

# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2015-2020

## Cascades West Economic Development District



Photo Credits Gary Halvorson, Oregon State Archives

September 2015

Volume I: Basic Plan

Prepared for:  
Cascades West Economic Development District

Prepared by:



This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was prepared by –



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Approval of this document has been recommended by -

- Lane Economic Committee September, 2015
- Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments Community and Economic Development Committee September, 2015

For consideration by -

- Cascades West Economic Development District Board of Directors
- Lane Council of Governments Board of Directors
- Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments Board of Directors
- U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration

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## **SPECIAL THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Community Service Center's Community Planning Workshop at the University of Oregon developed this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy in collaboration with the Cascades West Economic Development District, the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments and the Lane Council of Governments. The University of Oregon Economic Development Administration University Center provided technical and funding support. The U.S. Economic Development Administration provided primary funding for the project.

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## **About the Community Service Center**

The Community Service Center (CSC), a research center affiliated with the Department of Planning, Public Policy, and Management at the University of Oregon, is an interdisciplinary organization that assists Oregon communities by providing planning and technical assistance to help solve local issues and improve the quality of life for Oregon residents. The role of the CSC is to link the skills, expertise, and innovation of higher education with the transportation, economic development, and environmental needs of communities and regions in the State of Oregon, thereby providing service to Oregon and learning opportunities to the students involved.

## **About Community Planning Workshop**

Community Planning Workshop (CPW) is an experiential program within the Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management at the University of Oregon. Students work in teams under the direction of faculty and Graduate Teaching Fellows to develop proposals, conduct research, analyze and evaluate alternatives, and make recommendations for possible solutions to planning problems in Oregon communities. The CPW model is unique in many respects, but is transferable to any institution that desires to link pedagogy with community service.

## **About the EDA University Center**

The University of Oregon Economic Development Administration University Center (EDAUC) is a partnership between the Community Service Center, the UO Department of Economics, the Oregon Small Business Development Center Network and UO faculty. The UO Center provides technical assistance to organizations throughout Oregon, with a focus on rural economic development. The UO EDAUC seeks to align local strategies to community needs, specifically with regards to building understanding of the benefits of sustainable practices and providing technical training to capitalize on economic opportunities related to those practices. The UO EDAUC is partially funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cascades West Economic Development District (CWEDD) is designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration to work on economic development efforts in Linn, Benton, Lane and Lincoln Counties. The CWEDD advocates for, supports and coordinates regionally significant economic development activities in the region. The District prepared this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to guide regionally significant economic development projects and activities over the next five years.

## Regional Economic Vision

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*THE DISTRICT'S PREFERRED FUTURE INCLUDES A GROWING AND DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY WITH RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT PROVIDE STABLE FAMILY WAGE JOBS, LIFELONG LEARNING AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES, SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCES, INTEGRATED INFRASTRUCTURE, AND COORDINATION AMONG ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS THROUGHOUT THE REGION.*

---

## Goals

- Create partnerships needed for **REGIONAL COLLABORATION**
- Advance economic activities that **INCREASE** access to and provide a range of **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**
- **BUILD** on region's **ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE** and assets through collaborative means
- Identify and leverage internal and external funding sources to **FUND** projects that increase the resilience (diversity and redundancy) of **INFRASTRUCTURE** systems throughout the district
- Partner to **CONNECT WORKFORCE** training, education, and entrance opportunities **WITH** workforce **DEMAND**
- **ENHANCE VISIBILITY OF** community assets and accessibility of basic services in **RURAL AREAS**

### What is a CEDS?

"...an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen Regional economies."

- U.S. Economic Development Administration

## Marketable Strengths

The following lists, grouped by category, present strengths identified during the SWOT analysis.

### Connectivity:

- Direct access to interstate 5
- Multi-use ocean ports for fishing, research and trade
- Local, regional, national and international rail network
- Freight infrastructure

### Culture of Innovation

- Business incubators and accelerators (e.g. Regional Accelerator & Innovation Network, FertiLab)
- Research institutes and higher education institutions
- Proven track record of successful business starts (e.g. Nike, Garage Games, Molecular Probes)

### Supportive Business Climate

- Adaptive and attractive building code processes
- Small business support (e.g. chambers of commerce, Cascades West Financial Services)
- Workforce training centers

### Technical Support

- Councils of Government (LCOG, OCWCOG)
- UO Economic Development Administration University Center
- Multiple economic development related non-profits and foundations

## District-Wide Opportunities

The following lists present opportunities identified during the SWOT analysis.

- Quality of place for growing population segments (i.e. retirees, families, aging baby boomers, climate migrants, etc.)
- Growing trade between US and Asia
- Enterprise zones
- Access to available capital
- Increasing higher education enrollment
- Growing national and international economies
- Workforce training and education
- New and expanding markets (e.g. value-added forest products, marijuana, tourism, craft beer and wine, etc.)
- 'Green business'
- Renewable energy
- 'Lay-down' areas for multi-modal freight transfers
- California and Washington markets
- Growing national and international economies

## Guiding Principles

Guiding principles provide structure for the plan update process. Figure S-1 shows the guiding principles agreed upon by the OCWEDD board for the 2015 CEDS update.

**Figure S.1: 2015-2020 CEDS Guiding Principles**



Source: Community Planning Workshop

## Implementation Structure

The implementation structure outlines the District's approach to achieving its vision. The 2015-2020 CEDS Action Plan is structured as follows:

- **Goals:** The goals are broad statements that describe the District's overarching aspirations for economic development in the region.
- **Objectives:** Objectives are closely tied to goals. They describe specific and measurable milestone to work towards in order to achieve each goal.
- **Strategies:** A strategy describes a plan of action and approach designed to achieve each objective.
- **Actions:** Actions describe the specific steps needed to implement the listed strategy.

**Figure S.2: 2015 CEDS Action & Implementation Plan**



Source: Community Planning Workshop

# Comprehensive Action Plan

The following table summarizes specific **priority** CEDS actions organized by plan Goal. Refer to the Strategic Action Plan section beginning on Page 13 for a complete list of actions categorized by Goal, Objective and Strategy. Volume II, Appendix A contains detailed information for all action items, including potential partners, implementation ideas, proposed timeline and estimated budget.

**Figure S.3: 2015 High Priority CWEDD CEDS Actions**

Goal	Priority Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Regional Collaboration	1.1.1.1: Create and maintain a CWEDD website to function as an information hub for the region by 2016. (1)					
	1.1.1.2: Create a regional economic development organization chart that clearly identifies the linkages and roles of all economic development agencies. (1)					
	1.2.1.1: Create and convene at least annually four working groups to be responsible for implementation and monitoring of each goal/priority area identified in this CEDS. (1)					
Economic Development	2.1.2.1: Coordinate the inclusion of regional branding language on local jurisdictions' and the State of Oregon's tourism promotion efforts. (1)					
	2.2.1.1: Create and promote a database of incubators, accelerators, capital sources and support services available in the region by 2016. (1)					
	2.2.2.1: Working groups agree on two to three of the following business clusters to focus business development efforts on over the next 5 years: software/technology; food and beverage; education technology and research; advanced manufacturing; value-added forest products; university-related spinoffs; health; marine; agriculture; bioscience; and natural textiles. (O)					
Entrepreneurship & Innovation	3.1.1.1: Organize a forum on regional innovation networking by the end of June 2016. (A)					
	3.1.2.2: The CWEDD will develop and implement a strategy for increasing business visibility, involvement, and entrepreneurial education into local schools by 2017. (O)					
	3.1.2.3: Prepare and promote an inventory of resources available to entrepreneurs by December 2016 through a combination of mixed media such as a website, listserv, or social media. (1)					
Technical Support	4.1.1.1: Create a section in the CWEDD website to list current funding opportunities for local jurisdictions by December 2016. (1)					
	4.1.2.1: CWEDD will work with OCWCOG and LCOG to complete a Regional Needs Assessment by summer of 2016. (A)					
Workforce Development	5.1.1.1: Assess the workforce development system in the region and make recommendations to the CWEDD Board about the CWEDD's role in supporting coordination among workforce development organizations. (1)					
	5.1.1.2: 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. (O)					
Rural Development	6.1.1.1: In partnership with local Main Street programs, identify and support downtown revitalization projects in rural communities each year. (O)					
	6.1.3.1: The Rural Development Working Group will use the results of the regional needs assessment (from Action 4.1.2.1) to identify, prioritize, and recommend a set of rural area "projects of regional significance" to the CWEDD Board. (O)					

Key: (1) one time project; (O) ongoing project; (A) annual project; (LD) limited duration project

Source: Community Planning workshop

# INTRODUCTION

Fertile valleys, abundant forest lands, pristine beaches, temperate climate, world class universities, and a culture of innovation are common to the Cascades West Economic Development District (CWEDD). Located south of the Portland Metro area, the CWEDD provides numerous examples of all that western Oregon has to offer. Complete with direct access to the West Coast's main interstate highway, rail hubs, world-class port facilities, clean water and renewable energy, it's easy to see why the region retains and attracts some of the nation's top talent and industry.

