



# Mid-Columbia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Hood River, Wasco, Sherman counties, Oregon  
*and*  
Klickitat and Skamania counties, Washington

**September 2012**



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy**

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## OVERVIEW

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### About the Plan

Annually, MCEDD collaborates with community representatives to develop our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs). This plan identifies strategies based on current trends and areas best suited for growth to sustain and enhance the region's economy. It serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities.

While updating the CEDs for 2012, the MCEDD region participated in USDA's Stronger Economies Together (SET) program to increase and leverage additional participation in the planning process. MCEDD hosted a series of seven sessions through SET to help develop a plan that meets the region's needs.



The CEDs process is an important component of the region's development. It is designed to be flexible in meeting the current needs of the region, as well as providing future accommodation for development. It provides a mechanism to coordinate the efforts of individuals, organizations, local governments, and private industry concerned with economic development.

### About MCEDD

Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) was established in 1969 by its five member counties: Hood River, Wasco and Sherman in Oregon and Klickitat and Skamania counties in Washington. Mission: *"To promote the creation of family-wage jobs, the diversification of the economic base, and the growth, development and retention of business and industry within the five-county district"*

MCEDD is governed by a twenty one-member Board of Directors with a representative from each of the five counties in the district, a representative of the cities of each county, representatives of the Ports and Chambers of Commerce in the region, as well as private sector representatives from major economic sectors.

***Mid-Columbia Economic Development District provides business and technical assistance and regional planning services to support a thriving regional economy.***

### The Result

The MCEDD CEDs Committee, community partners, and MCEDD staff worked cooperatively to develop this plan to ensure a cohesive regional document that supports a truly regional economy, crossing between the states of Oregon and Washington.

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## COVERAGE AREA

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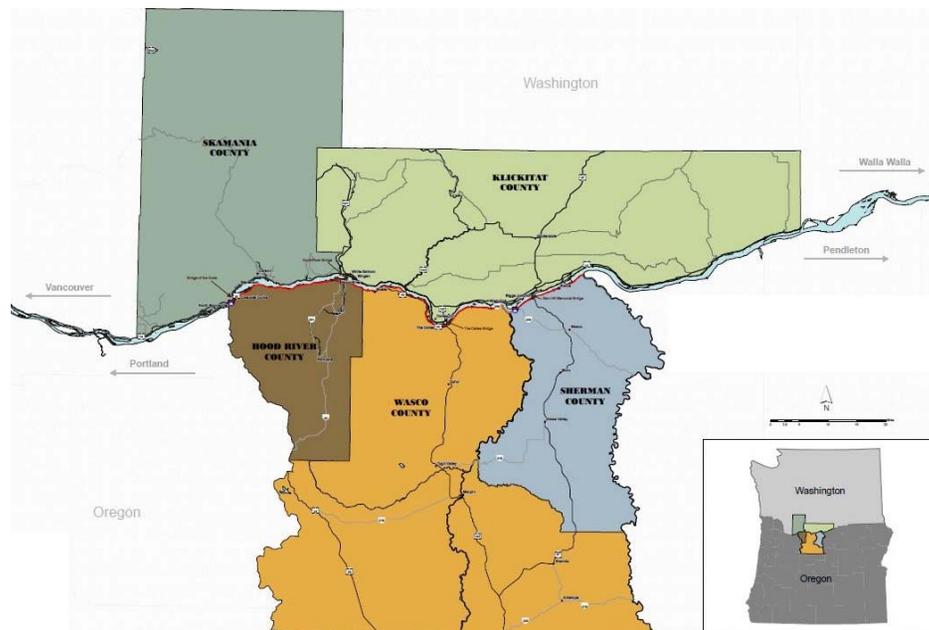
### Description

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

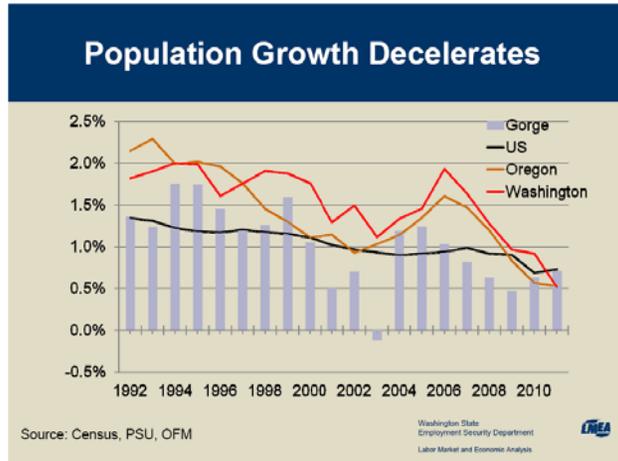
Tribal Reservations are located in three of the region's five counties. A 387,912-acre portion of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation is located in south Wasco County. Approximately 916 acres are located in the northeast corner of Wasco County, in the community of Celilo. The community of Celilo is not a reservation, only federal lands exempt for their occupancy. Sherman County has 146 acres owned by the "Mud Head" Indian tribe. Indian tribes own 66,252 acres of land in Klickitat County – 57,452 acres make up part of the Confederated Tribes of the Yakima Nation Reservation; just 9.17 acres of the Yakima Reservation lie in Skamania County. Reservation and tribal lands comprise a total of 455,235 acres of Indian Reservation land in the region.

The region is rural, but closely connected to urban markets. With a central location in the Pacific Northwest, the region acts as the "Center of the Hub" with direct access to metro areas and the ability to do business on an international scale with approximately a 6,000 mile area from the West Coast to the East Coast to Asia, all within one regular business day.

### Map of Coverage Area



Population



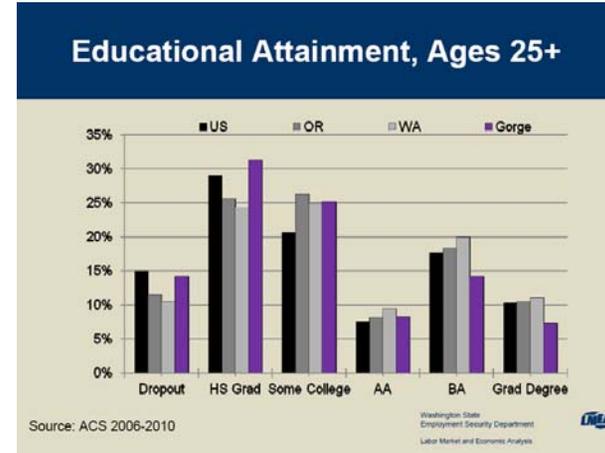
The Mid-Columbia region is a rural region with strong communities scattered throughout. As a whole, in 2011 the estimated population of the region is 81,279. In general, our counties are growing slower than they were in the early 2000s but are increasing again. Sherman County, our most rural county, is the only one experiencing population loss.

Our population also tends to be older than either of the states. We have a higher percentage of residents over 55, with a significantly lower percentage between the ages of 20 to 34. This could be indicative of a lack of opportunities for our younger residents to break into the workforce, but it also shows what a strong resource we have in our experienced residents.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, our population is also fairly white compared to either of our states, with between 65% and 90.4% non-Hispanic white populations in each county. The Mid-Columbia does have a growing Hispanic population, and a significant tribal presence. Engaging these groups in our economic development activities will be important in the coming years.

<sup>1</sup> Bailey, Scott. "What Census Data tells us about the Columbia Gorge Region". 3/8/12. Presentation.

Educational Attainment

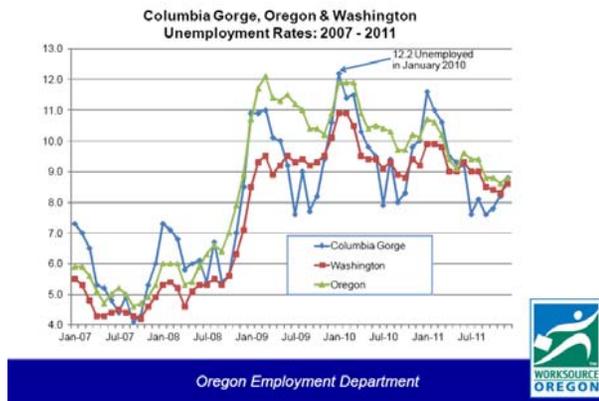


The Gorge has a slightly different educational attainment pattern than either Washington or Oregon, but remains relatively close in these numbers. Significantly, we have a strong showing in high school and AA degrees in comparison with our states. However, our region is lagging behind in college and graduate degrees. This reflects the strong commitment to workforce training and the lack of advanced degree opportunities in the Gorge. Hood River County stands out from the other counties, and the states, in that it has the highest percentage of those with less than 9<sup>th</sup> grade education (10.7%) but also higher percentages of residents with college and graduate degrees (16.4% and 9.5% respectively). This could be a result of the strong agricultural industry combined with the growing high tech sector. Sherman County has the highest percentage of residents with some college or an Associates' degree, while Klickitat County has the highest percentage of residents with a high school diploma (35%).<sup>2</sup> We must work to match our workers education and skill sets to what our businesses require.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## Employment and Wages

The Unemployment Rate Peaked in January 2010



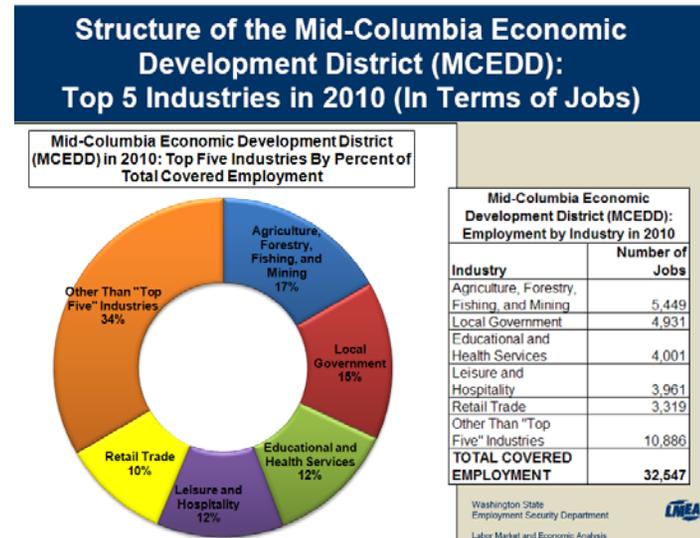
Unemployment is an indication of the level of economic health in our region. During the current recession, it peaked in 2010 at 12.2%. While it has had ups and downs, it is approximately in line with Washington and Oregon states trends. In fact, our 2011 unemployment in the Oregon counties was lower than the rate in Oregon. Klickitat and Skamania counties are doing slightly worse than the Washington unemployment rate however, at 3.3% and 1.4% above their state rate respectively. Due in large part to the strong agricultural presence in our regional economy, our employment growth is also very seasonal.<sup>3</sup>

Our top two employment industries are agriculture and local government. The agriculture industry provides 17% of the jobs in the Mid-Columbia counties but only about 10% of our total payroll. Our second largest employment sector is local government. These jobs make up about 15% of our total employment. However, in many of our counties, local government has laid off workers in tough times. These workers make up the largest percentage of total payroll in the region at 18%.

<sup>3</sup> Fridley, Dallas. "The Columbia Gorge's Key Workforce Challenges." 3/8/12. Presentation.

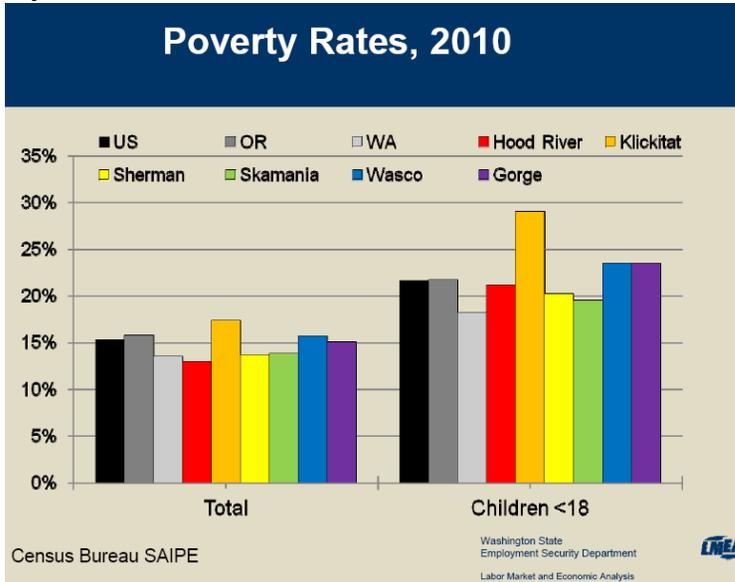
Additional highlights from our employment sector information include<sup>4</sup>:

- While leisure and hospitality make up 12% of our employment base, they are not among the top five industries as far as wages. This results in significant lower income populations in some areas that are heavily reliant on this industry.
- Respectively, professional and business services make up a significant portion of our region's wages (15%) but have not created as many jobs. These firms are continuing to increase their presence in the region however, with an additional 1,000 added between 2004 and 2010. As this occurs, these higher paying jobs will drive up cost of living and price out some of our lower wage earners.
- The health services sector is increasing both its employment and payroll in the region steadily.



<sup>4</sup> Meseck, Don. "Industry Trends in the MCEDD." Stronger Economies Together: Exploring Regional Demographics and Trends. Sherman County Fairgrounds. 3/8/12. Presentation.

