it somewhat aligns with current needs and opportunities.

Priority Area 4 – Workforce Support: 75% (6) responded Area 4 completely aligns with your current needs and opportunities, and 25% (2) said it mostly aligns.

Priority Area 5 – Rural Vitality: 37.5% (3) responded Area 4 completely aligns with your current needs and opportunities, 25% (2) said it mostly does, and 37.5% (3) said it somewhat aligns with current needs and opportunities.

LEC members indicated the following in terms of how well each member thought they were progressing in terms of **Priority Area Indicators**:

Priority Area Indicators	Individual Org/Agency		Lane County as Collective
Collaboration	Very Well	37.5% (3)	25% (2)
	Well	50% (4)	25% (2)
	Somewhat Well	12.5% (1)	50% (4)
	Not So Well	0	0
	Stuck	0	0
Equity & Inclusion	Very Well	12.5% (1)	0
	Well	62.5% (5)	50% (4)
	Somewhat Well	12.5% (1)	37.5% (3)
	Not So Well	12.5% (1)	12.5% (1)
	Stuck	0	0
Resilience	Very Well	0	0
	Well	62.5% (5)	50% (4)
	Somewhat Well	37.5% (3)	37.5% (3)
	Not So Well	0	12.5% (1)
	Stuck	0	0

Preparation: LEC members are asked to consider indicator progress, whether the above results still ring true for you, and to be ready to discuss questions, ideas, interests in better addressing how Lane County as a collective can improve progress toward these indicators and/or dig into how perceptions might differ from what members see/agree is actual progress.

ITEM 7: LEC Member and Stakeholder Presentations

This item asks about the interest of members to hear presentations from each member over the course of the year and for the group to weigh in on the key stakeholders the LEC should hear from at least annually. Please also consider if you think an in person meeting two (2) - four (4) times a year may be beneficial.

ITEM 8: LCOG Loan Program Overview

This item provided an update on the products offered and how they are organized.

Lane Economic Committee (LEC)
Lane Council of Governments (LCOG), Fifth Floor Conference Room
859 Willamette Street -- Eugene (Hybrid meeting via Zoom)

MINUTES

December 11, 2023
11:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Ervin; Chair (City of Cottage Grove / Government), Matt Michel; (City of Veneta / Government), Allie Camp; (City of Springfield / Government), Jake Clifton; (Business), Sandra Easdale; (LCOG Staff), Mike Eyster; (LCC), Jacob Thode; (City of Veneta), Mark Bodie; (Business/Finance), Paul Berger; (Business), Jenna Cusimano; (Lane County / Government), Cindy Perry; (Business / Labor), Larissa Ennis (University of Oregon), Nicole Desch; (Collaborative EDO).

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeremy Caudle; (City of Lowell / Government), Chantelle Meyer; (Economic Development), Faye Stewart; (City of Cottage Grove / Government), Kari Westlund; (Travel Lane County), Jude Anderson; (Lane County / Government), Justin Peterson; (Oregon Cascades West), Anne Fifield; Vice Chair (City of Eugene), Anne Whittington; (Oregon Cascades West).

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

GUESTS: Heidi Larwick; (Connected Lane County).

1. Welcome/Introductions / Changes to the Agenda

Chair Ervin called the LEC meeting to order at 11:30 AM. Introductions were made, and 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

Ms. Walters said LCOG staff would like LEC members to share their current priority tasks or upcoming tasks in January, to help shape the LEC program for 2024.

Ms. Perry noted that the Lane Workforce Development Board was in the process of creating their 2024 / 2028 Strategic Plan. Their state-required Local Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act was also under development. The strategic plan was scheduled to be completed by the end of January 2024, and the local plan would be completed by March 18, 2024. She suggested that the strategic plan could be presented at a future LEC meeting.

Ms. Taylor told the group she would be retiring from LCOG at the end of December 2023, after forty years of service. It had been her pleasure to work with the members of LEC.

LEC members congratulated Ms. Taylor.

4. Review Minutes from November 13, 2023

MOTION: Mr. Eyster moved, seconded by Mr. Berger to approve the November 13, 2023, LEC meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

5. 2024 Government Member Appointments

Ms. Walters reminded members representing jurisdictions to let Paula Taylor or herself know if there would be any changes in representation.

6. 2024 Lane Economic Committee Chair and Vice-Chair

Ms. Walters said assembling a nominating committee did not happen and noted that Chair Greg Ervin and Vice Chair Anne Fifield expressed their willingness to serve another term as LEC officers. Therefore, a motion to re-elect Chair Ervin and Vice Chair Fifield could be made, or motions to nominate other candidates could be made.