This document will guide us for the next five-years. As you read, look for ways you can contribute to the region's economic strategy. Together, we can achieve the region's economic goals.

## Background

The CWEDD is designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) to work on economic development efforts in Linn, Benton, Lane and Lincoln Counties. The CWEDD advocates for, supports and coordinates regionally significant economic development activities in the region. The Oregon Cascades West Community and Economic Development Committee and the Lane Economic Committee play lead roles in defining regional community and economic development issues, opportunities, vision, goals, and work programs.

According to the EDA, a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) is intended to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen regional economies. The purpose of

### What is a CEDS?

"CEDS are designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of **an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen Regional economies**. The CEDS should analyze the Regional economy and serve as a guide for establishing **Regional goals and objectives**, developing and implementing a **Regional plan of action**, and identifying **investment priorities and funding sources**. Public and private sector partnerships are critical to the implementation of the integral elements of a CEDS set forth in paragraph (b) of this section. As a performance-based plan, the CEDS will serve a critical role in a Region's efforts to defend against economic dislocations due to global trade, competition and other events resulting in the loss of jobs and private investment."

- U.S. Economic Development Administration

a CEDS is to serve as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources.

The EDA requires that economic development districts update their CEDS every five years pursuant to 13 C.F.R. § 303.6(3)(ii). This plan is an update to the 2010 CEDS. It sets the vision and strategy for the next five-year implementation cycle. The University of Oregon's Community Service Center (CSC) facilitated the plan update process and prepared this plan.

The development and maintenance of the CEDS is required to qualify for U.S. Economic Development Administration assistance under its public works, economic adjustment and planning programs, and is a prerequisite for designation by the U.S. Economic Development Administration as an Economic Development District.

The regional CEDS will benefit the Cascades West Region in two primary ways:

- The CEDS highlights key priorities for the region in the next five years. By pooling resources and fostering collaboration, regional organizations can make progress toward achieving the region's economic vision.
- The CEDS identifies important projects and activities that have regional significance. Communities seeking to advance projects in these identified areas can use the CEDS to demonstrate that their projects are not just of local concern, but support broader regional goals.

## Process and Methods

As noted above, the EDA requires economic development districts update their CEDS every five years pursuant to 13 C.F.R. § 303.6(3)(ii). The process and contents contained herein are intended to meet the federal requirements for CEDS. Specifically, the plan update process involved review of available economic data and plans, consultation with the CWEDD Board/CEDS Strategy Committee<sup>1</sup>, and interviews, surveys, and focus groups with key stakeholders. The process included visioning, goal setting and action planning exercises. From this in-depth exploration of regional attitudes of economic development, the following set of guiding

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<sup>1</sup> In order to ensure regional representation, the CWEDD Board elected to serve as the CEDS Strategy Committee for the 2015-2020 update. This plan outlines a set of administrative changes the district will implement over the next five-years to restructure and clarify the administrative structure of the CWEDD. These changes include defined roles for the Board, Working Groups and Strategy Committee.

### Challenges

How to get 38 jurisdictions to work toward a shared vision?

How to diversify and strengthen the regional economy?

How to make the region more resilient?

### Opportunities

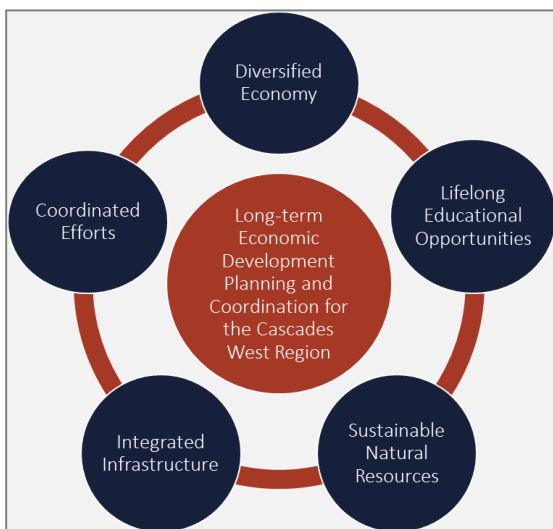
Higher education institutions and research centers.

Culture of entrepreneurship and innovation.

Beautiful environments and abundant natural resources.

principles emerged, providing structure and focus for the planning team throughout the plan update process.

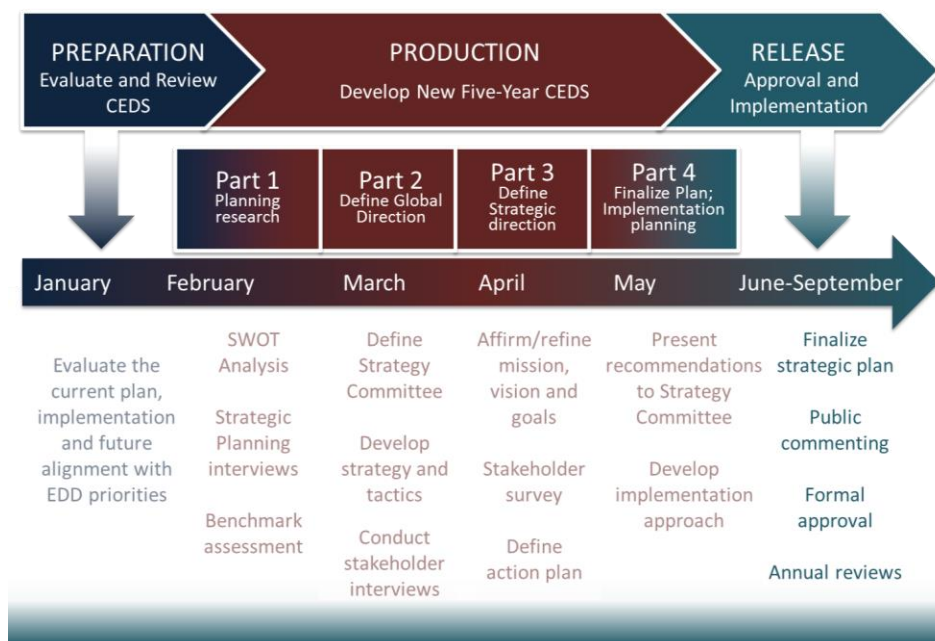
**Figure 1.1: 2015 CEDS Guiding Principles**



Source: Community Planning Workshop

The CSC used an iterative, facilitated method to update the CEDS. The process included: (1) convening the CWEDD Board; (2) updating data related to characteristics and economic trends in the region (3) developing and administering an online survey of both internal and external stakeholders, (4) conducting stakeholder interviews, (5) convening a coastal focus group; and (6) preparing draft and final plan material for review and comment. Figure 1.2 below summarizes the overall work program and schedule of activities.

**Figure 1.2: Project Activities and Timeline**



Source: Community Planning Workshop

# Organization of this Report

The CEDS is divided into two volumes. The following outline summarizes the content contained in each volume and the sections therein.

## Volume I

- Introduction: Provides background on the CEDS, describes the methods used to update it and presents the overall structure of the document.
- District Profile Summary: Presents a summary of the Region's economic development conditions and summarizes its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Strategic Action Plan: Presents the 2015-2020 CEDS vision, goals, objectives, strategies, and actions.
- Implementation: Presents the Board structure, a draft timeline for implementation over the next five years and the District's plan for measuring performance.

## Volume 2

- Appendix A - Action Item Forms: Contains detailed descriptions of each action including rationale, ideas for implementation, champion, potential partners, potential funding, performance measurements, and estimated costs and time.
- Appendix B – Project List: This section will list potential projects that may qualify for funding from outside sources, including the EDA. The Board will update this section as regionally relevant economic development projects emerge over the next five years.
- Appendix C - Socioeconomic Profile: Presents demographic and economic data about the region. These can serve as economic indicators for the region as a whole.
- Appendix D – Community Resources: Presents information about resources and characteristics of the region's communities and jurisdictions related to economic development in the region.
- Appendix E – Natural Resources: Presents information about Cascades West's natural systems that have an influential role on the region's economic development efforts.
- Appendix F - Process: Provides a summary of the process used to facilitate the update of the 2015-2020 CEDS for the Cascades West Economic Development District. This includes agendas and minutes from the District's Board meetings.
- Appendix G – SWOT Analysis: Provides a summary of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis conducted with the District. This includes input from the District Board, the stakeholder survey, and stakeholder interviews.