## Poverty and Income



Poverty has increased in the Mid-Columbia between 1999 and 2010.<sup>5</sup> For a family of four to be considered in poverty they make under \$17,374 a year. Both Sherman and Wasco counties saw an increase in the poverty rate over the last decade while Hood River County's rate decreased slightly. Klickitat County's rate is about four percentage points higher than either Washington State or Skamania County. And among children the poverty rate is drastically higher than the population as a whole. These numbers point toward a continued, growing need for employment, workforce training, housing and transportation services to support these populations.<sup>6</sup>

Our region's overall income scale is skewed toward the lower end. Each of the five counties, except Hood River, has about 15% of their households making under \$15,000 per year. This is several

percentage points higher than Washington or Oregon's percentage, which are 10.6% and 12.7% respectively. However, each of our counties has higher percentages of middle income residents than the states, or other income brackets as well. Our largest income bracket is those households making between \$35,000 and \$74,999. This larger lower and middle income population supports the information given above about wage and industry distributions. In light of that information, these numbers may move toward increased stratification in incomes in the coming years as much focus is on higher paying business and professional services and medical services as well as low paying hospitality and food service jobs. These jobs on either end of the income spectrum are vital to our economy, but require some thought about additional services we will need to remain competitive as our company's workforce requirements and our communities change.

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While the Mid-Columbia's economy is coming out of the current recession about as well as the state as a whole, rural economies are not expected to add as many jobs as urban areas will in the future. In this context, our workforce is aging while fewer opportunities are available for younger workers. These issues could lead to major concerns as younger workers will, in general, make less over their lifetime as they are starting more slowly. It could also lead to significant training needs as our older workers retire, and our younger workers need to look to education to gain experience, and address shifts in the skills needed to be competitive. Serving areas where this transition is occurring with attainable housing units connected to transportation, educational

<sup>5</sup> "Housing Needs Assessment." Mid-Columbia Housing Authority. 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Bailey, Scott.

<sup>7</sup> American Community Survey. Five Year Data, Table S1901. 2010.

and employment opportunities could improve local economic competitiveness while supporting our communities. <sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Fridley, Dallas. "The Columbia Gorge's Key Workforce Challenges." Stronger Economies Together: Exploring Regional Demographics and Trends. Sherman County Fairgrounds, Moro, Oregon. 3/8/12. Presentation.

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## ECONOMIC PROFILE: REGIONAL

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### Economic Foundations

Traditional foundations of the regional economy across counties correspond with physiographical differences directly affecting the agricultural economy, forest products industry, power generation system, tourism, and recreational activities. Where the growing season is short and precipitation high, historically the region's forest products industry have been the economic foundation. Now this region is restructuring to better protect its natural resources and empower its entrepreneurs. Where the growing season is longer, with ample precipitation and good drainage, tree crops are produced. On the high, dry, plateau, grain is the major crop.

Prevailing winds in the Columbia River Gorge are from west to east in the summer and from east to west in the winter. This phenomenon has helped boost the region's economy in recent years; the prevailing summer winds, which blow up river against the river current, provide ideal conditions for wind sports. Thousands of windsurfers a year come to what has become a "Mecca" of the sport—the Columbia River Gorge.

Location advantages support trade within and outside the region, offering options for expanded export opportunities. Multiple transportation options offering increased access to markets include air, rail, highway, and water.

### Regional Industry Cluster Development

Major economic drivers for the region and industry cluster efforts focus in five areas:

- High Tech
- Renewable Energy
- Art and Culture
- Wine/Value Added Agriculture
- Healthcare

### Building Blocks of the Regional Economy

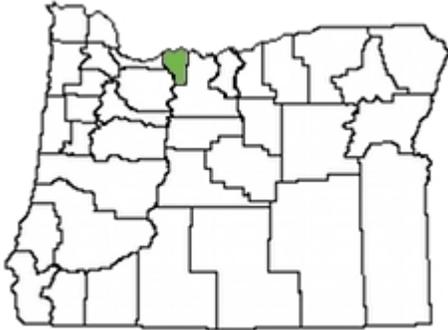
Key Area	Average Score
Financial Capital	4.5
Entrepreneurial Environment	4.5
Workforce	4.7
Infrastructure	4.2
Business Environment	4.5
Amenities	3.7
Innovation Capacity	4.4
6= high need	1= low need

*Information from Meyer Memorial Trust work, as scored at the May 2012 Stronger Economies Together meeting.*

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## ECONOMIC PROFILE: HOOD RIVER COUNTY, OREGON

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Hood River County is rich in natural resources with agriculture, lumber and recreation as sources of revenue and industry. The County contains two incorporated cities as well as the unincorporated communities of Dee, Odell and Parkdale. Important sectors include technology, agriculture, outdoor gear manufacturing and tourism.

Agriculture is a big part of both the economy and community in Hood River County. The major crops, including pears, apples, and cherries, bring in about \$60 million dollars per year. Value added agriculture also plays an economically significant role with a potential for additional future growth. Hood River County is home to several wineries, a part of the 40+ wineries in the Mid-Columbia Gorge growing over 140 varieties, with an accumulation of over 1000 wine awards. In addition to agriculture, forestry is also significant. Unique to Hood River County is County ownership and maintenance of forest lands. A burgeoning tech sector also defines the economy of the county as shown in the listing of primary employers in the County.

In Hood River County, outdoor gear and activewear companies have flourished. Innovation in product design, green design and sustainability has positioned Hood River County to be a global leader in outdoor gear and activewear. The diverse landscape of Hood River County supports outdoor tourism. The many recreational attractions bring thousands of visitors to the county each year making tourism one of the largest economic sectors in the region. On the water, Cascade Locks is a world class sailing destination and Hood River is a kite boarding and windsurfing destination, each attracting visitors from around the world. The mountainous terrain boasts beautiful vistas and waterfall for hiking and cycling and snowboarding and skiing in the winter. It is estimated that in 2011 visitors to the County spent over \$75 million; through this the local economy earned \$20 million and supported 950 jobs.

### **Business Support Structure**

#### **Hood River Economic Development Working Group**

This group exists to facilitate business growth and job creation in Hood River County. Members include Port of Cascade Locks, Port of Hood River, City of Cascade Locks, City of Hood River, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District, Columbia Gorge Community College, Hood River County, Hood River County School District, and the Hood River Chamber of Commerce.

### Special Incentives

The Enterprise Zone and Long-term Rural Enterprise Facilities Program is offered on Port of Hood River and Cascade Locks industrial property sites. The enterprise zones exempt businesses from local property taxes to new locating businesses and the Rural Enterprise Facilities allows property tax abatement as long as 15 years on new facility improvements and installations.

### Cascade Locks

The City of Cascade Locks can accommodate more types of industry than other areas of the County due to available land supply. However, large scale development may require additional services and workforce. There several projects underway in Cascade Locks with potential economic benefits. Despite limitations to certain projects, the Port of Cascade Locks has built strong tribal relations and actively seeks to support business development in the community.

### Hood River

The City of Hood River's reputation as an outdoor recreation destination, existing business investments, and additional infrastructure improvements has enhanced opportunities to grow business in the City. The City has a thriving downtown with core retail businesses. On the western end of the City and in the Heights, there is greater opportunity for further business development with available lots. In the Port and Waterfront areas, a significant amount of development has taken place. In 2012 the Port of Hood River began construction on two new Waterfront Business Park buildings and prepared the Halyard Building for a new tenant, and the second is a new Turtle Island food processing plant which is currently undergoing construction. In addition, Nichols Landing, a hotel and office/retail development is planned for the south end of Nichols Basin. This development is currently seeking a variety of permits and regulatory reviews.

### Odell and Parkdale

The communities of Dee, Odell and Parkdale are situated along US 30/OR 35, leading to Mount Hood. They have a strong agriculture focus with multiple fruit packing houses. The communities are small with few services, but are included in the enterprise zone. In addition to agriculture, forestry plays a large role. Infrastructure improvements have been made to the communities, but remain limiting factors along with the transportation distance from 1-84 for business development.

### Hood River County Top Employers

- Best Western-Hood River
- Cardinal IG Co
- CenturyLink
- Cloud Cap/Goodrich
- Columbia Gorge Hotel
- Dakine
- Diamond Fruit Growers
- Duckwall-Pooley Fruit Co
- Full Sail Brewing Co
- Hood River Care Center
- Hood River County
- Hood River Distillers, Inc
- Hood River Juice Company
- Hood River School District
- Hood River Supply Association
- Hood Technology Corporation
- Insitu
- Mt. Hood Meadows Ski Resort
- Providence Memorial Hospital
- Rosauers
- Safeway
- Sagotech
- Stadelman Fruit Company
- Turtle Island Foods, Inc.
- Walmart

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## ECONOMIC PROFILE: KLICKITAT COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Klickitat County has three distinct economic regions. The western third of the county is dependent upon orchards, fruit packing, and wood products. The central third includes the county seat, the closed aluminum smelter, Maryhill Museum and beaches serving recreationalists. The eastern third includes vegetable farming and a growing number of wineries, along with the regional landfill, Rabanco. Incorporated cities in the County include Goldendale, Bingen and White Salmon.

The County continues to look towards efforts designed to reduce the long-standing unemployment created by reductions in forest products and aluminum smelter employment as well as the general downturn in agriculture. Central to Klickitat County's economic development strategy is strengthening the financial base of the county, including the agricultural sector. As one of the top wind resource areas in the Pacific Northwest, and with the adoption of a first-in-the-nation Energy Overlay Zone for wind and solar facilities, the county is a center for renewable energy projects. Iberdrola recently developed the Big Horn wind project, an expansive project near Bickleton in eastern Klickitat County and further new development has occurred along US-97.

In addition to support for renewable energy projects, the county continues to actively support value added process for traditional timber and agricultural uses. The Mt Adams Resource Stewards group, formed in 2003, has small business incubation activities, including activities surrounding a small wood utilization initiative. In support for value-added ag, there is a growing wine industry in the county and throughout the region. The County has actively supported the efforts of the Columbia Gorge Winegrowers to promote the grapes and wines of the area and produced an additional wine map covering the entire county, including parts of the Columbia Gorge AVA and Horse Heaven Hills AVA. Currently, vineyards in the County produce one third of the state's wine grapes and the County is home to many notable wineries.

The county has burgeoning high-tech growth centered around Boeing-owned Insitu that is powering strong industrial economic growth on both sides of the river. In the past few years, like most other areas, the County's medical facility, Skyline, expanded. Services at the Columbia Gorge regional airport, located in the County, also expanded. The site there includes life flight, an essential service for the region. The airport is a critical facility for the entire region and projects to expand and support the airport show predominantly in the regional priorities for development of the region.

### **Goldendale**

Paralleling support for agriculture, the County, the Port of Klickitat, and the City of Goldendale have been engaging in numerous industrial park infrastructure projects and related marketing efforts designed to expand the number of light manufacturing jobs available. These industrial areas have been a major focus for economic development activities.

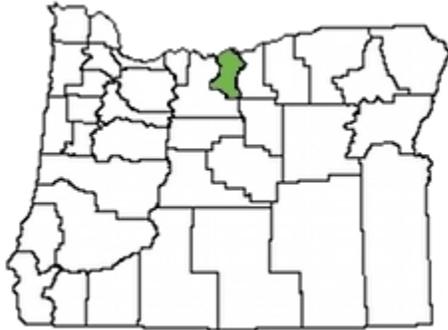
### **Bingen and White Salmon**

The neighboring cities of Bingen and White Salmon are attracting more residents as housing prices soar across the river and new companies move into and expand in the cities. The result has been a squeeze on affordable and workforce housing options for both areas. Growth of business in both cities has been strong based on an emphasis of high tech companies locating in the area.

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## ECONOMIC PROFILE: SHERMAN COUNTY, OREGON

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Sherman County is frequently referred to as the "Land Between the Rivers." Located in north central Oregon, the Columbia River forms the northern border, while the east and west boundaries are marked by the steep, deep canyons of the John Day River on the east and the Deschutes River on the west. The rugged canyons of Buck Hollow, a tributary of the Deschutes, mark the southwest border.

The last decade saw Sherman County's population decline from 1,934 in 2000 to 1,765 in 2010 and the closing of many local businesses, consolidation of farms and out-migration of the younger generations. This is beginning to reverse as people are moving back into the county, building new homes and opening new businesses.

Sherman County has the highest percentage of tilled farmland out of any county in Oregon.

Sherman County's most important crop is winter wheat. Of the county's 531,200 acres, 304,138 are tillable. Farms average 3,500 acres and the average yield is 42 bushels per acre. Dry-land wheat has proven a reliable crop for decades in Sherman County<sup>9</sup>. However, some of those acres in the community of Grass Valley are now catering to racing fans with the development of the Sherman County Race Track. This project brings the second racetrack for sports cars in the state of Oregon to a county in great need of economic diversification.

Wind energy, particularly in the northeast section of the County, continues to be a source of economic development for Sherman County. Currently, wind fuels the 321-megawatt Klondike Wind Farm located four miles southeast of Wasco, as well as the 450-megawatt Biglow Canyon Wind Farm just to the north. The first three phases of the Klondike project, owned by Iberdrola Renewables, Inc., use 44 Siemens 2.3 MW wind turbines and 146 GE 1.5 MW wind turbines. These wind farms supply clean, renewable electricity to Portland General Electric, Bonneville Power Administration, the Eugene Water & Electric Board and others.

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## ECONOMIC PROFILE: SKAMANIA COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Skamania County is at the heart of the gorge and has an abundance of natural resources as well as scenic and recreational resources. Almost 90 percent of Skamania County is timberland and most of it is within the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. The Gifford Pinchot National Forest extends north to the southern boundary of the Mt. St Helens Volcanic Monument. The majority of Skamania County's population resides near the county's southern boundary, which is the Columbia River. The County's two incorporated cities are located along the Columbia River, the Cities of Stevenson and North Bonneville. The County also has four unincorporated urban areas: Skamania, Carson/Stabler, Home Valley and Underwood.