MOTION: Mr. Eyster moved, seconded by Mr. Berger to appoint Greg Ervin as the 2024, LEC Chair and Anne Fifield as the 2024, LEC Vice Chair. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Connected Lane County

Ms. Larwick introduced herself as the Executive Director of Connected Lane County, a youth-focused organization established to better understand why high school students were not graduating from school. The first Connected Lane County initiative was established at the Lane Education Service District (ESD). The goal was to contact all Lane County school districts and learn about their challenges. In the last seven years, Connected Lane County had grown significantly and became independent from the ESD. It was now a 501 (c)(3) organization with 26 employees.

Connected Lane County Mission

To create safe and equitable learning environments for all of Lane County's youth, while helping them break down their barriers to learning and life and expand their knowledge.

Connected Lane County prepared youths for the challenges that face them after high school. The following was presented as a high school graduate's skills breakdown by percentage:

- 36 Percent Professional Skills – Skills for Career Growth (Communication, Problem Solving, and Timeliness)
- 47 Percent Technical Skills – Skills for Specific Jobs or Industries
- 17 Percent Life Skills – Skills for Independence

Connected Lane Count Core Programs to Date

- Elevate – Empowerment of Youth and Educators by Creating Meaningful Connections with Industry Partners
- Navigate – Crucial Support for Education, Career Goals, Financial Stability, and Employment to Unhoused or Underserved Youths
- Spark – A Safe Place to Learn, Innovate, Collaborate, and Create
 - The first Spark facility, a 6,000-square foot innovation hub located in downtown Eugene, opened in 2021. Operations at this facility remained ongoing.

Connected Lane County 2022 / 2023 Statistics to Date

- 3,158 Lane County Youths Served
- 732,123 Dollars in Wages Paid to Youth
- 58 Percent Identify as Black, Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC)
- 48 Percent Female
- 14 Percent Non-binary
- 14 Percent Unhoused / In Transition

Connected Lane County Excelerators

Excelerators was developed in 2023, for out-of-school youth, aged 18 to 24, who did not get a full educational experience. This program paired in-person learning with industry applications. Youths enter a six-week program that focused on culinary arts, technology, or manufacturing technology. (Healthcare would be added to the program in 2024.) After six weeks of industry specific learning, youths enter their chosen industry for a three-week applied learning course. Youths are paid for all nine weeks of the program.

Ms. Larwick noted that a second Spark facility opened in the City of Springfield in June of 2023. To accomplish this, Connected Lane County raised over two million dollars and renovated an 11,000-square foot building. Unlike the Eugene facility, this facility was equipped with a laundry room and showers for youths to use. It also offered hands-on welding and fabrication learning.

Mr. Eyster asked Ms. Larwick to discuss the connection between Connected Lane County and the Lane Community College (LCC).

Ms. Larwick said Connected Lane County's work involved pathways to LCC and the University of Oregon (UO). Youths were shown what the path would look like at each school so they could understand their options.

Chair Ervin asked about the Connected Lane County schedules.

Ms. Larwick said the daytime programs typically began at 10:00 AM. Those programs were created for out-of-school youths, to avoid competing with school schedules. Connected Lane County provided bus passes and gas cards to help with transportation issues. In some cases, housing costs were paid, for those residing outside of the Eugene / Springfield area. Food was also provided. In-school youth programs took place after school or during the summer months and transportation assistance was provided for those programs too.

Mr. Eyster asked if there were any indicators that the program was having an impact on graduation rates.

Ms. Larwick said because there were so many factors to consider regarding the barriers of Lane County youth, it was hard to determine the program's impact on overall graduation rates. The main goal of Connected Lane County was to make sure that youths were prepared and excited about embarking on a career path. Three Connected Lane County youths had already received full-ride scholarships at UO. The success of the program would be determined by the number of youths who pursue higher education or enter their chosen industry. Connected Lane County was tracking those numbers.

Mr. Michel asked how the City of Veneta could encourage youth from the Fern Ridge area to enter the program.

Ms. Larwick said Connected Lane County had been trying to establish relationships with areas throughout Lane County for the past eight years, and no two areas were alike. She welcomed suggestions on events that Connected Lane County could attend to establish a stronger connection with Veneta. The main connection between Connected Lane County and Veneta was currently the School district.

Mr. Eyster noted that part of the City of Veneta's Economic Development Program entailed informing high school juniors and seniors about entrepreneurial options.

Mr. Berger asked if Connected Lane County had worked with school counselors.

Ms. Larwick said Connected Lane County was a member of the Beyond High School Network, which was made up of UO and LCC representatives, high school counselors, and career center staff. They met on a monthly basis.