- Appendix H – Stakeholder Survey Results: Provides key findings, implications, and summarized results from the stakeholder survey.
- Appendix I – Interview and Focus Group Results: Provides key findings, implications, and summarized results from stakeholder interviews and the coastal focus group.
- Appendix J – Resilience Assessment: This section will present a set of resilience principles the District can use to increase its ability to anticipate, absorb, adapt to, and recover from potential economic disruptions.

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# DISTRICT PROFILE SUMMARY

This section summarizes key characteristics of the region and provides background on the region's economic development situation. In addition, the section outlines the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. For additional detail, please refer to the technical appendices in Volume II of this plan. This section, together with information contained elsewhere in this report, satisfies 13 C.F.R. § 303.7(b)(i) and (ii).

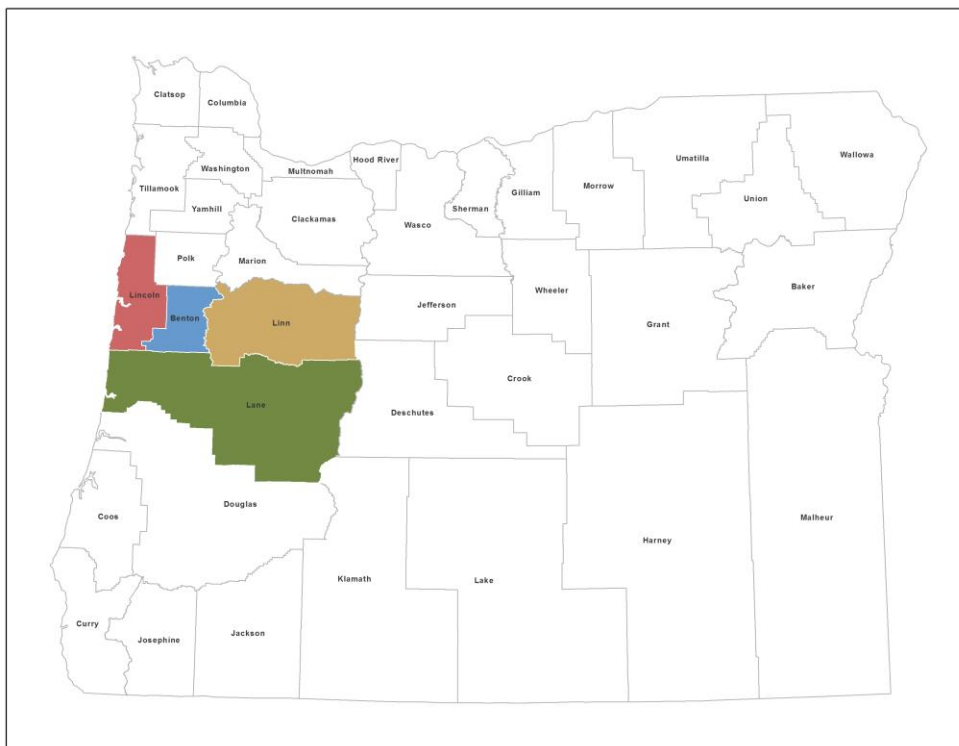
## Economic Development Conditions

This CEDS is based on an assessment of the economic conditions of the region. The following subsections summarize the unique features and characteristics of the CWEDD. This section, together with information contained elsewhere in this report, satisfies 13 C.F.R. § 303.7(b)(i).

### Location

The planning region for the Cascades West Economic Development District is the four-county area of Benton, Lane, Lincoln, and Linn Counties. The region is located in the center of western Oregon, stretching from the Pacific Ocean eastward over the Coast Range and through the Willamette Valley to the crest of the Cascade Range.

**Figure I.1: Map of the CWEDD Planning Region**



Source: Community Planning Workshop

## Geography & Climate

The region extends from sea level at the Pacific Ocean in the west to over 10,000 feet at the crest of the Cascades in the east. The southern end of the Willamette Valley surround the major population centers located along the Interstate 5 corridor.



Photo Source: Gary Halvorson, Oregon State Archives

The Willamette River runs north through the valley toward its mouth at the Columbia River. Primary and secondary agricultural lands support a variety of agricultural industries and businesses in the region.

The region has a temperate climate with moderate differences between summer high and winter low temperatures. The region receives between 40 and 90 inches of rainfall per year and a warm relatively dry summer promoting timber growth and a large agricultural sector.

## Natural Environment

The region's unique geography, including the fertile Willamette River Valley, Cascade and Coast Range foothills, and coastal influences, contributes greatly to its agricultural productivity - producing high-value nursery stock, world-class vineyards, and establishing the region as the Christmas tree and the grass seed "capital of the world." Forestlands are important to the Cascades West region for their economic, environmental, recreational, and quality of life benefits. Forest lands cover approximately 75% of the region, with roughly 50% of the region in State or Federal forest land.

## Demographics

The population in the region generally aligns with the state overall in terms of gender, age and race. According to the U.S. Census (2013), 50.7% of the population in the region is female and 49.3% is male. Nearly one-in-five people in the region are under the age of 18 and 62.7% of the regional population is of working age (16-64 years). Of that, just over half (54%) are between 30 and 54. The region does have a slightly smaller percentage of pre-school age children (5.2% versus 6.1% for the state), and has a slightly higher percentage of population older than 65 (17.0% versus 15.5% for the state). Minority populations are growing in the region, accounting for nearly 16% of the population in 2013.

The Oregon Office of Economic Analysis projects that the region will grow roughly 33% by 2050. By comparison, the projection for the state overall for the same period is 46%. Notably, Linn County is expected to grow by roughly 44% by 2050 while Lincoln County is expecting growth of only 22%. Through 2050, Benton and Lane Counties expect to grow by 30% and 32% respectively.

Significantly, in-migration is expected to accelerate, with in-migration accounting for 83% of regional population growth through 2040. Predictions are that coastal populations will continue to age and that net population growth in coastal areas will come from in-migration.

**Lincoln County:**

Population: 46,560  
Area: 980 sq. mi.  
Per Capita Income: \$24,354  
County Seat: Newport

**Benton:**

Population: 87,725  
Area: 676 sq. mi.  
Per Capita Income: \$26,177  
County Seat: Corvallis

**Linn:**

Population: 118,665  
Area: 2,291 sq. mi.  
Per Capita Income: \$22,165  
County Seat: Albany

**Lane:**

Population: 356,125  
Area: 4,554 sq. mi.  
Per Capita Income: \$23,869  
County Seat: Eugene

## Economy

Historically, the ocean, agricultural lands, and forest lands provided a variety of harvesting, processing, and secondary processing opportunities for the region. Despite boom-bust cycles, the extraction and processing of the region's natural resources generally provided a solid economic base through the 1970s.

During the 1980s, many of the region's natural resource-based businesses faced significant structural changes and began contracting. While the entire region was impacted by this shift, many of the region's rural communities suffered severe hardships, as their relatively narrow natural resource-based economies were unable to replace industries and jobs lost.

Health care, educational services, retail trade and manufacturing are the top four employers respectively by sector in the region. Approximately 80% of employees live and work within the region. Roughly 60% of the jobs in the region are located in Lane County with Linn (17%), Benton (15%), and Lincoln (seven %) accounting for the remainder.

## SWOT Summary

The CEDS Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis considers the internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors

(opportunities and threats) that influence economic development in the Region. The following sub-sections summarize the SWOT analysis findings. The SWOT results helped to frame and guide the formation of the CEDS goals, objectives, strategies, and actions. Refer to Appendix F for additional information. This section, together with information contained elsewhere in this report, satisfies 13 C.F.R. § 303.7(b)(ii).

## Marketable Strengths

The CWEDD has a unique set of strengths. Survey responses and stakeholder comments specifically identified growth in the medical supply, maritime industry, and research clusters as key strengths in the region. In addition, the amount of agriculture and food industries contribute to the region's position in the state.

The following lists, grouped by category, present additional strengths identified during the SWOT analysis.