Skamania County's major industry since its incorporation in 1854 has been timber. However, since the early 1980s the timber industry has declined. For the past two to three decades, the county has slowly replaced the timber industry with key industries that include: high-tech, light manufacturing, and value-added agriculture (wineries, orchards, organic farming). The County has three major industrial areas available for development: Wind River Business Park, Stevenson Waterfront Industrial Area and Cascades Business Park. The Wind River Business Park and Stevenson Waterfront Industrial Area are partially developed with all utilities available (including high speed broadband) and Cascades Business Park infrastructure will be finished in the fall of 2012. Skamania County has low taxes, low utilities, available land, and a great transportation network of major highways, river and rail services, which are all available for the transport of goods and services to major ports and the Interstate highway system. Additional information can be found at [www.portofskamania.org](http://www.portofskamania.org).

In addition to the above key industries, the tourism and recreation industries have also flourished. The County's visitor center hosts over 10,000 visitors each year and recently opened a seasonal satellite visitor center to accommodate additional visitor needs. Web hits for the City of Stevenson and Chamber of Commerce sites total approximately 216,000 per year. Per capita, the County has the highest tourism revenue in the state and travel spending has increased by 7.8% (1991-2009), which is also the highest percentage in the state. Recreationists travel here for hiking, biking, fishing (salmon, steelhead and white sturgeon), windsurfing, kite boarding, sailing, kayaking, sightseeing, water skiing and jet skiing. In addition to the Columbia River, Skamania County also has the White Salmon, Little White Salmon and Wind Rivers that offer abundant opportunities for recreation. In recent years, the Stevenson waterfront has become a premier place for windsurfing and kite boarding and continues to attract more recreation each year. Additional information on activities the County has to offer can be found at [www.skamania.org](http://www.skamania.org).

### Business Support

Skamania Economic Development Council's mission is to promote economic growth and retention in Skamania County. Board members include representatives of Skamania County, City of Stevenson, City of North Bonneville, Port of Skamania, USFS, and private sector businesses and key community stakeholders. The EDC has three loan funds to assist businesses with their financial needs along with business programs and a business support center that provide businesses with expertise needed to successfully manage their businesses. In addition, the EDC supports the Port of Skamania, the Community Action Team, the Stevenson Business Association and the Red Carpet Committee to promote available properties and market Skamania County to potential businesses for expansion or relocation. More information about the EDC's programs can be found at [www.skamania-edc.org](http://www.skamania-edc.org).

### Stevenson

The City of Stevenson, incorporated in 1907, serves as Skamania County's county seat and business center. In the late 1990's the City emerged as a tourist destination and a popular venue for mid-sized conferences. Located in the center of the Columbia Gorge Scenic Area the visitor has access to a myriad of activities (windsurfing, kite boarding, sailing, kayaking, water skiing, hiking, fishing/hunting, and biking) including a welcome respite on the only commercially zoned waterfront within Skamania County. The city is served by SR-14, BNSF Railroad (with sidings), and a large commercial dock along the Columbia River. The City welcomes new business development and essential infrastructure (water, sewer, natural gas and fiber) is available throughout the downtown core and waterfront business areas.

### North Bonneville

Located just 45 minutes from PDX, the City of North Bonneville has the largest amount of industrial/business park space available in Skamania County, with the Cascades Business park on its east side (32 acres of leasable, shovel-ready land with utilities installed) and the Lewis and Clark Business Park on its north side (46,000 SF leased with an approved master plan for an additional 15,000 SF). The city also has inexpensive commercially-zoned land and building space available in its downtown core. Direct highway access (without at-grade railway crossings) lends particular advantages to the North Bonneville sites. The city also recently partnered with a private company to provide high speed cable internet throughout the community. In 2012, the average residential home sales price was only \$150,000. The community boasts 40% designated parks and open space, and enjoys convenient access to outdoor recreation including 14 miles of paved trails in the city, Beacon Rock State Park, the Beacon Rock Golf Course, a spur to the Pacific Crest Trail, and all the water sport activities on the Columbia River.

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## ECONOMIC PROFILE: WASCO COUNTY, OREGON

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Wasco County is one of Oregon's oldest counties, established in 1854 by the Oregon Territorial Legislature. The county seat is the City of The Dalles with other incorporated cities including Antelope, Dufur, Maupin, Mosier and Shaniko.

Wasco County's economic base is agriculture and the processing of agricultural products, particularly cherries, wheat and livestock. County farm-gate sales were nearly \$88 million in 2010, mostly from sweet cherries and wheat (\$48 million and \$20 million, respectively).<sup>10</sup> Other

traditional industries have included forestry, manufacturing, electric power generation and transportation. Wasco County's economy has diversified from its traditional natural resources base to include a stronger focus on technology and manufacturing.

The rapid growth of renewable energy industries is driving additional employment through support industries and related manufacturing. The world's largest Internet firm, Google, established a major operational center in The Dalles. The region is also home to a strong cluster of high tech companies which are supported through the efforts of the Gorge Technology Alliance. Economic sectors related to tourism have also grown, supporting tourism throughout the County. Notably, Maupin's economy thrives in the summer with Deschutes River rafting and the communities of The Dalles and Mosier have recently benefited from an increase in cycling.

As the largest community in the County, The Dalles serves as a retail and service hub for many surrounding counties, resulting in strong employment in these industries as well as government. Further expansion of the healthcare sector, with the expansion of Mid-Columbia Medical Center, has also positively impacted job growth in the County.

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<sup>10</sup> (2011 research for the Wasco County Extension Service by Bruce Sorte).

### Major Wasco County Employers

All Star Rafting  
Cascade Eye Center  
Columbia Bancorp  
Columbia Gorge Center  
Columbia Gorge Community College  
Columbia Hill Family Medicine  
Columbia State Bank  
Cousins Country Inn  
Crestline Construction  
ESD  
Fred Meyer  
Google  
Griffith Motors  
Kmart  
Mid Columbia Center for Living  
Mid Columbia Medical Center  
North Wasco School District  
Northwest Aluminum Specialties  
Orchard View Farms  
Oregon Cherry Growers  
Ray Schultens Motors  
Safeway  
Union Pacific  
US Army Corps of Engineers  
Wasco County

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## ASSETS: ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES

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The top asset identified by the Mid-Columbia region is the power of collaboration. We are made stronger by having a region that crosses state boundaries and recognizes the role the Columbia River has played as a connecting body for the region for centuries. We have an increasing number of partners and degrees of connection that cross public, private, local, state and federal interests. This strong network creates opportunities for the region to enhance access to resources through our bi-state status, leverage our developing regional strategy as a catalyst for action and seek tools to further increase connections between one another.

The top five assets of the Mid Columbia region identified, in priority order:

- Collaboration
- Transportation and Location Advantages
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Agriculture
- Scenic Beauty with Year-Round Recreation

As a rural region, we seek solutions to become increasingly self sufficient and understand the necessity to bring together all of our talents and resources together collectively in order to accomplish economic development initiatives so critical to this area. We work together on areas of commonality, but recognize and celebrate diversity. We are cognizant of all communities in the region, providing equal emphasis and support to those both large and small.

<b>Mid-Columbia Assets</b>	
<b>Collaboration</b>	
	The region is historically connected and is unique in working across state boundaries, forging partnerships between Oregon and Washington.
	Collaborative human networks exist within the region and agencies exhibit a willingness to partner across sectors. The tendency of our rural communities is for residents to be active in multiple organizations, wearing “many hats.” The region offers ample opportunities for leadership and civic engagement.
	A strong sense of community exists throughout the region. Community pride is evident and lends itself to having residents working hard to maintain economic viability. This sense of community helps create a strong local economic base.

<b>Transportation and Location Advantages</b>
The region has a distinct geographic advantage in being centrally located in the Pacific Northwest. We are described as the “Center of the Hub.”
We have direct access to metro areas: Portland/Vancouver, Tri-Cities, Yakima, Bend, Boise, and Boardman/Hermiston. This proximity offers distribution options for products, increases cultural opportunities, and enhances workforce and business opportunities. There is bi-directional access: rural to urban and urban to rural.
“World Clock”: Our region is uniquely positioned to do business with approximately a 6,000 mile area from the West Coast to the East Coast to Asia, all within one regular business day.
Accessibility: a variety of transportation options are available. The region offers market access through:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highways and Interstates: East/West and North/South corridor routes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air: Columbia Gorge Regional Airport and Hood River airport. Life flight services are also available from the regional airport.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rail: Burlington Northern and Union Pacific offer rail services for the movement of goods in Oregon and Washington. Currently, passenger rail service is only available on the Washington side.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River: The Columbia River facilitates barge traffic. This is particularly important for transporting waste and agricultural products.</li> </ul>
Access to markets, including international markets for exporting materials. Our economy includes a focus on bringing in dollars from outside the community and minimizing leakages. We are an exporter of fruit, timber, wine, wheat, power and manufactured goods, among others.
<b>Natural and Cultural Resources</b>
The area is rich in natural resources, supporting timber, agriculture, recreation and tourism as well as lifestyle entrepreneurs attracted to the natural amenities.
Diverse climates exist within the region’s borders from the warm, arid eastern parts to the cool, damp western parts of the region. Generally, we enjoy a temperate climate with welcome seasonal changes and varying degrees of precipitation. The variation in both topography and climate leads to a diversity in economies, variations in crops and living opportunities. For example, the Columbia Gorge Winegrowers are able to characterize this region as “A world of wine in 40 miles” due to the variation in climate and soils.
Strong rural values and characteristics are present that the region seeks to maintain and protect.
The region has strong culture and history and has been a trading center for millennia. It has ongoing tribal relationships with the presence of four tribes: Umatilla, Nez Pearce, Warm Springs, and Yakama. The region also has additional evolving cultures as the demographics of the region continue to change.

<b>Agriculture</b>
There is a total of approximately 130,000 acres of prime farmlands in the region.
Agriculture forms a base for our economy and is a stabilizing force to moderate economic swings. Cherries, wheat, grapes, apples, pears, cattle, sheep, and a variety of other products are grown or produced in the region. There is both commercial-scale agriculture and a growing small farms network with support through Gorge Grown Food Network.
The region has enjoyed an increasing focus on value added agricultural products through carefully cultivated strategies.
<b>Scenic Beauty with Year-Round Recreation</b>
Parts of the region encompass the federally recognized Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. In 2009, National Geographic Traveler ranked the region 6 <sup>th</sup> internationally on its destination scorecard to the world's most iconic destinations.
The scenic beauty of the region traverses mountains, rivers and plains.
Abundant recreational opportunities for all four seasons including cycling, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, camping, rafting, kayaking, canoeing, windsurfing, rock climbing, and a variety of snow sports.
<b>Additional Regional Assets</b>
Diverse foundational businesses alleviate peaks and troughs of economic cycles. These include historical strong businesses in the agriculture and forestry sectors as well as new industry clusters in value-added ag, high tech, healthcare, and renewable energy.
Renewable energy assets include utilization of solar, wind, geothermal and biomass opportunities throughout the region. In addition, we are training the workforce for this need. Columbia Gorge Community College's Renewable Energy Technology program offers the west coast's first wind technician training.
Higher education opportunities are currently available in the region through Columbia Gorge Community College and OSU and WSU Extension. Strong base, but also a challenge for enhancement.
Federal agency presence in the region, including a strong presence from the Army Corps of Engineers and US Forest Service. Historically these have been stable jobs and resources infused to the region, but the region recognizes that there are additional opportunities for partnership.
Human capital and entrepreneurial spirit. Diverse range of skill sets from entrepreneurs to retirees.
Existing infrastructure has been developed in the region to support industrial and commercial development. It is also a challenge, though, in maintaining and expanding our region's infrastructure. Infrastructure includes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable, reliable power</li> <li>• Available industrial sites</li> <li>• Telecommunication and broadband capacity that supports a high level of high tech and self employed workers.</li> <li>• Water/sewer/community facilities</li> </ul>

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## CHALLENGES: FINDING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

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The Mid-Columbia region faces a variety of challenges that currently hinder our economic development activities. However, we view these challenges as opportunities for change and advancement. We focus on the opportunity that is created through these challenges to design strategies which leverage our assets to address the needs that arise through these challenges.

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### **CHALLENGE:** Skilled Workforce

The region recognizes the critical role already played by educational institutions serving the Mid-Columbia, but has identified that additional resources are required for a fully trained workforce with the skills needed to support business growth and success. In meeting our challenge, the focus is to expanding educational and training services. In educational attainment, the MCEDD region is keeping pace with the states and exceeding the nation in the percentage of the population with an Associate's degree, but falls behind in measurements of individuals with a bachelors degree or higher. The primary avenue to address the need for a skilled workforce is via support to enhance and expand upon existing services, with a long term vision for developing new resources. Infrastructure and programming in access to education are both critical areas to address.