Ms. Waters asked Ms. Larwick to discuss The Agency and asked how Connected Lane County got industry partners excited about working with youths.

Ms. Larwick said after youths complete an internship or a five-week summer program, eight to ten youth were selected and hired by The Agency. The Agency was a paid work experience that provided youths with the opportunity to grow and further develop skills learned in previous programs. By completing small-batch projects for local businesses and nonprofits, youths learned essential job skills to succeed in real-world industries. Some of the organizations involved with The Agency have been The Eugene Symphony, Food for Lane County, LCOG, and PIVOT Architecture.

Regarding getting industry partners excited about working with youths, Ms. Larwick said Connected Lane County visited their facilities, and spent time building those relationships. They worked to educate partners about the best way to approach youths before working relationships with them began. She noted that there were many repeat partnerships.

Ms. Walters asked if Connected Lane County partnered with the career technical education (CTE) programs in the schools.

Ms. Larwick said Connected Lane County partnered with CTE a lot when they first started. What they determined over time was that many marginalized youths did not have access to CTE programs, which resulted in less interaction with CTE. Connected Lane County was essentially providing youths with services similar to CTE programs.

Ms. Walters asked how Connected Lane County was engaging with rural districts. Ms. Larwick said each district is unique in character so there is a wide spectrum in terms of what CLC's connections look like. For example, it could range from getting one or two students to CLC locations and programs or working closely with a teacher or team in a particular content area.

Mr. Berger asked Ms. Larwick to discuss how Connected Lane County provided social services to Lane County youth.

Ms. Larwick said Connected Lane County had six Resource Navigators on staff who were very aware of the social services available in each community.

Mr. Berger asked if there were any thoughts about a mentorship program.

Ms. Larwick said Connected Lane County just received funding from Lane County Health and Human Services to pilot a mentorship program mainly focused on BIPOC populations in 2024.

Ms. Larwick noted that at any given time, 500 youths were unhoused or in transition and Connected Lane County only had 13 beds. There was another population of youths that were going to college but could not afford the cost of housing in this area.

Ms. Walters asked what LEC members could do to help the program, get the word out about the program and its services.

Ms. Larwick said Connected Lane County was always looking for ways to deepen relationships in various communities. Any help with regard to that was always welcomed and appreciated. Any connections and creative strategies that LEC members came up with would be helpful.

Ms. Larwick noted that the Springfield Spark facility was located at the Booth-Kelly Center and invited LEC members to schedule a tour.

8. Adjournment

Chair Ervin said the next LEC meeting would take place on January 8, 2024. He adjourned this meeting at 12:30 PM.

(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.	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. City and County economic development staff should deliver an annual CEDS overview and update to elected officials.
Increase CWEDD's staff capacity so CWEDD can provide more support to regional initiatives.	Seek funding to add at least 1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff support position to CWEDD. 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).
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

What will guide regional economic development?

Provide support to entrepreneurship and business retention and expansion efforts by serving as a clearing house for regional data and resources.

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.

Facilitate connections between educational institutions (both K-12 and higher education) and business incubators and accelerators to foster a culture of entrepreneurship.

Implementation Ideas

How can the strategies be implemented?

Create and promote a database of incubators, accelerators, capital sources, and business support services available in the region.

Assist with identifying and pursuing funding that would increase capacity of business incubators and accelerators.

Develop a business registration or tracking system that will allow the collection of more and better data about businesses' needs.

Establish a network of local and regional staff who can help businesses navigate through permitting and other processes.

Develop and publicize educational opportunities about the advantages of international trade for regional businesses that are interested in expanding into new markets.

Facilitate annual meetings with representatives from business development centers and incubators/accelerators to discuss the process referrals between support providers.

Facilitate annual meetings with representatives from educational institutions to build connections between regional needs and academic course offerings.

Organize a forum on regional innovation networking.



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).	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Encourage local practitioners to support the update of the economic development sections of comprehensive plans by encouraging resilience considerations for employment land.</p>
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.	<p>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.</p> <p>Increase staff time at COGs dedicated to helping with preparing funding applications and providing technical assistance on infrastructure project development.</p>



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.	<p>Work with local Main Street programs to identify and secure funding for downtown revitalization projects.</p> <p>Work with Destination Marketing Organizations and the Willamette Valley Visitors Association to develop and market local value-added products.</p> <p>Develop/sustain business retention and expansion programs in rural communities with a particular emphasis on succession planning for businesses at risk of closing.</p>
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.

LANE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE - 2023

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* These positions are appointed by their respective elected bodies.

** This position is appointed by the LCOG Board.

Changes are indicated in **Bold**

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