### Connectivity:

- Direct access to interstate 5
- Multi-use ocean ports for fishing, research and trade
- Local, regional, national and international rail network
- Freight infrastructure
- 

### Supportive Business Climate

- Adaptive and attractive building code processes
- Small business support (e.g. chambers of commerce, Cascades West Financial Services)
- Workforce training centers

### Culture of Innovation

- Business incubators and accelerators (e.g. Regional Accelerator & Innovation Network (RAIN), FertiLab)
- Research institutes and higher education institutions
- Proven track record of successful business starts (e.g. Nike, Garage Games, Molecular Probes)

### Technical Support

- Councils of Government (LCOG, OCWCOG)
- UO Economic Development Administration University Center
- Multiple economic development related non-profits and foundations

## Regional Weaknesses

The CWEDD is a large and diverse region. Due to the range in size, scale and resource base of the local economies, a lack of agreement on regional economic development priorities exists. Real and perceived divides exist between rural and urban areas; coast, valley and mountain; and COG territories.

The following lists, grouped by category, present additional weaknesses identified during the SWOT analysis.

### Connectivity:

- Limited east-west connectivity
- Lack of rail connections to the coast
- Limited regional airport service
- Lack of available and accessible regional public transportation
- Lack of multi-modal transfer stations between valley and coast

### Institutional Barriers

- Lack of regional brand
- High demand for and limited supply of affordable housing
- Limited regional collaboration and partnership
- High demand for and limited supply of technical assistance to communities
- Government regulations (too many)

### Demographics

- Relatively small population
- Aging population and increasing number of retirees
- Lack of skilled labor force (not enough trained workers)

### Infrastructure

- Aging physical infrastructure (e.g. transportation, water, sewer, etc.)
- Lack of financial support services for startups
- Limited access to infrastructure financing

## **District-Wide Opportunities**

The overall perception is that the region is filled with unrealized potential. Specifically, survey respondents, project stakeholders and members of the CWEDD Board all emphasized increased regional coordination and collaboration as a key economic development opportunity. Other themes included promotion of the region's livability, available employment opportunities, existing maritime trade and research facilities, and premier educational and research assets.

The following lists present additional opportunities identified during the SWOT analysis.

- Quality of place for growing population segments (i.e. retirees, families, aging baby boomers, climate migrants, etc.)
- Growing trade between US and Asia
- Enterprise zones
- Access to available capital
- Increasing higher education enrollment
- Growing national and international economies
- Increase economic diversity across the region
- Workforce training and education
- New and expanding markets (e.g. value-added forest products, marijuana, tourism, craft beer and wine, etc.)
- 'Green business'
- Renewable energy
- 'Lay-down' areas for multi-modal freight transfers
- California and Washington markets
- Growing national and international economies

## Potential Threats

The CWEDD is vulnerable to a number of internal and external threats. Notably, many of these are tied to the region's natural resources and location. For example, the region is susceptible to chronic (e.g. flood) and catastrophic (e.g. subduction zone earthquake and tsunami) natural hazards.

The following lists, grouped by category, present additional threats identified during the SWOT analysis.

### Disaster Events

- Chronic natural hazards (e.g. floods, winter storms, wildfires, landslides, etc.)
- Catastrophic natural hazards (e.g. Cascadia subduction zone earthquake and tsunami)
- Long-term impacts from climate change

### Miscellaneous

- Lack of affordable housing stock
- National/international economic downturn
- High housing costs relative to wages
- Declining natural resource availability

### Coordination

- Jurisdictional competition within the region
- Lost economic development opportunities (due to lack of collaboration)
- Duplication of efforts
- Competition from other metro areas
- Shift from resource and manufacturing to service based economy

### Taxes

- Decreasing gas tax revenue
- Uncertain state tax structure



# STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The Strategic Action Plan outlines how the Cascades West Economic Development District (CWEDD) plans to facilitate economic development in the Cascades West region. This section presents the District's vision and the specific goals, objectives, strategies, and actions for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). More information about the process and the specific action items is located in Appendices A and E. This section, together with information contained elsewhere in this report, satisfies 13 C.F.R. § 303.7(b)(iii).

## Regional Economic Vision

The CEDS vision describes the District's ideal economic development future for the region. The vision guides the District's work and the content of the CEDS Action Plan. The District worked collaboratively to reach a shared vision that respects the goals and capacities of each community, nurtures and supports both existing and new businesses, and works to establish a multi-dimensional economy. The vision for the 2015-2020 CEDS is as follows:

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The District's preferred future includes a growing and diversified economy with range of employment opportunities that provide stable family wage jobs, lifelong learning and training opportunities, sustainable natural resources, an integrated infrastructure, and coordination among economic development efforts throughout the region.

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## Plan Structure

The Strategic Action Plan describes the District's approach to achieving this vision over the next five years. The 2015-2020 CEDS Action Plan is presented later in this section and is structured as follows:

- Goals: The goals are broad statements that describe the District's overarching aspirations for economic development in the region.
- Objectives: Objectives are closely tied to goals. They describe the specific and measurable milestone to work towards in order to achieve each goal.
- Strategies: A strategy describes a plan of action and approach designed to achieve each objective.
- Actions: Actions describe the specific steps needed to implement the listed strategy.

CSC and the District designed each goal and its respective objectives, strategies, and actions to be S.M.A.R.T.: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Oriented. The S.M.A.R.T. approach makes sure that an action plan is designed for success, and that goals are actually attainable and realistic. Aligning the action plan to these five criteria is vital to making progress towards the CEDS vision and seeing concrete results of the regional economic development approach.

The District Board updated the 2015-2020 CEDS Goals based on discussions and public feedback. Four of the goals listed in the 2010-2015 CEDS remain in the update, with minor adjustments (Goals 2, 3, 5, and 6). Two of the previous goals pertaining to technical and infrastructure support, were combined into Goal 4. The Board added and prioritized Goal 1 (regional collaboration) in response to an identified need to promote more coordination among economic development efforts in the region. In summary, the 2015-2020 CEDS Goals are:

*Goal 1: Create partnerships needed for regional collaboration*

*Goal 2: Advance economic activities that increase access to and provide a range of employment opportunities*

*Goal 3: Build on region's entrepreneurial culture and assets through collaborative means*

*Goal 4: Identify and leverage internal and external funding sources to fund projects that increase the resilience (diversity and redundancy) of infrastructure systems throughout the district*

*Goal 5: Partner to connect workforce training, education, and employment opportunities with workforce demand*

*Goal 6: Enhance the visibility of community assets and accessibility of basic services in rural areas*

Once the CEDS goals were agreed upon, CSC worked with the Board to develop sets of Objectives, Strategies, and Actions. The Board tailored the objectives and strategies to capitalize on specific opportunities and address specific challenges in the region. Each goal is listed with its respective considerations that describe what these barriers are and why it is important for the District to address them over the next five years.

The actions listed below briefly describe the specific steps the District will need to take in 2015-2020 to promote regional economic development. More information about these actions including rationale, ideas for implementation, champions, potential partners and funding sources, and estimated costs and time considerations can be found in Volume II, Appendix A. The following section, Implementation, describes how the District intends to successfully execute the 2015-2020 CEDS.

## Goal I Create partnerships needed for regional collaboration

Considerations: 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. Such collaboration can include partnering to compile and disseminate information, to promote regional events, to create job clusters, and to update future iterations of this CEDS document.

<u>Objective 1.1:</u> Implement a regional, asset-based, S.M.A.R.T. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which expands public, private and non-profit collaboration with a common strategic vision.	Strategy 1.1.1: Make the CEDS the principle document for regional collaboration on economic development and economic resilience.	Action 1.1.1.1: Create and maintain a CWEDD website to function as an information hub for the region by 2016. <b>[High Priority Action]</b>
		Action 1.1.1.2: Create a regional economic development organization chart that clearly identifies the linkages and roles of all economic development agencies. <b>[High Priority Action]</b>
<u>Objective 1.2:</u> Develop a collaborative regional economic development ecosystem that enables local community, economic, workforce development and planning practitioners to be as successful as possible.	Strategy 1.2.1: Promote the regional economic development strategy through active communication, regional working groups, and leadership curriculum.	Action 1.2.1.1: Create and convene at least annually four working groups to be responsible for implementation and monitoring of each goal/priority area identified in this CEDS. <b>[High Priority Action]</b>
		Action 1.2.1.2: Identify and/or partner within existing organizations to offer leadership training opportunities to build the capacity of regional leaders to collaboratively guide, manage and lead the regional economy.