#### NEEDS:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <u>Community College</u>   | Columbia Gorge Community College (CGCC) is responsive to industry's needs with cornerstone programs which have supported the region's economic development initiatives including Nursing and Renewable Energy Technology training. Needs include: Act as an advocate to help advance new programs identified in the Academic Master Plan. Provide support for independent accreditation. Identify resources to provide development and maintenance of campus facilities. |
| <u>4 Year University</u><br><u>Research Institution</u><br><u>Graduate Degrees</u> | There is no four year university with a campus in the region. OSU and WSU have extension offices in all counties and CGCC partners to expand offerings. However, the region notes a distinct need to expand offerings for four year university and graduate level courses. In addition, a research institution is needed to meet growing high tech demand and increase our R/D capacity.   |

<u>Basic Skills Training</u>	Basic skill requirements and the workforce quality for entry level positions needs improvement. The region seeks to match the needs of businesses with available skills trainings. Providers include Mid-Columbia Council of Governments, Opportunity Connections, and Worksource OR and WA.
<u>Bi-State Workforce</u>	As a bi-state area, we share a common workforce but not necessarily a common workforce system. The region advocates for collective training opportunities and a regional system in Oregon and Washington.
<u>Pre K-12 Support</u>	The pre K-12 system in the region is the primary provider for basic skills development. Most school districts have struggled in the past few years to maintain vibrancy during state and federal budget cuts.

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**CHALLENGE:** Lack of Affordable Housing

Access to housing, particularly workforce housing, is an issue for the entire Mid-Columbia region. The region has been actively working to address a variety of critical housing needs. On the eastern end, the region is seeking to address barriers related to permanent construction home ownership financing. On the western end, local governments are considering creative collaborations to address shortages in rental workforce housing, considering the interaction between workforce housing, job retention and workforce training. Understanding new market pressures, further defining current needs and identifying avenues to support adequate housing in the Mid-Columbia region are all necessary to meet this challenge. Without affordable options, individuals must commute or find work elsewhere and businesses may elect not to move into or expand in our communities.

NEEDS:

<u>Workforce and Affordable Housing</u>	Providing workforce housing and affordable housing is a critical challenge in the region. Communities need adequate housing for residents of all ages and all income levels. Workforce housing options within reasonable commuting distances are also required to support the employees of businesses expanding in the region.
<u>Energy Efficiency</u>	In addition to increased access to housing, the region also needs increased access to, and utilization of, energy efficiency programs to support better housing stock.
<u>Housing Stock Age</u>	Overall, the housing stock in the Mid-Columbia region is older than either that of the US or Oregon and Washington. This is common for most rural areas.

Utilizing Downtown Upper Story Floors Some communities in the region have underutilized upper floors in their downtowns. Encouraging vertical housing in projects in downtown regions may help further utilize those resources.

**CHALLENGE:** Shortage of Capital

The shortage of capital in the region crosses a number of areas, relating to both capital for businesses and funding for infrastructure. The region has made strides in increasing access to resources through regional initiatives including the MCEDD revolving loan funds, establishment of community banks, development of a Gorge Angel Investor Network, and through dedicated funds via the Oregon and Washington Investment Boards and Mount Hood Economic Alliance.

**NEEDS:**

Business Funding Both debt and equity financing is necessary and should include a mix of public and private options. Included in the need is increasing capitalization for locally managed revolving loan funds and to identify, prioritize and leverage funding resources specific to business development. In addition, the region needs to enhance systems for a comprehensive resource for businesses to identify available lending and grant options and provide information in a manner that encourages minority and small and emerging business applications.

Infrastructure Funds Community infrastructure remains a critically underfunded need. Maintenance and expansion are both necessary, but difficult to achieve when local governments are often faced with declining revenue sources and state and federal resources become increasingly limited. Adequate public infrastructure is necessary in serving industrial, commercial and residential areas of the region which contribute to increased opportunities for employment and expanded property tax base.

Small Business Support Related to the shortage of capital is the effective utilization of capital resources through strong business models. The region faces a disparity in small business support services between our Oregon and Washington counties, due in large part to shortage of funds. The region seeks to support additional funding for small business services throughout the region and looks to expand regional capacity in business services and education.

**CHALLENGE:** Regulatory Environment

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

NEEDS:

Achieve Balance

The region seeks to achieve balance between the two purposes of the National Scenic Act: protect and support the economy of the Columbia River Gorge while providing for the enhancement of its scenic, cultural, recreational, and natural resources. We look to balance regulatory requirements to foster conditions for healthy development.

Urban Area Process

Funding cuts have diminished the staffing levels at the Columbia River Gorge Commission which develops and implements policies and programs to support management of the National Scenic Act. These cuts increase the difficulty of addressing regional issues such as urban areas. Of particular concern to economic development interests are Urban Growth Boundaries. Funding for stabilizing the Commission and addressing the regional issues is sought as well as looking at a consensus process.

Interagency  
Communication

Correspondence between regulatory agencies is sought to address common regional issues. There are several identified wetland sites in the five-county region and further common needs regarding transportation, forests, and ag land preservation.

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**CHALLENGE:** Communications and Clearly Branded Regional Identity

NEEDS:

Image and  
Regional Brand

With five chambers in the region, the Columbia Gorge Visitors Association and the John Day River Territory, there are multiple entities that can take the lead in building our internal and external image and promoting our assets through regional branding. With considerable differences in state funding for marketing, though, coordination is challenging.

State and  
Federal Leadership

Better knowledge of this region's issues and opportunities is needed by our state and federal leadership, with the region taking charge to provide opportunities to educate our policy makers. Acting regionally provides more strength in this endeavor.

Telecommunication

Increasing broadband access is critical to supporting our growing industry sectors. While pockets of our region are covered, access for all residents is necessary.

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**CHALLENGE:** Other Challenges

Beyond the top five challenges listed above, additional issues face the Mid-Columbia region and impact our economic development future.

NEEDS:

Investment and  
Trade Leakages

Investment and trade leakages occur in the region as we see dollars which enter our communities leave for purchases outside of the region and investment in other areas. We need to further research and identify leakages which are occurring in the region then encourage business start ups in the areas identified. We seek to support local purchasing and sourcing.

Brain Drain/  
Youth Opportunity

As is similar in many rural communities, our region is concerned about creating a variety of opportunities for our youth to find employment in the region and return to the region. We seek to stem the "brain drain" from the region and retain students we educate who could contribute to a bright economic future.

- Lack of Expansion Space Expanding and new businesses need support with the development of more available and attractive commercial and industrial spaces.
- Incubators and Mentorship programs Supporting the development of business mentorship programs and incubator spaces helps enhance start up business ventures in the region.
- Cultural Isolation Due to the rural nature of our counties, we often experience cultural isolation. Within our asset base is close proximity to larger cities as well as an abundance of cultural resources within the region itself. We seek to support cultural diversity by leveraging those assets.
- Public Transportation Data describing commuting habits in the Mid-Columbia by place of work show that workers in the Mid-Columbia region travel outside their state of residence to work to a greater extent than the average worker in Oregon, Washington, or the nation. Public transportation is necessary both from a human and social services standpoint but also from an economic standpoint to support the mobile workforce. We market the region as one workforce area and need to provide the transportation options to facilitate that to a greater extent.
- Access to Health Care/Mental Care Access to health care and mental care is critical to ensuring a healthy population and workforce. Increasing the number and affordability of options is necessary.

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## VISION AND GOALS

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**VISION:** The Mid-Columbia region envisions a thriving and prosperous economy supporting diverse entrepreneurial opportunities that act in harmony with the area's rural qualities, values and natural resources.

### Economic Development Goals

**Business Retention/Expansion:** Enhance the retention and expansion of businesses in the Mid Columbia/Columbia River Gorge.

**Business Attraction:** Achieve an increase in new business to the region that will continue to diversify the economy and create sustainable opportunities, including family wage jobs, over the next ten years.

**Infrastructure:** Facilitate the timely maintenance and improvement of public infrastructure and support scalable infrastructure development, which will contribute to increased economic opportunities.

**Economic Resources:** Increase the Mid Columbia region's receipt of resources for economic development initiatives, including funding, technical assistance and training.

**Entrepreneurial Environment:** Facilitate integrative partnerships and communication across business clusters, industries, entrepreneurs, government and economic development organizations to further develop an effective economic support structure.

**Workforce:** Regularly assess needed workforce requirements, ensuring a regional workforce that is work-ready and well-educated.

**Bi-State Engagement:** Engage elected representatives in Oregon and Washington to advocate more effectively for the common needs of the Columbia River Gorge in support of all the other six goals.

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## **STRATEGY: BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION**

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**Goal:** Enhance the retention and expansion of businesses in the Mid Columbia/Columbia River Gorge.

### **Key Issues:**

- How do we expand businesses that are here?
- How do we keep businesses from moving away?
- How do we support capitalization/expansion?
- Agriculture as key industry: Agricultural industry= businesses in the region. Downsizing vs consolidation of farms.
- Successful businesses need to be proactive vs reactive and able to adapt quickly to change.
- Need sustainable funding mechanism for SCORE and SBDC outreach.
- Stabilize business climate.
- Diversification of and within businesses helps them survive.
- Entrepreneurial opportunities: spin offs from successful businesses—collaboration.

### **Quick Wins**

1. Make initial contact with businesses to understand their needs and provide support. Connect with industry groups.
2. Create and support online forums in mediums specific to industry needs.
3. Provide businesses with larger exposure to online resources.
4. Host an export training workshop.

### **High Priority Long Term Actions**

1. Establish a Business Retention and Expansion plan.
2. Provide financial reeducation for new and existing businesses.
  - a. Shoe leather consulting by SBDC to help overcome fear and time issues
  - b. Encourage networking and mentoring think tank (from private enterprise)
  - c. Establish alternate times/formats for small business education
  - d. Seek additional resources for SBDC and SCORE.
3. Develop a mentorship program. Connect and collaborate with regions that have established mentorship programs to implement in the Gorge.

<b>Goal: Business Retention and Expansion</b>			
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Lead Partners</b>
1. Increase understanding of business needs so that appropriate support can be provided to business in our region.	1.1 Engage in business outreach, focusing to industry organizations to better understand their collective needs.	Ongoing	Industry Organizations, SBDC, EDCs, Ports
	1.2 Identify the most appropriate electronic tools (LinkedIn, Facebook, Google Groups) and create online forums for communication about needs and resources.	1 year	Industry Organizations
2. Build and advocate for a local Business Support Network that will provide necessary tools and education for local businesses to be established and expanded.	2.1 Continued one-on-one outreach by SBDC to help entrepreneurs overcome fear and time issues.	Ongoing	SBDC, SCORE
	2.2 Seek resources for expanded SBDC services for the entire region (OR and WA).	3 years	SBDC, Counties, MCEDD
	1.3 Continue development of a business support network in our region that builds upon existing groups' efforts and seeks to fill gaps.	Ongoing	Gorge OEN, SBDC, MCEDD
	2.3 Encourage a networking and mentoring think tank (from private enterprise).	5 years	Industry Organizations
	2.4 Provide alternate times/formats for small business education.	1 year	SBDC, CGCC
	2.5 Publicize small business networking, mentorship and training opportunities through MCEDD/Chamber newsletters.	6 months	MCEDD, Chambers, SBDC, regional EDC's
	2.6 Increase exposure to online resources for businesses from beginners to experts through further marketing of available resources.	1 year	SBDC, Chambers, CGCC
3. Establish a Business Retention and Expansion plan.	2.7 Utilize regional economic development/marketing website for business education, including "how to" videos.	2 years	SBDC, CGCC
	3.1 Identify and engage key partners who need to be involved in the BRE planning process.	2 years	Chambers, SBDC, CGCC, workforce partners, Gorge OEN, Consortium, Extensions Offices, States, EDCs, SCORE,
	3.2 Implement process to plan for a BRE program.	2 years	
3.3 Find funding to support BRE plan's actions.	4 years		

			Private enterprise
4. Identify Investment and Trade Leakages to support identification of export opportunities and encourage business expansions.	4.1 Host export training and provide resources for businesses to expand their export potential	6 months	Port of Skamania, MCEDD
	4.2 Conduct a trade leakage study.	4 years	

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## **STRATEGY: BUSINESS ATTRACTION**

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**Goal:** Achieve an increase in new business to the region that will continue to diversify the economy and create sustainable opportunities, including family wage jobs, over the next ten years.

### **Key Issues:**

- Attraction should be a targeted strategy.
- The region has existing industry clusters it can draw from in looking towards targeted business attraction.
- Past efforts have been difficult to sustain, but there have been some great tools developed.
- Both states have resources for business attraction type efforts and need to be engaged.
- Regional successes have been achieved in areas such as collaborating on joint marketing at trade shows.

### **Quick Wins**

1. Enhance availability of regional information on the MCEDD website.
2. Leverage the UAV presence in the region: partner in proposals for centers of excellence, seek to host a regional UAV conference and support joint attendance at UAV-related tradeshow.
3. Further distribute the regional marketing video, especially focusing to social media utilization.

### **High Priority Long Term Actions**

1. Develop a targeted regional marketing plan to better utilize existing regional marketing materials.
2. Market available regional business financing/incentives and further develop appropriate tools to make locating in the Gorge easier for businesses.
3. Better utilize regional and public agencies to identify and overcome regulatory hurdles to development.
4. Create a Business Advisory Board to talk with new businesses looking at the region.