## Goal 2 Advance economic activities that increase access to and provide a range of employment opportunities.

Considerations: Local and regional businesses are the primary contributors to employment and economic activity. In order to thrive, the region must both support and retain existing businesses and industries. In addition, the region must be prepared to take strategic advantage of new opportunities that have regional economic significance or impact. By creating a culture of entrepreneurship, community members will seek out opportunities to improve their skills, access existing job opportunities, or start their own businesses.

<p><u>Objective 2.1:</u> Broadcast a message regionally, nationally, and internationally, that the Cascades West region is a desirable place for businesses to locate and grow by highlighting our strengths in workforce, education, leisure, and healthcare.</p>	<p>Strategy 2.1.1: Develop internal (within Cascades West Region) and external branding and marketing plan.</p>	<p>Action 2.1.1.1: Complete a regional marketing research report with recommendations for the CWEDD board.</p>
		<p>Action 2.1.1.2: Capitalize on and align branding efforts in the region that align with the promotion of key industries outlined within the CEDS.</p>
		<p>Action 2.1.1.3: Establish a committee to review quality of place concepts and happiness index methodologies and make a recommendation to the CWEDD board by summer 2017 on whether or not to craft a set of appropriate regional metrics.</p>
	<p>Strategy 2.1.2: Align tourism promotion with regional marketing strategy.</p>	<p>Action 2.1.2.1: Coordinate the inclusion of regional branding language on local jurisdictions' and the State of Oregon's tourism promotion efforts. <b>[High Priority Action]</b></p>
<p><u>Objective 2.2:</u> Improve business environment to encourage retention, expansion, attraction, and resilience of businesses that provide living wage jobs.</p>	<p>Strategy 2.2.1: Support the development of existing and new business.</p>	<p>Action 2.2.1.1: Create and promote a database of incubators, accelerators, capital sources and support services available in the region by 2016. <b>[High Priority Action]</b></p>
		<p>Action 2.2.1.2: Establish a network of local and regional navigators to help entrepreneurs through permitting and other processes by 2016.</p>
		<p>Action 2.2.1.3: Increase the availability of educational opportunities to regional businesses interested in international trade on the advantages of exporting their goods and services.</p>
	<p>Strategy 2.2.2: Adopt a business development strategy for businesses in target clusters.</p>	<p>Action 2.2.2.1: Working groups will agree on two to three of the following business clusters to focus business development efforts on over the next five years: software/technology; food and beverage; education technology/research; advanced manufacturing; value-added forest products; university-related spinoffs; health; marine; agriculture; bioscience; and natural textiles. <b>[High Priority Action]</b></p>

## Goal 3 Build on region’s entrepreneurial culture and assets through collaborative means.

Considerations: Entrepreneurs continue to be a significant economic generator in the region. Their efforts expand existing sectors, create new sectors that diversify the economy and generate most of the region’s job growth. With macro-level economic changes – from globalization to shifting market structures – the regional economy will require a continued in-flux of fresh energy from new and existing businesses. In order to empower entrepreneurs in the region, The District will need to be proactive, responsive, flexible, coordinated, and innovative.

<p><u>Objective 3.1:</u> Support and strengthen existing network of business accelerators to facilitate information sharing, encourage partnerships and improve coordination of efforts in the region.</p>	<p>Strategy 3.1.1: Coordinate the formalization of a regional innovation network.</p>	<p>Action 3.1.1.1: Organize a forum on regional innovation networking by the end of June 2016. <b>[High Priority Action]</b></p>
	<p>Strategy 3.1.2: Connect innovation network with all educational institutions, business development centers, and existing businesses to foster the culture of entrepreneurship.</p>	<p>Action 3.1.2.1: Facilitate annual fall meetings with representatives from educational institutions to build connections between regional needs, and academic course offerings.</p>
		<p>Action: 3.1.2.2: The CWEDD will develop and implement a strategy for increasing business visibility, involvement, and entrepreneurial education into local schools by 2017. <b>[High Priority Action]</b></p>
		<p>Action: 3.1.2.3: Prepare and promote an inventory of resources available to entrepreneurs by December 2016 through a combination of mixed media such as a website, listserv, or social media. <b>[High Priority Action]</b></p>

## Goal 4 Identify and leverage internal and external funding sources to fund projects that increase the resilience (diversity and redundancy) of infrastructure systems throughout the district

Considerations: 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. OCWCOG and LCOG are uniquely positioned to help provide technical assistance and connect specific projects with other resources (e.g. Regional Solutions Teams, University based programs, state and federal agency partners, etc.).

<u>Objective 4.1:</u> Increase regional visibility and use of CWEDD and COGs to amplify regional knowledge of funding information and resources available over the next five years.	Strategy 4.1.1 - Increase promotion of available services and funding sources that can be accessed via CWEDD.	Action: 4.1.1.1: Create a section in the CWEDD Website to list current funding opportunities for local jurisdictions by December 2016. <b>[High Priority Action]</b>
	Strategy 4.1.2 - Identify and prioritize projects of regional importance that improve the quality of place for residents. (green space, multi-modal transportation options, affordable housing stock, arts & culture)	Action 4.1.2.1 CWEDD will work with OCWCOG and LCOG to complete a Regional Needs Assessment by summer of 2016. <b>[High Priority Action]</b>
		Action 4.1.2.2: CWEDD in cooperation with LCOG and OCWCOG will create a quarterly newsletter or email blast on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis which informs on grant deadline dates, eligibility information, current and planned projects, and other funding opportunities.
<u>Objective 4.2 -</u> Increase capacity to support grant writing and technical project development needs for jurisdictions in the region.	Strategy 4.2.1 - Increase planning and grant writing assistance.	Action 4.2.1.1 CWEDD will publish and annually update an inventory of existing grant writing and proposal development resources at LCOG, OCWCOG, and other economic development agencies in the region.
		Action 4.2.1.2 - Create a database to share available resources with all regional communities containing a bank of past grant proposals and technical projects, and increase the number of staff hours available to smaller communities.

## Goal 5 - Partner to connect workforce training, education, and employment opportunities with workforce demand.

Considerations: Many businesses in the District report that they are struggling to find qualified employees for a range of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled positions. 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 District. Using research to analyze current and future job demand, the CWEDD can help link education, training, apprenticeships and career planning to the employment needs of existing and emerging business sectors.

<u>Objective 5.1:</u> Increase the size and quality of the workforce by connecting and aligning education and workforce development programs to develop the region's current and future talent supply chain and meet employer needs.	Strategy 5.1.1: Coordinate the efforts of Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and educational institutions in the region to help identify and provide for current employer needs.	Action 5.1.1.1: Assess the workforce development system in the region and make recommendations to the CWEDD Board about the CWEDD's role in supporting coordination among workforce development organizations. <b>[High Priority Action]</b>
		Action 5.1.1.2: 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. <b>[High Priority Action]</b>
<u>Objective 5.2:</u> Retain and attract younger talent by increasing meaningful career opportunities.	Strategy 5.2.1: Identify and promote sectors with high growth and wage opportunities in order to retain and better attract young talent to the region.	Action 5.2.1.1: CWEDD will identify growing industries paying living wages as well as strategies and best practices to attract and retain talented professionals.
	Strategy 5.2.2: Identify and promote strategies that will improve the District's quality of place and livability.	Action 5.2.2.1: CWEDD will identify and promote strategies and best practices for improving factors of livability such as, quantity and access to affordable housing, alternative transportation options, quality healthcare and education, access to open spaces, and arts and culture.

## Goal 6 - Enhance the visibility of community assets and accessibility of basic services in rural areas

Considerations: Rural communities have unique economic strengths and challenges. The intent of this goal is to promote the economic vitality of communities outside the region's metropolitan areas. The District's primary approach will be to integrate the urban and rural economies through tourism and recreation. Small communities may lack the local capacity, staffing, and funding resources necessary to undertake complex projects, such as infrastructure upgrades. Training and educational opportunities exist in the region, however distance and other challenges prevent rural communities from accessing those services. Lack of basic services, such as healthcare facilities and transportation options, can inhibit the attractiveness of rural areas to prospective residents and employers. Therefore, ensuring equitable access to basic services for residents and businesses in rural areas is a critical strategic opportunity.