<b>Goal: Business Attraction</b>			
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Lead Partners</b>
1. Promote the Gorge as a great place to do business.	1.1 Develop a unified marketing message through a regional marketing plan. Expand our “Quality. Life. Style” branding.	3 years	Bi-State Advisory Council, CRGVA
	1.2 Integrate information for regional businesses on a single website to make locating a business here easy to understand. Increase linkages to other landing sites, including social media.	2 years	MCEDD, County economic dev’s
	1.3 Leverage the UAV presence in the region. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support joint attendance at UAV focused tradeshows.</li> <li>• Seek to host an AUVSI conference in the region.</li> <li>• Engage with the States, Oregon BEST and other partners in advocating to make appropriate airspace/areas available for testing and seek designation as a center of excellence.</li> </ul>	1 year	GTA, regional airport, MCEDD, CGCC, private industry, states, tribes
	1.4 Further distribute the regional video “Come to the Gorge” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host a debut party</li> <li>• Send via social media sources</li> <li>• Ensure video linked on other websites (ports, chambers, etc)</li> <li>• Use Google Analytics from video views to target other business attraction strategies</li> </ul>	1 year	Bi-State Advisory Council
2. Develop appropriate tools to make locating in the Gorge easier for businesses.	2.1 Promote existing regional business financing/incentives.	2 years	Local Govt, Ports, EDCs, States, CRGC, MCEDD
	2.2 Work together with regional partners to decrease the time it takes to navigate the regulatory system by providing better education and resources. Continue to decrease regulatory hurdles to development and business location in the region.	ongoing	Local Govt, Ports, EDCs, States, CRGC, MCEDD
	2.3 Establish a Business Advisory Board to talk with new businesses considering locating in the region.	5 years	MCEDD

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## STRATEGY: INFRASTRUCTURE

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**Goal:** Facilitate the timely maintenance and improvement of public/private infrastructure and support scalable infrastructure development, which will contribute to increased economic opportunities.

### Key Issues:

- Adequate infrastructure is key to attracting businesses.
- Maintenance is key to retaining businesses.
- Regulations don't often fit small communities.
- Funding is lacking, including a lack of resources for matching funds.
- Project readiness may vary.
- Interagency coordination (City, developers, utilities, etc) when adding infrastructure can allow us to do more cost effectively. For instance, if a trench is open for a project, coordinate adding other services, such as fiber.

### Quick Wins

1. Engage in planning efforts to meet broadband needs through the Klickitat-Skamania Broadband Planning Project and seek resources to include for broadband planning in our Oregon counties.
2. Work with the Hatfield Institute/School of Government on a bi-state project.
3. Coordinate legislative education efforts.

### High Priority Long Term Actions

1. Conduct a long term freight study throughout our region.
2. Provide for road and highway improvements.
3. Encourage and develop consistent and predictable funding sources.
4. Develop and keep "level of service" for roads, water, sewer, storm water, fiber and other basic infrastructure.
5. Increase community self-sufficiency and self-sustainability for meeting infrastructure needs.

<b>Goal: Infrastructure</b>			
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Enhance broadband capacity for the region.	1.1 Engage in planning efforts to meet broadband needs through the Klickitat-Skamania Telecommunications Planning Effort.	1 year	CEKC, WSU, counties, MCEDD
	1.2 Seek funding for similar planning efforts in Oregon.	Ongoing	MCEDD, counties
2. Identify needs and opportunities to act cooperatively to ensure and initiate development.	2.1 Work with PSU's Hatfield School of Government's Oregon Consensus program to develop a bi-state project (potentially coordination between Stevenson and Cascade Locks).	1 year	Stevenson and Cascade Locks
	2.2 Focus on bi state "pods" within the region to increase coordination/collaboration between cities across state lines.	2 years	Local Governments, MCEDD
3. Encourage and develop consistent and predictable funding sources for infrastructure. Seek to increase community self-sufficiency in meeting infrastructure needs.	3.1 Effectively communicate infrastructure needs to policymakers by coordinated legislative education efforts.	2 years	MCEDD, Local and county governments, EDCs, Ports
	3.2 Facilitate and match appropriate funds with infrastructure needs including: Government and other grants, Loan funds.	Ongoing	MCEDD, Ports, MCCOG
4. Coordinate transportation investment to support the region's economies and communities.	4.1 Continue to support funding and projects for road and highway improvements to maintain this vital link in our transportation networks.	Ongoing	ODOT/WSDOT, local and county governments,
	4.2 Conduct a long term freight study throughout our region	2 years	ODOT/WSDOT, MCEDD, Ports, Railroads, Airports,

	4.3 Coordinate public transportation needs through Gorge TransLink to improve regional public transportation options.	2 years	MCEDD, Transport. Providers
	4.4 Promote utilization of public transportation and provide for employment transportation through enhancement of vanpools and coordinating employer transportation resources.	2 years	MCEDD, Transport. Providers, ODOT/WSDOT
	4.5 Enhance and sustain options for supporting transportation access across the river (bridges), including non-motorized access.	5 years+	Ports, MCEDD
5. Identify needed infrastructure improvements and support maintenance of existing infrastructure.	5.1 Prioritize important infrastructure projects in the CEDS biannually or in a fashion that allows for dynamic updating to incorporate community needs as they arise.	Biannually	MCEDD
	5.2 Utilize an electronic platform to support communication of priority improvements to outside funders.	12 months	MCEDD, RSC
6. Create information sharing structure among Ports, local governments, economic development councils, and regional entities to better understand industrial lands challenges and availability.	6.1 Develop Industrial Lands Task Force	2 years	Ports, local/county governments, MCEDD, Industry Orgs, State
	6.2 Create a regional working group on industrial lands that includes personnel, local and state agency departments to address the ongoing issue of coordinating infrastructure organizations, businesses, and agencies.	1 year	Ports, local/county governments, EDCs, MCEDD, Industry Orgs State agencies,
7. Provide technical and grant administration assistance to support community projects	7.1 Use policy of decentralization and new technology to solve wastewater issues.	Ongoing	MCEDD, local governments/districts, Utilities, federal/state agencies

(waste water, utility, other capital projects).	7.2 Conduct community tours and advise on available resources.	1 year	MCEDD
	7.3 Provide grant development and administration for state and federally funded projects.	Ongoing	MCEDD.
8. Address a Lack of Affordable and Workforce Housing in the region.	8.1 Seek resources to provide adequate workforce and affordable housing, including analyzing opportunities for a housing revolving loan fund.	5 years	MCHA
	8.2 Increase access to, and utilization of, energy efficiency programs to support better housing stock.	3 years	MCHA, MCEDD, Counties

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## STRATEGY: ECONOMIC RESOURCES

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**Goal:** Increase the Mid-Columbia region's receipt of resources for economic development initiatives, including funding, technical assistance, and training.

**Key Issues:**

- The region well understands our priority issues and needs, but there is a general lack of funding.
- Increased visibility to outside funders of regional priorities is needed.
- Resources expand beyond funding needs and include technical assistance and training needs as well.
- Economic development as a field suffers from systems complexity and requires a full ecosystem view-all areas must thrive.
- We utilize many communication forms effectively in the region (with collaboration noted as one of the region's key assets).
- We have a unique opportunity in coordination with Meyer Memorial Trust for development of a platform to enhance investment into our communities. The local region and state of Oregon are already involved, but additional Washington engagement will be needed if the program is fully funded.
- Requires multiple approaches in looking both inward and outward to fill gaps and increasing self sufficiency.
- In order to effectively enhance our resources we must also steward and best utilize existing resources.

**Quick Wins (next 6 months)**

1. Create LinkedIn group to connect economic resources.
2. Provide grant writing training program for the region.
3. Increase resources to finance local businesses.

**High Priority Long Term Actions**

1. Develop "RARE" type program for Washington counties in the MCEDD region.
2. Continue updating and enhance distribution of a master list of needs and issues in the region.
3. Expand financial fitness summits to offer to the entire region.
4. Utilize the "Investment Platform for Economic Development" tool.

<b>Goal: Economic Resources</b>			
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Provide clearinghouse for statistics, grant resources, and information about economic development in our region.	1.1 Create LinkedIn group to connect economic resources; distribute and promote use.	6 months	MCEDD
	1.2 Coordinate and sponsor grant writing training programs to enhance capacity at local governments, entities and non-profits in the region.	1 year	CEKC
	1.3 Increase “Financial Fitness” Summits to serve the entire region by working collaboratively on outreach and seeking funding/support to provide workshops.	3 years	CEKC, WSU and MCEDD
	1.4 Create a clearinghouse of program and funding information, including a calendar.	4 years	MCEDD
2. Create regional understanding of needs and issues in the Mid-Columbia to support addressing them.	2.1 Create a master list of needs/issues for the region through the CEDS Project Prioritization	Ongoing	MCEDD
	2.2 Distribute project list throughout the region. Connect into electronic tools to increase visibility.	Ongoing	MCEDD
	2.3 Identify gaps in technical assistance resources and connect with local solutions.	Ongoing	MCEDD, local and county governments
	2.4 Provide opportunities for face-to-face check in on needs and progress. Potentially coordinate with tours.	Quarterly or Bi-annually	MCEDD, local and county governments

3. Develop a “RARE” type program to increase capacity for Washington communities in the region as it has been for Oregon communities.	3.1 WSU Extension to work with AmeriCorps, contact RARE at University of Oregon for advice on starting a program that could serve Washington’s rural communities as well.	5 years	WSU
4. Work to increase funding available in our region for economic development activities.	4.1 Utilize the “Investment Platform for Economic Development” tool to further coordinate investments and increase outside funding in the Gorge.	1 year	MCEDD, foundations, local and county governments, special districts
	4.2 Connect with additional funding sources to increase their investment in the Gorge through outreach to and developing relationships with other funders at foundations as well as government entities.	Ongoing	All
	4.3 Increase availability of business financing options, utilizing both debt and equity instruments.	3 years	MCEDD, Gorge OEN, States, Venture

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## STRATEGY: ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT

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**Goal:** Facilitate integrative partnership and communication across business clusters, industries and entrepreneurs, government and economic development organizations to further develop an effective economic support structure.

### Key Issues

- The region has a strong entrepreneurial focus with a need for increasing the culture of entrepreneurship in the region. Support for strategies focused on entrepreneurial development ranked #2 (behind Business Retention and Expansion) during this planning process.
- There are a number of existing resources within the region to support the entrepreneurial environment which can be supported and enhanced, including educational resources for “teaching” entrepreneurial values.
- Strong industry clusters exist within the region through the Gorge Technology Alliance, Columbia Gorge Bi-State Renewable Energy Zone, Columbia Gorge Winegrowers Association and Gorge Grown Food Network.
- Additional industry clusters are developing in Arts and Culture, healthcare, outdoor gear, and additional value-added agriculture sectors. These emerging clusters, particularly value-added ag strategies, are highly important to the region.
- All industry clusters can be strengthened and further support. This strategy ranked #3 in the planning process.
- Public-private partnerships are critical for our continued success. We have some of the support structure and tools in place, but can further enhance those resources.

### Quick Wins

1. Identify partners in key business clusters, industries, entrepreneurs, government and economic development organizations.
2. Work with partners to develop a structure and tools to facilitate communication and collaboration.

### High Priority Long Term Actions

1. Enhance support for existing and emerging industry clusters.
2. Host regular discussions between business clusters, industries, entrepreneurs, government and economic development organizations.

<b>Goal: Entrepreneurial Environment</b>			
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Partner with entities in economic development and the private sector to achieve common goals.	1.1 Identify partners through outreach to organizations, business, and governments that have roles in economic development.	6 months	Business clusters, industries/private business, entrepreneurs, government and economic development organizations—MCEDD, SBDC, CTA, CGBREZ, CGWA, CGACA, GHC, Ports, EDCs, CGCC, MCCOG, etc
	1.2 Gather information on assets and strengths within each partner and share this resource as a way to promote efficient use of our region’s resources.	6 months	
	1.3 Work with partners to develop an effective structure and/or tool to facilitate ongoing communication and collaboration regarding entrepreneurial efforts.	6 months	
	1.4 Host regular discussions across groups to support further entrepreneurial education and to increase collaboration.	Ongoing	All
	1.5 Use above coordination strategies to identify barriers to economic development and identify ways to remove them.	Ongoing	All
	1.6 Increase support for PubTalks and similar networking opportunities throughout the partnership.	Ongoing	MCEDD, Gorge OEN, GTA, GO!, GGFN, etc.
2. Support enhanced industry cluster development	2.1 Provide a stronger focus on value-added agriculture	4 years	MCEDD
	2.2 Continue to support industry cluster development in high tech, wine, renewable energy, healthcare, and arts and culture. Analyze additional clusters.	3 years	MCEDD, Industry organizations
3. Identify and host programs to support enhancement of an entrepreneurial culture	3.1 Support existing entrepreneurial training programs	1 year	All
	3.2 Develop new programs to encourage and teach entrepreneurial values, utilizing existing delivery mechanisms (schools, nonprofits, etc)	3-5 years	All

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## STRATEGY: WORKFORCE

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**Goal:** Regularly assess needed workforce requirements, ensuring a regional workforce that is work-ready and well-educated.

### Key Issues:

- Strong community college located in the region, but no 4 year university with a campus in the region.
- Workforce size limited, but regional in nature. We do not share a common workforce system bi-state.
- Funding limitations, particularly for the K-12 system to retain vibrancy.
- Specialized skills may be difficult to attract.
- Quality of education is critical.
- Some High school students are leaving school without proper skills and experience to join workforce.
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) competencies are important.
- Alignment of educational systems (early learning through advanced education) for a seamless education system.

### Quick Wins

1. Identify organizations performing workforce training in the region.
2. Identify barriers and opportunities for workforce training organizations to coordinate.
3. Address cultural competency of workforce training organizations that host events or services which are challenging for potential participants to access.
4. Assess training needs for employees of regional businesses.

### High Priority Long Term Actions

1. Enhance/expand regional career preparation programs targeted to students and job seekers. Address transit and day care issues.
2. Develop multi-faceted first training/employment experiences (mentorship programs and job shadow opportunities).
3. Identify means to assist firms to gain access to educational and research institutions.