<b>Objective 6.1:</b> Increase the economic vitality and resilience of rural areas in the region.	<b>Strategy 6.1.1 -</b> Promote and expand eco-tourism, marine-related activities, sustainable farming, local vineyards and food production by adopting a regional approach to rural economic development.	<b>Action: 6.1.1.1:</b> In partnership with local Main Street programs, identify and support downtown revitalization projects in rural communities each year. <b>[High Priority Action]</b>
		<b>Action: 6.1.1.2:</b> Partner with Travel Oregon and other local tourism agencies to develop and market local value-added products.
	<b>Strategy 6.1.2 -</b> Facilitate the expansion of value-added natural resource industries by connecting rural entrepreneurs to innovation networks and support services.	<b>Action 6.1.2.1:</b> The rural economic development working group will create a communication strategy to customize and promote rural innovation services from the regional innovation network in order to spur entrepreneurial growth in rural communities.
	<b>Strategy 6.1.3 -</b> Meet the economic needs of rural communities by diversifying and distributing needed services -such as energy, transportation, food, water, communication, etc. – across the region.	<b>Action: 6.1.3.1:</b> The rural economic development working group will use the results of the regional needs assessment (refer to Action 4.1.2.1) to identify, prioritize, and recommend a set of rural area “projects of regional significance” to the CWEDD Board by 2017. <b>[High Priority Action]</b>
		<b>Action: 6.1.3.2:</b> The rural economic development Working Group will partner with private sector businesses to ensure at-risk job sectors in specific communities are resilient to succession.



## IMPLEMENTATION

To realize the objectives of its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), the District needs to adopt a realistic plan that allows for the timely implementation of action items. This section presents the implementation plan for the 2015-2020 CEDS. First, it describes changes to the organizational structure of the District. The remainder of the section presents a proposed timeline for implementation and a plan for measuring progress on action items over the five-year period. This section, together with information contained elsewhere in this report, satisfies 13 C.F.R. § 303.7(b)(iii).

### District Structure and Collaboration Framework

Stakeholders in the region identified a strong desire for increased collaboration. However, participants indicated that the District currently lacks the structure necessary for this to occur. Based on discussions with the OCWEDD Board/CEDS Strategy Committee, CWEDD Staff, OCWCOG and LCOG Economic Development Staff as well as conversations with EDA West Coast Regional Staff, the 2015-2020 CEDS proposes the following changes to the District structure to increase collaboration and administrative efficiency.

First, the 2015-2020 CEDS formally acknowledges the CWEDD Board as the district's governing body. The CWEDD Planning Organization<sup>2</sup> staff reports to the CWEDD Board.

Second, the 2015-2020 CEDS creates four Working Groups:

- Regional Economic Development Practitioners Working Group
- Entrepreneurship and Innovation Working Group
- Workforce Development Working Group
- Rural Development Working Group

The primary purpose of the Working Groups is to ensure implementation of the CEDS. In addition, the Working Groups will serve as a forum for sharing ideas and coordinating regionally significant economic development activities. Additional information about the Working Groups is presented below.

Third, the 2015-2020 CEDS proposes formal appointment of a Strategy Committee<sup>3</sup> to represent the primary economic interests of the CWEDD in updating and implementing the CEDS. Under Goal 1 of this plan, the CWEDD Board will meet

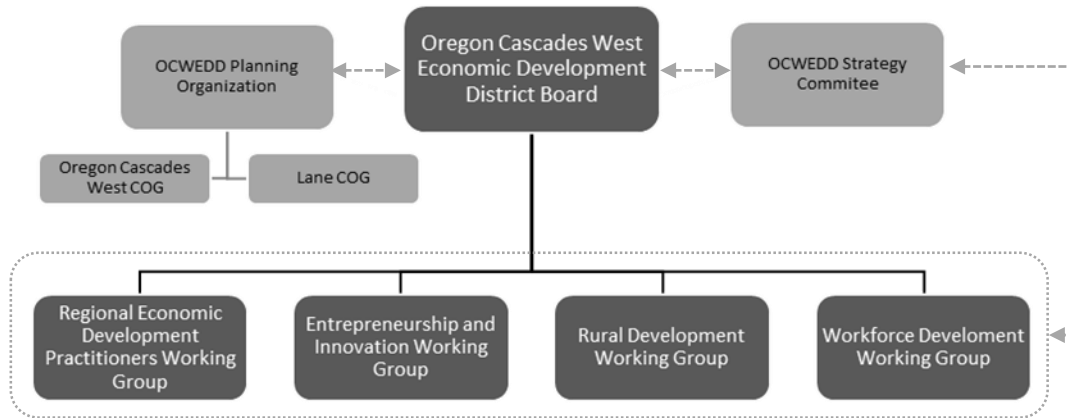
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<sup>2</sup> At present, the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) functions as the EDA defined Planning Organization. OCWCOG collaborates with the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) to provide economic development planning services and support to the OCWEDD.

<sup>3</sup> The Strategy Committee is the committee identified by the Planning Organization as responsible for the development, implementation, revision or replacement of the CEDS.

during year one of the update cycle to formally appoint and convene the Strategy Committee.

**Figure 4.1: Proposed District Administrative Structure**



Source: 2015-2020 CEDS

## Cascade West Economic Development District Board

The District Board has input and oversight in all CWEDD activities. The District Planning Organization staff reports to the District Board. Following is a summary of the purpose, composition and meeting schedule for the CWEDD Board as currently outlined in the CWEDD Governing Board bylaws. Under Goal 1 of this plan, the CWEDD Board will review and update the CWEDD Governing Board Bylaws in accordance with the amended (most current) version of CFR 303 during the 2015-2020 implementation cycle.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Board is to serve as the governing body of the District.

### Composition

The District's bylaws state that the Board is comprised of 20 members. Representatives from the Oregon Cascade West Council of Government's (OCWCOG) Executive Committee and the Executive Board for the Lane Council of Government's (LCOG) are specifically identified. Other representatives are determined by the District's Articles of Agreement. The CEDS Implementation Strategy does not propose any changes to the composition of the Board.

### Meeting Time

The District's by-laws require that the Board meets at least one time per year.

## Working Groups

Each of the proposed Working Groups will focus on completing specific actions outline in the strategic action plan. In addition, the working groups will identify projects of regional significance that may qualify for funding from outside sources, including the EDA. Projects will be listed, as identified, on the CEDS Project List (see Volume II, Appendix B) The CEDS proposes that each Working Group meet on a quarterly basis for the first year and then determine the appropriate frequency of subsequent meetings. Suggested Working Group member lists are proposed below. We anticipate that each working group will consist of six to ten members. The purpose for each of the Working Group is also outlined below. Note that some of the working groups focus on specific activities related to a relevant goal, while others focus on a particular strength or opportunity in the District. Additional information for each working group is presented below.

### Regional Economic Development Practitioners Working Group

#### Purpose:

The purpose of this group is to facilitate collaboration and idea sharing among economic development practitioners in the District. The group would be composed of economic development coordinators and practitioners from within the District. The Working Group will focus on business retention, expansion, and attraction efforts in the District, as well as issues of livability and talent retention and attraction. The group will also serve as a forum for practitioners to report on economic development efforts in their jurisdiction.

#### Potential Members:

The Board should look at filling member vacancies on the Regional Economic Development Practitioners Working Group with economic development practitioners from the two Councils of Government, counties, local jurisdictions, ports, and tribes in the District. Other possible Working Group members could include representatives from chambers of commerce, educational institutions and small business development centers, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) in the District, from the Board.

#### Meeting Times

The Regional Economic Development Practitioners Working Group will meet on a quarterly basis during the first year. The Working Group will determine subsequent meeting times based on their anticipated workload for years two through five.

### Entrepreneurship and Innovation Working Group

#### Purpose:

Entrepreneurs continue to be a significant economic opportunity in the District. Their efforts expand existing sectors, create new sectors that diversify the economy and generate job growth in the District. This Working Group focuses on developing the network of business accelerators through organization of a regional

innovation forum, maintaining open communication with educational institutions, creating educational programming around entrepreneurialism, and promoting entrepreneurial resources through an inventory of assets and resources in the District.

#### Potential Members:

The Entrepreneurship & Innovation Working Group should be comprised of representatives from regional accelerators, NOAA, ONAMI, K-12 and post-secondary educational institutions, regional Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), the private sector, and the Board.

#### Meeting Times

The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Working Group will meet twice during the first year. One of the actions this group will be implementing is to develop an annual forum on innovation. This action will require the Working Group to meet outside of the scheduled meetings during the first year. The Working Group will determine meeting times for developing this forum.

## Workforce Development Working Group

#### Purpose:

Many businesses in the District report that they are struggling to find qualified employees for a range of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled positions. As the District's economy transitions from a resource-based to a service-based economy, helping workers transition from declining and into growing industries will be a significant opportunity for the District. The purpose of this Working Group is to help coordinate and align the efforts of Workforce Investment Boards in the District. Given the District's strength in post-secondary education, this Working Group will focus and prioritize workforce development resources on retaining post-secondary program graduates and connecting them with employment needs in the District.