<b>Goal: Workforce</b>			
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Support local institutions in assessing needs and expanding capacity for training.	1.1 Identify organizations performing workforce training in the region. Produce a resource list of workforce organizations in both states within the region currently in operation	Next 6 months	MCCOG, CGCC, MCEDD, Non-Profits
	1.2 Identify barriers and opportunities for organizations to coordinate through Mid-Columbia Workforce Development Assessment	Next 6 months	MCCOG, CGCC, MCEDD, WorkSource, local school districts, Non-Profits
	1.3 Address cultural competency of organizations that host events or services that are challenging for potential participants to access through utilizing WSU Navigating Differences program to train workforce organizations and business associations putting on events to address issues of appropriate timing, location, and support with regard to transportation and child care	Next 6 months	WSU Navigating Differences
	1.4 Assess training needs for employees of regional businesses through hosting bi-state regional workforce summit to convene businesses, industries, entrepreneurs, and workforce organizations	Next 6 months	Columbia Gorge Consortium (MCCOG, CGCC, MCEDD, MCHA, CRGC), Extension offices, Chambers, private businesses, EDCs, GO!, Non-profits
2. Enhance/expand regional career preparation programs targeted to students and job seekers	2.1 Expand reach of regional job/career fairs	Next 1 to 2 years	MCCOG, CGCC, local school districts, Extensions, Youth Development Organizations, Chambers, The Next Door, Inc.

	2.2 Develop multi-faceted first training/employment experiences through job shadow and mentorship programs connecting K-20 institutions, workforce training programs, industry associations, businesses and other employers	Next 1 to 2 years	CGCC, MCCOG, Chambers
3. Identify means to assist firms to gain access to educational and research institutions	3.1 Identify and coordinate advocates for a four-year university and regional research and development facilities	Next 2 years	CGCC, MCEDD, GTA

**Other Strategies:**

- Develop problem solving and team work skills in students; industries can provide technical training.
- Develop high achievement reputations in schools—helps area businesses recruit and attract employees.
- Applied training in schools and for displaced workers.
- Promote and enhance student internships with area businesses.
- Promote working skills in school curriculum.
- Assess high-tech firm skills and knowledge needs—better communication between local schools, educational institutions and local businesses or trade organizations.
- Reduce industry cost to train.
- Develop interning programs and technology mentoring programs.
- Prepare youth in education system with basic skills, early education, and viable training.
- Connect programs for early training and life skills on LinkedIn.
- Establish scholarships for youth to attend higher education institutions or workforce training programs.

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## STRATEGY: BI-STATE ENGAGEMENT

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**Goal:** Engage elected representatives in Oregon and Washington to advocate more effectively for the common needs of the region in support of the other six goals.

**Key Issues:**

- The region is tied together across state boundaries (Oregon and Washington).
- The region has a history in working together, but this may not be reflected in state/national policy.

**Quick Wins**

1. Convene governors, state, federal, and local electeds in a Bi-State Legislative Forum.
2. Build coalitions among key business owners and elected officials across political and geographic boundaries to advocate at the national level.
3. Establish a CEO Forum.
4. Host a Bi-State Education and Workforce Forum.
5. Develop Public Policy Forums on a variety of topics.
6. Create a Central Forum that takes feedback from the Education and Workforce Forum, CEO Forum, and Public Policy Forums to disseminate and create a common voice for the region on policy issues.

**High Priority Long Term Actions**

1. Effect policy changes to enable cross boundary cooperation.
2. Establish cross-river alliances. (example: Cascade Locks and Stevenson, White Salmon and Hood River)
3. Consolidate services in the region.
4. Authorize interstate investment—infrastructure, marketing, other.
5. Seek tuition reciprocity for Washington and Oregon.

<b>Goal: Bi-State Engagement</b>			
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Engage business leaders in contributing to the bi-state cooperation discussion with elected officials.	1.1 CEOs invite CEOs. The invitation letter is co-signed by CEOs of Insitu, Google and ICE. Gorge OEN and GTA extend initial outreach to co-signers and offer logistical support	6 months	GTA, Gorge OEN, GHC, Private Industry, Central Forum
	1.2 Outreach to broad cross-spectrum of industries. Consider healthcare subset by building upon Gorge Health Connect as well as others that are more established.	Ongoing	
	1.3 CEOs self-organize and lead the forum (frequency of meetings, agendas, issues, etc.). They are encouraged to bring issues that would benefit from regional support to regional coordination group to leverage connections.	1 year	
2. Engage education providers in a comprehensive conversation about education in our region. through an	2.1 Hold an Education and Training Forum that increases opportunities for collaboration across state lines discussing investment in early learning, addressing basic skills gaps and job readiness, the role education and workforce training plays in business recruitment and retention and attracting and retaining the talent needed to grow and diversify the private sector in the region.	1 year	K-12 superintendents, ESDs, Title IB workforce training providers, community colleges and universities from both states, Central Forum
	2.2 Foster additional educational opportunities such as establishing a regional Center of Innovation, attracting research and development capacity and advanced educational opportunities in our region.	Ongoing	
	2.3 Establish unified, cross-border workforce training region to support increasing home grown talent for the industries that make up the economy in the region.	Long term	

	2.4 Outreach to Washington and Oregon universities to establish a stronger presence in the Gorge and increase opportunities for our residents to receive four year and advanced degrees without leaving the region.	Ongoing	
	2.5 Explore possible tuition reciprocity that would be consistent among all higher learning institutions in Washington and Oregon.	Ongoing	
3. Implement public policy forums in a variety of areas related to economic development.	3.1 Build on Gorge Consortium efforts to increase coordination in our region to address pressing regional needs. Possible topics could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attainable housing as a regional, bi-state concern</li> <li>• Land-use planning at the regional level (zoning as policy challenge)</li> <li>• Rural infrastructure</li> <li>• Regional transportation</li> <li>• Regional tourism and marketing</li> </ul>	Spring 2013	Gorge Consortium
4. Create a Central Forum that takes feedback from the education providers, CEO Forum, and Public Policy Forums.	4.1 The regional forum's mandate should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation for the bi-state legislative convenings</li> <li>• On-going outreach to state and federal lawmakers</li> <li>• A common communications platform, reaching all stakeholders and policy-makers</li> <li>• A coordinated, single voice for the Columbia Gorge region</li> </ul>		Gorge Consortium, CEO Forum, Education & Training Forum, Public Policy Forum
5. Bi-State Legislative Forum to effectively communicate our region's needs to state and federal legislators.	5.1 Convene governors, state, federal, and local elected focused on Bi-State Legislative needs	September and November Dates	Gorge Consortium, Advisory Committee including representation from local jurisdictions and private business
6. Support additional capacity for grant writing	6.1 Pool regional resources for grant-writing trainings through organizations like Oregon and Washington APA chapters, our	Ongoing	Universities, CGCC, local governments, MCEDD

throughout our region.	University partners-PSU, WSU, OSU, etc, and non-profits.		
	6.2 Promote coordinating regionally on grant applications as applicable to increase competitiveness and eligibility for larger grants.		

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## REGIONAL PROJECT PRIORITY LIST

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### **Prioritization Process**

A primary component of the regional economic development strategy is identifying collective issues and prioritizing both public works and technical assistance projects. Annually, the MCEDD CEDS Strategy Committee prioritizes Public Works and Technical Assistance Projects for incorporation to the MCEDD Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The projects are solicited from each county's economic developer. While each county has their own process for needs and issues, all gather projects and information from public and nonprofit groups in their area and identify county priorities. These are categorized based upon the following characteristics:

- **Readiness to proceed** with preference given to projects ready to start immediately.
- **Regional Impact** with preference given to projects that impact a large portion of the region, rather than a single community.
- **Potential availability of funding sources** with preference given to projects with a higher degree of local match and with avenues for additional funding identified. Additional preference to those with the potential to qualify for EDA funding.
- **Economic impact** with preference given to projects with job growth/retention.
- **Alignment with EDA Priorities:** Collaborative Regional Innovation, Public/Private Partnerships, National Strategic Priorities, Global Competitiveness, Environmentally-Sustainable Development, Economically Distressed and Underserved Communities

The CEDS strategy committee meets to review the projects and staff recommendations and adopts a regional priority listing. These are divided into public works and technical assistance categories for both states. The placement within the lists is based upon physical location of the project, despite the fact that it may impact multiple areas.

### **Purpose**

Prioritization is designed to:

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

**MCEDD 2012 Public Works and Technical Assistance Priority List**

The following represent priorities adopted for 2012 in four categories: Oregon Public Works, Washington Public Works, Oregon Technical Assistance and Washington Technical Assistance.

<b>Oregon Public Works Projects</b>			
<i>Priority</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Needed</i>	<i>Total Project Cost</i>
1	<p align="center"><b>Indian Creek Greenway</b></p> <p>Expand the Indian Creek Campus of Columbia Gorge Community College to support instruction and workforce training, university partnerships, attainable housing, recreation and restoration.</p>	\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000
2	<p align="center"><b>City of Hood River Sewer Plant</b></p> <p>Address issues with the City of Hood River’s wastewater treatment plant outfall pipeline and poor mixing at the discharge pipe.</p>	\$1,500,000	\$2,250,000
3	<p align="center"><b>City of Wasco Water/Wastewater</b></p> <p>Replace the City of Wasco’s sewer collection system by implementing a phased improvement project, with line replacement to be constructed within a 10 year time frame.</p>	\$120,000/per phase	\$200,000/ per phase
4	<p align="center"><b>The Dalles Downtown Riverfront Access</b></p> <p>Construct a pedestrian-only tunnel at Washington Street to link downtown The Dalles and the new Lewis and Clark Festival park with the Columbia River and new Marine Terminal.</p>	\$3,800,000	\$9,850,000
5	<p align="center"><b>Community and Training Center- Rufus</b></p> <p>Renovate the former Rufus Grade School into a community and training center. The Center will serve as a site to congregate for citizens and as a hub community and regional events. The City is also proposing a Renewable Energy Visitor’s Center as part of the community center.</p>	\$2,780,000	\$4,000,000

**Washington Public Works Projects**

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Needed</i>	<i>Total Project Cost</i>
1	<p><b>Wind River Business Park Water/Wastewater System</b>                      The Wind River Business Park contains approximately 300 acres of developable land. The Port of Skamania currently has three tenants at the site, but needs to construct and upgrade the current water system to meet business needs.</p>	\$1,570,000	\$2,000,000
2	<p><b>Columbia Gorge Regional Airport Flex Space</b>                      Construct facility to house expanding private business and subsequent aviation related business park tenants</p>	\$1,000,000	1,250,000
3	<p><b>Cascade Avenue Rebuild</b>                      Cascade Avenue is a primary arterial to access the waterfront and Stevenson Waterfront Industrial Park. The project will rebuild the road base, improve safety issues for turning radius at the railroad crossing, add/continue sidewalk on the south side, and upgrade swale along the north side.</p>	\$501,500	\$571,500
4	<p><b>Columbia Gorge Regional Airport Taxiway Strengthening and Runway Lengthening</b>                      Lengthen existing primary runway to 5,500 ft to accommodate increased volume of larger aircraft landings. Strengthen existing runway pavement with improvements to be done in 2012. Phase II funds are needed to bring taxiways up to same strength standards.</p>	\$6,300,000 (note: combined project total)	\$6,300,000 (note: combined project total)
5	<p><b>Bingen Point Access</b>                      Construct additional BNSF over/under pass access to Bingen Point Business Park in support of Boeing-Insitu expansion</p>	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000

**Oregon Technical Assistance Projects**

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Needed</i>	<i>Total Project Cost</i>
1	<p><b>Mosier Groundwater Sustainability Study</b>                      Water levels in Mosier-area wells have dropped by up to 200 feet in the past 30 years, affecting residential and agricultural uses. Project would study suspected commingling wells and complete engineering/repair of five top priority wells.</p>	\$240,000	\$315,000
2	<p><b>Giles French RV Park Study</b>                      Sherman County is continuing with the process to lease Giles French Park from the Army Corps and develop it into a campground. The current phase will work with a landscape architect to develop a draft plan for approval by the Tribes and initial submittal to the Corps.</p>	\$35,000	\$35,000
3	<p><b>Forest Biomass Collection Facility</b>                      This project includes planning for the establishment of a biomass collection facility, eliminating slash burning of the County forest. This project includes study and permitting of a small facility on County property.</p>	\$450,000	\$500,000
4	<p><b>Cascade Locks Mountain Bike Trail System</b>                      The Port of Cascade Locks has worked with the International Mountain Biking Association to prepare a mountain bike feasibility study and a conceptual trail plan. A NEPA study is necessary to move the project forward.</p>	\$100,000	\$170,000
5	<p><b>Dufur Wastewater Mutual Agreement/Order Project</b>                      Dufur is currently operating under a mutual agreement and order with DEQ because of wastewater discharge permit limitation violations. Project would complete engineering and construction to address and solve violations.</p>	\$40,000	\$50,000

**Washington Technical Assistance Projects**

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Funding Needed</i>	<i>Total Project Cost</i>
1	<p><b>Bingen Point Railroad Overpass Access Analysis</b>                      Analysis to determine means and cost estimates to provide additional BNSF over/under pass crossing at Bingen Point Business Park in support of Boeing-Insitu expansion.</p>	\$350,000	\$350,000
2	<p><b>Skamania County Strategic Plan Update</b>                      The Skamania County Strategic Plan was updated in 2003 and needs to be revisited.</p>	\$90,000	\$90,000
3	<p><b>Geothermal Feasibility Study</b>                      The Skamania County EDC desires to conduct a geothermal feasibility study to evaluate the locations and geography for the drilling of exploration wells. The study should also examine transmission interconnection and potential geothermal electric generation.</p>	\$100,000	\$100,000
4	<p><b>Secondary Test Well- North Bonneville</b>                      The City of North Bonneville has just three days of water reserves if the primary well that serves the entire city fails during the summer months. The primary well currently has the capacity to meet 10-year growth needs only if it is functioning correctly and a 40-acre industrially zoned property does not develop. The city's new water system plan calls for a secondary pumphouse and the first step is to test for a second well site.</p>	\$50,000	\$50,000

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## PROCESS

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### **Timeline: Consultation, Public Meetings, and Adoption**

The timeline for development and adoptions of this document consisted of the following:

- January 2012: Begin process of revising the Strategy as a collective bi-state economic development strategy for the Mid-Columbia region, in partnership with the USDA Stronger Economies Together program.
- January 2012 through July 2012: MCEDD hosts seven Stronger Economies Together sessions. MCEDD staff develops a draft plan in consultation with partner agencies, CEDS strategy committee and MCEDD Board.
- July 2012: Solicitation of projects and input from county economic development agencies and regional partners.
- July 26, 2012 to August 26, 2012: Plan available for public review and comment.
- September 13, 2012: Regional project prioritization established at the MCEDD quarterly meeting. Plan adopted and approved by the MCEDD CEDS Strategy Committee and Board of Directors at the MCEDD quarterly meeting.
- September 2012: Plan submitted to US Economic Development Administration.