#### Potential Members:

Potential members of the Workforce Development Working Group will consist of representatives from the regional WIBs, local vocational and secondary education institutions, the private sector, other pertinent state and local agencies, and the Board.

#### Meeting Times

The Workforce Development Working Group will meet on a quarterly basis during the first year. The Working Group will determine subsequent meeting times based on their anticipated workload for years two through five.

## Rural Development Working Group

### Purpose:

Rural communities have unique economic strengths and challenges. Rural communities may lack the local capacity, staffing, and funding resources necessary to undertake complex projects, such as infrastructure upgrades. This Working Group focuses on increasing the economic vitality and resilience of rural areas in the District by promoting rural tourism ventures, revitalizing rural downtowns, connecting rural entrepreneurs to innovation networks, and diversifying and distributing basic services.

### Potential Members:

Board members representing rural communities are ideal candidates for membership in the Rural Development Working Group. The Working Group should also consist of members from rural chambers of commerce and from non-profit organizations and foundations that focus on rural development issues.

### Meeting Times:

The Rural Development Working Group will meet on a quarterly basis during the first year. The Working Group will determine subsequent meeting times based on their anticipated workload for years two through five.

## CWEDD Strategy Committee

Consistent with federal guidelines, the CWEDD Strategy Committee is responsible for representing the district in “implementation, revision, or replacement” of the CEDS.

### Purpose

The primary purpose of the Strategy Committee is to ensure that the CEDS is used to guide regionally significant economic development activities and projects in the region. Specifically, the Strategy Committee will meet the objectives of this plan through implementation of the actions presented herein. In addition, the Strategy Committee is responsible for maintaining and updating the CEDS.

### Composition

In accordance with 13 C.F.R. § 303.6(b)(i), the strategy committee shall include representatives from the following: private sector, public sector (including public officials and elected representatives), community leadership, community members, workforce development board members, institutions of higher education, minority and labor groups, and others. Moving forward, the Strategy Committee will consist of representatives the District Board and members of the four Working Groups identified above. Additional Strategy Committee members will be identified as needed to ensure compliance with 13 C.F.R. § 303.6(b)(i).

## Meeting Time

The full Strategy Committee will meet at the discretion of the District Board. To facilitate active implementation of the action plan, the CEDS recommends that the full Strategy Committee meet at least once and up to four times per year.

## CEDS Five-Year Implementation Schedule

The EDA requires that CEDS be updated every five years. Plan implementation and maintenance is a critical component of the CEDS. This section presents a five-year schedule and generalized work program. The schedule is intended to identify critical path activities, where applicable. As the board and working groups meet, we anticipate that the schedule may change as project opportunities arise, priorities change and annual work programs are developed. OCWCOG will have primary responsibility for overseeing the schedule in consultation with LOCG and the District Board. Ideally, all of the actions outlined herein will be completed within the next five years.

### Year 1 Activities

Activities in the first year will focus on establishing the updated collaboration for the district. Priorities will include establishing the working groups and publicizing the CEDS to stakeholders throughout the district.

- Revamp CWEDD website (1.1.1.1) – (1)
- Form four Working Groups: Workforce Development, Rural Development, Economic Development Practitioners, Entrepreneurship & Innovation (1.2.1.1 & 1.2.1.4 & 6.1.1.1) – (1)
- CWEDD Board members begin promoting CEDS locally (1.2.1.2) – (O)
- Appoint and convene Strategy Committee

### Year 2 Activities

Activities in the second year will continue to focus on regional collaboration. Specific projects in the second year include the development of key resources – technological and human – that will support action item completion in years three through five. In addition, promotion of the district through strategic partnerships will be a secondary focus in year two.

- Regional Collaboration:
  - Create regional economic development organizational chart (1.1.1.2) – (1)
  - Board members continue to promote CEDS within their communities and jurisdictions (1.2.1.2) – (O)
- Economic Development:
  - Conduct regional marketing research report (2.1.1.1) – (1)
  - Promote key industries (2.1.1.2) – (LD)

- Include regional branding language in promotional efforts (2.1.2.1) – (1)
- Create a database of business services in District (2.2.1.1) – (1)
- Establish network of navigators for entrepreneurs (2.2.1.2) – (O)
- Focus development strategies on key clusters (2.2.2.1) – (O)
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation:
  - Regional Innovation networking forum (3.1.1.1) – (A)
  - Annual meeting with educational institutions (3.1.2.1) – (O)
- Technical Support:
  - Current funding opportunities on CWEDD website (4.1.1.1) – (1)
  - Regional needs assessment (4.1.2.1) – (A)
  - Grant and proposal resource inventory (4.2.1.1) – (O)
- Workforce Development:
  - Assess workforce development system (5.1.1.1) – (1)
  - Identify strategies for improving quality of place (5.2.2.1) – (LD)
- Rural Development:
  - Support downtown revitalization projects (6.1.1.2) – (O)
  - Communication strategy promoting rural innovation (6.1.2.1) – (O)
  - Identify regionally significant projects (6.1.3.1) – (O)

### Year 3 Activities

Year three will primarily involve continuation of activities initiated in years one and two. An important new activity anticipated in year three will be conducting a needs assessment. This work will set the stage for the initiation of the next plan update process that will commence in year five.

- Regional Collaboration:
  - Leadership training opportunities (1.2.1.3) – (O)
  - Board members continue to promote CEDS
- Economic Development:
  - Finish action 2.1.1.2 (promote key industries)
  - Form quality of place committee (2.1.1.3) – (O)
  - Continue action 2.2.1.2 (network of nav. for entrepreneurs)
  - Increase education on international trade (2.2.1.3) – (LD)
  - Continue action 2.2.2.1. (focus dev. Strategies on key clusters) – (O)
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation

- Increase entrepreneurial education in K-12 (3.1.2.2) – (O)
- Continue actions 3.1.1.1 (annual innovation forum) and 3.1.2.1 (annual meeting with educational institutions)
- Technical Support:
  - Regional needs assessment (4.1.2.1)
  - Continue action 4.2.1.1 (inventory of grant and proposal resources)
- Workforce Development:
  - Increase participation in apprenticeship programs (5.1.1.2) – (LD)
  - Identify high wage and growth sectors (5.2.1.1) – (LD)
- Rural Development:
  - Continue action 6.1.1.2 (support downtown projects) – (O)
  - Develop and market value-added products (6.1.1.3) – (O)
  - Continue action 6.1.3.1 (identify projects of regional significance) – (O)
  - Work with business on issues of succession (6.1.3.2) – (O)

#### Year 4 Activities

A primary focus of year four will be completion and closeout of discrete activities commenced in years one through three. Ongoing activities will continue in year four. In addition, the board will begin to establish desired outcomes for the 2020 plan update process in year four.

- Regional Collaboration:
  - Leadership training opportunities
  - Board continues to promote CEDS
- Economic Development:
  - Continue action 2.1.1.3 (quality of place committee) – (O)
  - Continue action 2.2.1.2 (network of nav. for entrepreneurs) – (O)
  - Finish action 2.2.1.3 (education on international trade) – (LD)
  - Continue action 2.2.2.1 (focus dev. strategies on key clusters) – (O)
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation
  - Continue actions 3.1.1.1 (annual innovation forum) and 3.1.2.1 (annual meeting with educational institutions)
  - Continue action 3.1.2.2 (increase entrepreneurial education in K-12) – (O)
  - Resource inventory for entrepreneurs (3.1.2.3) – (1)
- Technical Support:
  - Regional needs assessment (4.1.2.1)



- Continue action 4.2.1.1 (inventory of grant and proposal resources)
- Workforce Development:
  - Continue 5.1.1.2 (increase participation in apprenticeship programs) – (O)
  - Finish 5.2.1.1 (identify high wage and growth sectors)
- Rural Development:
  - Continue 6.1.1.2 (support downtown projects) – (O)
  - Continue 6.1.1.3 (value-added products) – (O)
  - Continue 6.1.3.1 (projects of reg. significance) – (O)
  - Continue 6.1.3.2 (succession issues) – (O)

### Year 5 Activities

The dual focus of year five will be (1) close out and evaluation of all 2015-2020 CEDS activities, and (2) completion of the 2020-2025 CEDS update.