### **Future Updates**

This plan is designed to be updated annually. The CEDS development and the process for updating the plan are mandated by EDA under 13 CFR 303.7.

### **Distribution of the Strategy**

Outreach on the CEDS is a critical component. It will be distributed in the following manners:

- Provided at the July session for the Stronger Economies Together program.
- Posted on MCEDD social media sites with press releases to local media sources.
- Hosted on the MCEDD website ([www.mcedd.org](http://www.mcedd.org)).
- Announced in the MCEDD Newsletter, which has a direct distribution of over 750 individuals.
- Copy to EDA, MCEDD Board and MCEDD CEDS strategy committee members.
- Hard copies of the strategy are made available in MCEDD office during regular working hours.

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## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

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### **Overall**

The performance measures for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy provide a means to measure the degree to which we meet the goals laid out in the plan. They incorporate measures required by EDA (marked by \*) as well as specific measures for each goal area. In addition to those noted, the number of new initiatives implemented from the CEDS will be tracked as will the leverage of public and private funding for every \$1 of funds committed.\* While number of jobs created/retained is used as a means for tracking, productivity is critical, but more difficult to measure.

### **BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION**

1. Number of jobs created and cost/job.\*
2. Number of jobs retained and cost/job.\*
3. Increasing average wages.
4. Lower unemployment and underemployment.
5. Increased use by firms of existing resources, such as business loan programs and export assistance.
6. Amount of private sector investment.

### **BUSINESS ATTRACTION**

1. Development and tracking of targeted media. Increase in use of regional marketing materials.
2. Number of firms moving to the region.
3. Number of industry symposia brought to the region to bring like businesses to the area.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

1. Number and type of infrastructure projects completed.
2. Prioritized investments and steps taken to coordinate planning of investments regionally.
3. Enhanced broadband access.
4. Increased access to transportation resources.

### **ECONOMIC RESOURCES**

1. Percentage of sub-state jurisdictions participating in the district (of those eligible to participate).\*
2. Number of regional collaborative projects.
3. State, federal, and foundation dollars attracted to the region for projects and strategies listed in the CEDS.
4. Success rate of application efforts based on number funded/number applied.

### **ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT**

1. Growth of firms in identified industry clusters.
2. Number of spin-out companies from existing clusters.
3. Development of communication tools for public-private partnership discussions.

### **WORKFORCE**

1. New partnerships formed between workforce, education and economic development in both states.
2. Lower dropout rates; increased graduation percentage.

## **BI-STATE ENGAGEMENT**

1. New bi-state initiatives and programs established.
2. Policies addressing bi-state issues.

### **Tracking Performance**

Performance will be measured annually based upon the annual action plan approved by the MCEDD Board and the performance measures listed in the approved CEDS. In addition, an annual report will be developed describing the accomplishments of the district covering each fiscal year.

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES AND PARTNERS

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Regional planning and development requires coordination between multiple economic development partners offering services and resources to the Mid-Columbia. The following is a brief description of these important organizations. It is essential to bring all of these talents and resources together in order to accomplish the economic development so critical to this area.

### **Federal**

#### **Economic Development Administration**

EDA provides funding for planning, technical assistance and public works projects in the region to address both the long-term economic distress of the area as well as acute economic dislocations caused by downturns in specific economic sectors.

#### **U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)—Rural Development**

Rural Development is another federal agency which has been a partner in economic development activities in the district. In past years this agency has been a major source of financing for infrastructure and community development projects, many times combining with funding from EDA and/or state dollars. It has also been a source of support for our business activities in recapitalizing our loan funds and supporting entrepreneurial activities through Rural Business Enterprise Grants.

#### **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)**

The SBA is a resource that has been used to a large extent in the financing of small business expansion projects in our region.

### **Jurisdictions**

**Tribes:** Umatilla, Nez Pearce, Warm Springs, and Yakama tribes

**Counties:** Klickitat, Skamania, Hood River, Wasco, Sherman

#### **Incorporated Cities:**

Klickitat County: Bingen, Goldendale, White Salmon

Skamania County: Stevenson, North Bonneville

Hood River County: Cascade Locks, Hood River

Wasco County: The Dalles, Maupin, Mosier, Dufur, Shaniko, Antelope  
Sherman County: Grass Valley, Moro, Rufus, Wasco

**Ports:** Cascade Locks, Hood River, The Dalles, Klickitat, Skamania

### **State**

#### **Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD) and Oregon Infrastructure Finance Authority (IFA)**

OBDD is the state's economic development entity. The IFA provides support of infrastructure in the region.

#### **Washington State Department of Commerce**

Commerce is the state's economic development entity.

#### **Oregon Regional Solution Centers**

Regional Solution Centers (RSC) were created by the Office of the Governor to combine Economic Revitalization Teams with advisory committees similar to the Oregon Solutions model. The Mid-Columbia region participates in the Central Oregon RSC.

### **Regional**

#### **Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area**

The National Scenic Area Act (NSA) was enacted in 1986, calling for the creation of the National Scenic Area. To support management of the NSA, the Columbia River Gorge Commission was established to develop and implement policies and programs in the NSA. As part of the legislation creating the NSA, each state was entrusted with funding for economic development within the Scenic Area boundaries. Each state appointed Investment Boards to make decisions on use of those funds for grants and loans (as managed by the Skamania County EDC and MCEDD).

#### **Bi-State Advisory Council**

In conjunction with the Act, the Bi-State Advisory Council was established for the NSA to work on strategy for economic development within the NSA. Membership includes the Oregon and Washington Investment Boards, MCEDD, Gorge Commission, USFS and Skamania County EDC.

### **Columbia Gorge Consortium**

The Consortium was formed as a partnership between Mid Columbia Housing Authority, Columbia River Gorge Commission, Mid-Columbia Council of Governments, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District and Columbia Gorge Community College. It is designed to provide coordination between workforce, transportation, housing, land use, and economic development efforts.

### **Mt. Hood Economic Alliance (MHEA)**

Hood River and Clackamas Counties formed a partnership to operate two lottery funded programs, Regional Investment Fund and Rural Investment Fund. As of 2004, Wasco County has joined this Alliance. Economic and community development projects located in these counties can apply for funding. Due to legislative de-funding of regional rural investment boards, this organization operates solely from revolved funds.

### **Community Enrichment for Klickitat County (CEKC)**

CEKC is a nonprofit designed to serve the needs of Klickitat and Skamania counties.

### **County Economic Development**

#### **Klickitat County Economic Development Authority**

The Klickitat EDA works to improve the economic conditions in the County.

#### **Skamania County Economic Development Council (EDC)**

The Skamania EDC is an integral part of economic development activities in the County. The EDC is staff for the Washington Investment Board and consequently MCEDD works closely with that agency to coordinate National Scenic Area bi-state activities.

#### **Hood River Economic Development Working Group**

The working group was formed as a partnership between the cities and ports in Hood River County, Hood River County Chamber of Commerce, Hood River County, Columbia Gorge Community College, Hood River School District and Mid-Columbia Economic Development District. It meets to discuss issues affecting economic development in the County.

#### **Wasco County Economic Development Commission**

Wasco County has an active committee of government leaders and private citizens who make economic development related recommendations to the County Commission. MCEDD provides staffing for the Commission to work to improve the economic conditions within the County.

### **Sherman County Economic Development**

MCEDD provides staffing for Sherman County economic development. Additional support is provided through the Sherman County Planning and Community Development Department.

### **City of The Dalles Urban Renewal Agency**

The Columbia Gateway/Downtown Urban Renewal Plan and Report allows for a variety of projects and activities including Property Rehabilitation Grant and Loan Programs

### **Tourism**

Chambers in the region include:

- Goldendale Chamber of Commerce
- Mt Adams Chamber of Commerce
- Skamania Chamber of Commerce
- Maupin Chamber of Commerce
- The Dalles Chamber of Commerce
- Hood River Chamber of Commerce

### **Columbia River Gorge Visitor's Association (CRGVA)**

CRGVA supports the chambers in the Mid-Columbia region.

### **John Day Regional Territory**

This partnership between Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler and Grant counties is a regional tourism marketing effort.

### **Workforce Training**

#### **Columbia Gorge Community College (CGCC)**

CGCC is the region's community college and provides professional and technical training, general education courses, and basic skill building. Cornerstone programs offered by the college which have supported the region's economic development initiatives include Nursing and Renewable Energy Technology training. The College is currently accredited through an association with Portland Community College, but is seeking independent accreditation.

## **K-12**

The K-12 system in the region is the primary provider for basic skills development. Most school districts have struggled in the past couple of years to maintain vibrancy during state and federal budget cuts. Multiple private institutions and additional charter schools also exist within the region to offer specialized options for education.

## **Opportunity Connections**

Opportunity Connections provides employment and training for citizens of the Mid-Columbia area with disabilities. The business operations of Opportunity Connections provide employment for over 300 people per year through packaging, assembly, commercial sewing, lettershop, janitorial services, and supported employment in Hood River, Klickitat, and Wasco Counties.

## **Mid-Columbia Council of Governments**

The Council of Governments administers Workforce Investment Act funding and serves Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam and Wheeler counties.

## **Worksource Oregon and Washington**

Worksource Oregon provides a regional training fund for Hood River, Wasco and Sherman counties and is a resource for local employers. Worksource Washington/Columbia Gorge provides employment assistance and a regional training fund for Klickitat and Skamania counties.

## **Public Transportation**

Hood River Transportation District  
Transportation Network  
Mt Adams Transportation  
Skamania County Transportation  
Sherman County Transit  
Gorge TransLink

## **Business Financing and Counseling**

### **Commercial Banks**

Providing financing for business development.

### **Small Business Development Center**

The Small Business Development Center networks provide assistance to small businesses in the region by offering business counseling and training.

### **Mentoring programs: SCORE**

SCORE, Service Corps of Retired Executives, offers business counseling.

### **Columbia Area Basin Asset Building Initiative**

The Asset Building Initiative is focused to financial literacy and basic business training to support entrepreneurial development. The group is currently working from a Paul G. Allen Planning grant which covers an area including Klickitat and Skamania counties.

### **Next Door**

Providing intensive support to the Latino community, Next Door is a critical source for individuals to seek initial advice when starting a business venture. Next Door has the capacity to then partner with the SBDC and MCEDD to assist their clients.

### **Gorge Angel Investor Network**

The Gorge Angel Investor Network (GAIN 1, 2, 3, and 4) and the Gorge Angel conference are vital partners in business financing.

### **Energy**

#### **Utilities**

Klickitat PUD, North Wasco PUD, Wasco Electric Coop, Hood River Electric Coop, Skamania PUD, City of Cascade Locks, CenturyLink, NW Natural, Avista, and Bonneville Power Administration are major players in the region as utility service providers.

### **Associations**

Columbia Gorge Bi-State Renewable Energy Zone (CGBREZ)  
Community Renewable Energy Association (CREA)

### **Other Entities Involved in Economic Development**

#### **Mid-Columbia Housing Authority**

The Housing Authority has been active in receiving funds to support low income and workforce housing. They are a critical component of the regional economy.

### **Mount Adams Resource Stewards (MARS)**

MARS is a grassroots effort to address issues dealing with the sustainability of rural communities in "Mt. Adams Country."

### **Gorge Grown Food Network and Farmers Markets**

Gorge Grown supports the local economy by serving "as a central source to inform, empower, and connect local Columbia River Gorge farmers, food producers, farm workers, consumers, policy-makers, educators, health promoters, and food enthusiasts." It also provides a mobile farmer's market to outreach to communities. Additional farmer's markets are supported throughout the region.

### **Gorge Owned Business Network (GO!)**

GO! provides a mechanism to connect and market local businesses and the impact of spending money locally. It also offers educational outreach and discussions.

### **Gorge Oregon Entrepreneurs Network (Gorge OEN)**

Gorge OEN provides "support activities and mentoring to the entrepreneurial community to foster business growth and employment opportunities. Gorge OEN brings entrepreneurs together to explore, exchange and nurture startup ideas; connect with service providers and business colleagues and introduce investors to promising ventures."

### **The Dalles Outreach Team**

The Outreach team is composed of members from the City of The Dalles, The Dalles Chamber of Commerce, Wasco County, Mid-Columbia Council of Governments, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District, Northern Wasco PUD, Northern Wasco School District, Port of The Dalles, and Columbia Gorge Community College. All members work cooperatively to identify and pursue projects that will benefit the area.

### **Private Business**

No economic development would take place without the entrepreneurs and industries that invest and risk their time and money to the projects that are our economy. All of MCEDD's activities take this into consideration.