- Regional Collaboration:
  - Leadership training opportunities
  - Board members continue to promote CEDS
- Economic Development:
  - Continue action 2.1.1.3 (quality of place committee) – (O)
  - Continue action 2.2.1.2 (network of nav. for entrepreneurs) – (O)
  - Continue action 2.2.2.1 (focus dev. strategies on key clusters) – (O)
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation:
  - Continue actions 3.1.1.1 (annual innovation forum) and 3.1.2.1 (annual meeting with educational institutions)
  - Continue action 3.1.2.2 (increase entrepreneurial education in K-12) – (O)
- Technical Support:
  - Regional needs assessment (4.1.2.1)
  - Continue action 4.2.1.1 (inventory of grant and proposal resources)
- Workforce Development:
  - Continue action 5.1.1.2 (increase participation in apprenticeship programs) – (O)
- Rural Development:
  - Continue 6.1.1.2 (support downtown projects) – (O)
  - Continue 6.1.1.3 (value-added products) – (O)

- Continue 6.1.3.1 (projects of reg. significance) – (O)
- Continue 6.1.3.2 (succession issues) – O)

#### Summary

Figure 3.1 on the following page presents a summary of the schedule and timeline by goal.

**Figure 3.2: CEDS Action and Implementation Schedule**

Goal	Actions (abbreviated for table)	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Regional Collaboration	<b>1.1.1.1: CWEDD website (1)</b>					
	<b>1.1.1.2: Regional economic development organization chart (1)</b>					
	<b>1.2.1.1: Form Working Groups for CEDS implementation (1)</b>					
	1.2.1.2: Leadership training opportunities (O)					
Economic Development	2.1.1.1: Regional marketing research report (1)					
	2.1.1.2: Capitalize on efforts that promote key industries (LD)					
	2.1.1.3: Quality of place review committee (O)					
	<b>2.1.2.1: Inclusion of regional branding language (1)</b>					
	<b>2.2.1.1: Database of business services in District (1)</b>					
	2.2.1.2: Establish network of navigators for entrepreneurs (O)					
	2.2.1.3: Increase education on international trade (LD)					
	<b>2.2.2.1: Focus development strategies on key clusters (O)</b>					
	<b>3.1.1.1: Annual regional innovation networking forum (A)</b>					
Entrepreneurship & Innovation	3.1.2.1: Hold annual meeting with educational institutions (O)					
	<b>3.1.2.2: Increase entrepreneurial education in K-12 (O)</b>					
	<b>3.1.2.3: Resource inventory for entrepreneurs (1)</b>					
	<b>4.1.1.1: Current funding opportunities on CWEDD website (1)</b>					
Technical Support	<b>4.1.2.1: Regional needs assessment (A)</b>					
	4.2.1.1: Inventory of grant and proposal resources (O)					
	4.2.1.2: Database of past grant proposals and technical projects (LD)					
	<b>5.1.1.1: Assess workforce development system (1)</b>					
Workforce Development	<b>5.1.1.2: Increase participation in apprenticeship programs (O)</b>					
	5.2.1.1: Identify high wage and growth sectors (LD)					
	5.2.2.1: Identify strategies for improving livability (LD)					
	<b>6.1.1.1: Support rural downtown revitalization projects (O)</b>					
Rural Development	6.1.1.2: Develop and market value-added products (O)					
	6.1.2.1: Communication strategy promoting rural innovation (O)					
	<b>6.1.3.1: Identify projects of regional significance (O)</b>					
	6.1.3.2: Work with businesses on issues of worker succession (O)					

Key: (1) one time project; (O) ongoing project; (A) annual project; (LD) limited duration project; **Bold** indicates High Priority Action

Source: Community Planning Workshop

**Figure 3.3: Complete CEDS Action Matrix**

Goal	Objective	Strategy	Actions (abbreviated for table)
Regional Collaboration	1.1: Implement CEDS	1.1.1: CEDS is principle document for regional collaboration and resilience	1.1.1.1: CWEDD website (1) 1.1.1.2: Regional economic development organization chart (1)
	1.2: Develop a collaborative regional economic ecosystem	1.2.1: Promote CEDS through active communication	1.2.1.1: Form Working Groups for CEDS implementation (1) 1.2.1.2: Leadership training opportunities (O)
Economic Development	2.1: Broadcast strengths & opportunities of region	2.1.1: Develop an internal and external branding and marketing plan	2.1.1.1: Regional marketing research report (1) 2.1.1.2: Capitalize on efforts that promote key industries (LD) 2.1.1.3: Quality of place review committee (O)
		2.1.2: Align tourism promotion with regional marketing strategy	2.1.2.1: Inclusion of regional branding language (1)
	2.2: Improve business environment	2.2.1: Support development of existing and new businesses	2.2.1.1: Database of business services in District (1) 2.2.1.2: Establish network of navigators for entrepreneurs (O) 2.2.1.3: Increase education on international trade (LD)
		2.2.2: Adopt a business strategy for target clusters	2.2.2.1: Focus development strategies on key clusters (O)
Entrepreneurship & Innovation	3.1: Support and strengthen existing network of regional accelerators	3.1.1: Coordinate the formalization of a regional innovation network	3.1.1.1: Annual regional innovation networking forum (A) 3.1.2.1: Hold annual meeting with educational institutions (O)
		3.1.2: Connect innovation network to education institutions, business development centers, and existing businesses	3.1.2.2: Increase entrepreneurial education in K-12 (O) 3.1.2.3: Resource inventory for entrepreneurs (1)
Technical Support	4.1: Increase the District's visibility and knowledge of funding opportunities	4.1.1: Promotion of services and funding accessed via CWEDD 4.1.2: Identify and prioritize projects of regional significance	4.1.1.1: Current funding opportunities on CWEDD website (1) 4.1.2.1: Regional needs assessment (A)
	4.2: Increase support capacity of District	4.2.1: Improve planning and grant writing assistance	4.2.1.1: Inventory of grant and proposal resources (O) 4.2.1.2: Database of past grant proposals and technical projects (LD)
Workforce Development	5.1: Increase size and quality of workforce by aligning efforts with regional needs	5.1.1: Coordinate efforts of Workforce Investment Boards	5.1.1.1: Assess workforce development system (1) 5.1.1.2: Increase participation in apprenticeship programs (O)
	5.2: Retain and attract talented professionals	5.2.1: Identify and promote high wage and growth sectors 5.2.2: Identify and promote strategies that improve livability	5.2.1.1: Identify high wage and growth sectors (LD) 5.2.2.1: Identify strategies for improving livability (LD)
Rural Development	6.1: Increase the economic vitality and resilience of rural areas	6.1.1: Promote and expand rural economic efforts by adopting a regional approach to rural development	6.1.1.1: Support rural downtown revitalization projects (O) 6.1.1.2: Develop and market value-added products (O) 6.1.2.1: Communication strategy promoting rural innovation (O)
		6.1.2: Connect rural entrepreneurs to innovation networks	6.1.3.1: Identify projects of regional significance (O)
		6.1.3: Help rural communities by diversifying and distributing basic services across the District	6.1.3.2: Work with businesses on issues of worker succession (O)

Key: (1) one time project; (O) ongoing project; (A) annual project; (LD) limited duration project; **Bold** indicates High Priority Action

Source: Community Planning Workshop

## Performance Measurement

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires that CEDS include performance measurements to hold districts accountable to the actions listed in their strategies (refer to 13 C.F.R. § 303.7(b)(iv)). In addition, each Economic Development District is required to submit CEDS Annual Performance Report. In order to be held accountable for the implementation of the strategy, the Board will oversee the production of the annual report.

The annual CEDS report will include a status update on each of the individual action items. Appendix A, which presents more details on specific actions, includes potential measurements for each action. The District can utilize these as a starting point for measuring progress on each action. Additionally, the socioeconomic data presented in Appendix B are economic indicators that can be updated to reflect progress made with economic development in the region.

Beyond meeting the federal requirements, the annual reports will serve two purposes. The Board will use the annual reports to measure progress made on each action. This will be useful in identifying areas of weakness and determining whether there is a need to adjust implementation methods for individual actions or strategies. The reports will also be a useful tool for communicating to internal and external stakeholders the District's work and its impact on the regional economy. Being able to communicate the progress and successes of the District will be key to maintaining the momentum and support of the CEDS in the region.

Additional metrics the district will consider reporting if data is readily available include:

- Number of jobs created in the Region after implementation of the CEDS;
- Number and types of regionally significant investments undertaken in the Region;
- Number of jobs retained in the Region after implementation of the CEDS;
- Types and number of regionally significant private sector investments undertaken in the Region after implementation of the CEDS;
- Significant changes in the economic environment of the Region.

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