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## APPENDICES A-B

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### *Appendix A – Regional Project List* MCEDD CEDS Projects

All of the projects listed below were prioritized based upon the following characteristics:

- **Readiness to proceed** with preference given to projects ready to start immediately.
- **Regional Impact** with preference given to projects that impact the entire region or a large portion of the region, rather than a single community.
- **Potential availability of funding sources** with preference given to projects with a higher degree of local match and with avenues for additional funding identified. Additional preference to those with the potential to qualify for EDA funding.
- **Economic impact** with preference given to projects with job growth/retention.

MCEDD requests the top five County priorities from the County economic developers for technical assistance and public works projects. These are vetted and approved through the governing bodies and most include a process for submission that includes consideration of projects in the county, cities, and from local partners. In addition, regional projects are solicited from MCEDD partners through the Columbia Gorge Consortium. The following projects are not listed in any priority order. They are listed in categories to more easily identify gaps and better understand similarities between projects.

<b>Water/Wastewater</b>			
<i>Project</i>	<i>Proponent</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Cost/Request</i>
Wind River Business Park Water/Wastewater System	Port of Skamania	The Wind River Business Park is one of just three industrial parks in Skamania County and contains approximately 300 acres of developable land. The Port of Skamania currently has three tenants at the site, but needs to construct and upgrade the current water system to meet business needs. The Wind River Business Park is an essential industrially zoned piece of property that has the potential to employ hundreds of people.	\$2,000,000/\$1,570,000

Carson Water System Improvement/Reservoir	Skamania PUD	The Carson Water System needs new reservoirs for additional capacity. The location of the reservoirs has been identified. The additional capacity will allow for more connections thus stimulating residential, commercial and industrial growth. In addition, the reservoirs would allow the PUD to store water for high demand and potentially reduce the reliance on surface water from Bear Creek. In addition, the current water system has 17% leakage in its existing pipes. These pipes all need to be fixed or replaced to reduce leakage and increase efficiency.	\$1,450,000/\$1,250,000
Secondary Test Well	City of North Bonneville	The City of North Bonneville has just three days of water reserves if the primary well that serves the entire city fails during the summer months. The primary well currently has the capacity to meet 10-year growth needs only if it is functioning correctly and a 40-acre industrially zoned property does not develop. The city's new water system plan calls for a secondary pumphouse and the first step is to test for a second well site.	\$50,000/\$50,000
City of Cascade Locks Municipal Water System	City of Cascade Locks	The City of Cascade Locks has a 246,000 gallon, concrete raw water tank reservoir built in 1935 that is deteriorating. The Hood River County Environmental Health Department recommended the City build a replacement tank to avoid possible contamination. Industry standards recommend a city to have storage capacity of three times their average daily use. A replacement reservoir of 500,000 gallons is required.	\$1,500,000/\$1,500,000
City of Hood River Sewer Plant outflow Extension	City of Hood River	The City of Hood River's wastewater treatment plant outfall pipeline discharges treated and disinfected effluent into the Columbia River. In its recent evaluation report, the Department of Environmental Protection identified poor mixing at the discharge pipe as a serious issue that needs to be corrected prior to the issuance of the next NPDES permit in five years. A limit was set for silver concentration and other monitoring requirements were added to the permit. Due	\$2,250,000/\$1,500,000

City of Hood River Northeast Water Loop	City of Hood River	to a lack of adequate mixing, silver will cause an exceedance of the water quality criteria at the edge of the mixing zone. Low water pressure exists at the Port of Hood River area due to a dead-end system. In order to ensure adequate water pressure in this area, a water main has to be installed across the State Street Bridge to Button Junction to Marina Drive to loop the system.	\$1,500,000/\$750,000
Dufur Dedicated Water Line to Reservoir	City of Dufur	The City of Dufur is unable to achieve disinfection CT values, resulting in a safe drinking water issue. Project would engineer and construct a dedicated water line from the well to the reservoir.	\$75,000/\$37,500
The Dalles Industrial Park Fire Flow Waterline	City of The Dalles	Construction of a second water main to supply the Port of The Dalles Industrial Park to provide necessary fire flow rates and provide redundancy to the water supply system for critical industrial customers.	\$2,166,000/\$1,789,175
Mosier Groundwater Sustainability Study	Mosier Watershed Council	Water levels in Mosier-area wells have dropped by up to 200 feet in the past 30 years, affecting residential and agricultural uses. Project would study suspected commingling wells and complete engineering/repair of 5 top priority wells.	\$315,000/\$240,000
Dufur Wastewater Mutual Agreement and Order Project	City of Dufur	Dufur is currently operating under a mutual agreement and order with DEQ because of wastewater discharge permit limitation violations. Project would complete engineering and construction to solve violations.	\$50,000/\$40,000
Stevenson Wastewater Plan and treatment Plant Update	Skamania County EDC	The City's wastewater system & plan's last major update was in 1991/2 and the focus was on expansion of the plant to address the transition to a tourism economy. In the past 4 years the City has invested \$225,000 in upgrades to meet changes in DOE standards. The City Council has identified the need to update the sewer plan to address re-rating for BOD/TSS loads for 10/13 NPDES permit; improve influent controls; update plan for collection system; address upgrades at the plant to meet redundancy requirements; and avoid a potential moratorium order. The plan will provide the	\$3,627,000/\$3,200,000

		template for identified plant construction upgrades including a second oxidation ditch, a second UV channel, a third clarifier, improved screening system and other updates.	
Wasco Waste Water Collection System Replacement	City of Wasco	The City plans to replace its sewer collection system by implementing a phased improvement project, with line replacement to be constructed within a 10 year time frame.	\$200,000/\$120,000
Waste Water Improvement	City of Moro	Improvements are necessary to achieve compliance with the City's WPCF permit with DEQ. The improvements include an additional evaporation pond and replacing a portion of the City's collection system to meet DEQ guidelines for pipe size and manhole locations.	\$1,642,500/\$1,042,500

#### Employment Lands/Bldgs/Infrastructure

<i>Project</i>	<i>Proponent</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Cost/Request</i>
Columbia Gorge Regional Airport Flexspace	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport	Construct facility to house expanding private business and subsequent aviation related business park tenants	\$1,000,000/\$1,250,000
101 Parallel Rehabilitation	Port of Klickitat	Construct improvements to 101 Parallel Building in the Dallesport Industrial Park	\$1,700,000/\$2,000,000
Hood River Waterfront Infrastructure for Light Industrial Development	Port of Hood River	The Port of Hood River obtained Site Certification for an 11.8-acre parcel ("Lot 1") on the Hood River Waterfront in April 2012, the largest remaining area of light industrial zoning in the City of Hood River. Certification elevated Lot 1 to shovel-ready status in the State of Oregon's property inventory. Construction of infrastructure-specifically, water, sewer, and public streets-is necessary to prepare the site for appropriate industrial development to meet job creation and economic development goals.	\$5,000,000/ 4,200,000
Bingen Point Way-Maple St Linkage	Port of Klickitat	Construct road, water, sewer, infrastructure improvements near entrance to Bingen Point Business Park	\$1,000,000/\$1,400,000

<b>Transportation</b>			
<i>Project</i>	<i>Proponent</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Cost/Request</i>
Columbia Gorge Regional Airport Runway Lengthening	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport	Lengthen existing primary runway to 5,500 ft to accommodate increased volume of larger aircraft landings.	\$4,000,000/\$4,000,000
Columbia Gorge Airport Taxiway Strengthening	City of The Dalles	The existing runway pavement strength is below that needed for some users. Runway improvements will be done in 2012. Phase II funds are needed to bring taxiways up to same strength standards.	\$2,300,000/ \$2,300,000
The Dalles Transportation Center	Mid Columbia Council Of Governments	The Dalles/Wasco County Transportation Center will eliminate challenges of multiple locations. The facility will serve the needs of the 5310, 5311 and 5311F service provider of Wasco County through The Link buses.	\$3,500,000/\$1,885,000
Bingen Point Railroad Overpass Access Analysis	WSDOT	Analysis to determine means and cost estimates to provide additional BNSF over/under pass crossing at Bingen Point Business Park in support of Boeing-Insitu expansion.	\$350,000/\$350,000
Bingen Point Access	WSDOT	Construct additional BNSF over/under pass access to Bingen Point Business Park in support of Boeing-Insitu expansion.	\$10,000,000/\$10,000,000
Downtown The Dalles Riverfront Undercrossing	City of The Dalles	Construct a pedestrian-only tunnel at Washington Street to link downtown The Dalles and the new Lewis and Clark Festival park with the Columbia River and new Marine Terminal.	\$9,850,000/ \$3,800,000
Cascade Locks Marine Park Entrance	Port of Cascade Locks	The Port of Cascade Locks desires to build a modern road and pedestrian access to the Marine Park that crosses the Mainline Railroad to eliminate safety concerns and enhance accessibility for trucks and recreational vehicles. The project will create a new primary entrance replacing the antiquated underpass currently used.	\$5,000,000/\$4,200,000

<p>Cascade Avenue Rebuild</p>	<p>City of Stevenson</p>	<p>Cascade Avenue is a primary arterial that provides access to the Columbia river for visitors, access to existing residents and residents of Stevenson that utilize the waterfront, and access to existing and potential businesses located in the Stevenson Waterfront Industrial Park. The project will rebuild the road base, improve safety issues for turning radius at the railroad crossing, add/continue sidewalk on the south side, and upgrade swale along the north side. The upgrades will also create additional parking for new businesses locating in the industrial business park and create a more attractive streetscape and access point for the tourism dependent waterfront.</p>	<p>\$571,500/\$501,500</p>
<p>Highway 14 Dam Access Road Intersection</p>	<p>Port of Skamania/ North Bonneville</p>	<p>The Dam Access Road project will improve approximately 1,800 feet of road to accommodate truck traffic from SR 14 to the new Cascades Business Park development in the City of North Bonneville. This project will provide the improvements necessary for trucks to safely and efficiently access the site. The project will also include the construction of an 8-foot wide pedestrian/bike pathway (including improvements to an existing wooden bridge) to separate vehicle and pedestrian/bike traffic in the area of the road improvements. A multi-use business park is being developed which will includes a mix of office, retail, e-commerce, warehousing, light industrial, and manufacturing businesses. This site, located directly east of North Bonneville along SR14, represents one of the few developable properties in the county that combines vital infrastructure such as highway access, available sewer, water, electricity, fiber optics with a local work force, business district and housing.</p>	<p>\$824,000/\$700,000</p>

**Community Readiness/Capacity Building**

<i>Project</i>	<i>Proponent</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Cost/Request</i>
Sherman County Strategic Plan	Sherman County	Sherman County's current Strategic Plan was completed in 1995 and updated in 1997. The County seeks to update the plan with feasible and relevant elements.	\$30,000/\$30,000
Skamania County Strategic Plan Update	Skamania EDC	Skamania County completed a strategic plan in 1992 and updated it in 2003 as a status check of the 1992 plan objectives and projects. Another 10 years has passed and the county needs to assess the 2003 objectives and projects and determine where its focus on economic development needs to go. Significant drops in timber industry and revenue both in the public and private sector continue to play a significant role in our economic development efforts.	\$90,000/\$90,000

### Community Facilities

<i>Project</i>	<i>Proponent</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Cost/Request</i>
Mid-Columbia Center for Living Facility	Wasco County	Construct a central location in The Dalles for access to public mental health addictions and developmental disability services. Currently across three locations.	\$4,000,000/\$3,000,000
The Dalles Civic Auditorium Theater Restoration	The Dalles Civic Auditorium	The 1921 theater in the The Dalles Civic Auditorium is currently unusable. Project would complete engineering/design for the restoration and updating of the theater.	\$98,944/\$93,944
Mosier School Modular Facility Upgrades	Mosier Middle School	Engineering and construction to connect new Mosier Middle School modular classroom facility to City's sewer and water systems so restrooms can be accessed in the new building.	\$43,500/\$38,500
Wasco Annex	Sherman County	Sherman County would like to explore the possibility of locating a Senior Living Facility on the site of the recently purchased Wasco Grade School. The school is no longer occupied as a school but is being used for a senior meal site	\$25,000/\$25,000

		and a preschool. The proposed living facility would be located on vacant land located at the site.	
Moro Medical Clinic Renovation	Sherman County Health District	The Health District would like to renovate and enlarge the existing Moro Medical Clinic. This will allow increase their exam rooms from two to four rooms and an additional bathroom that is dedicated to urine drug testing. This project will entail merging the annex building into the existing medical clinic to better utilize both buildings.	\$600,000/\$600,000
Rufus Community and Training Center	City of Rufus	The City of Rufus purchased the former Rufus Grade School which contains the city hall. The Center will serve as a site to congregate for citizens and as a hub community and regional events. The City is also proposing a Renewable Energy Visitor's Center as part of the community center.	\$4,000,000/\$2,780,000
Sherman County Office Annex Design	Sherman County	Sherman County would like to build an additional annex to the court house to house all county departments in one location. The current courthouse has run out of space and while additional offices are located within the City of Moro, having all offices on one site would better serve the public.	\$50,000/\$50,000
Sherman County Fairgrounds Grand Stands and Restrooms	Sherman County Fairboard	This project would replace restrooms and grand stands at the Sherman County Fairgrounds.	\$100,000/\$100,000

### Workforce/Education

<i>Project</i>	<i>Proponent</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Cost/Request</i>
Indian Creek Greenway	Columbia Gorge Community College	Expand the Indian Creek Campus of CGCC to support instruction and workforce training, university partnerships, attainable housing, outdoor recreation and environmental restoration.	\$6,000,000/\$3,000,000
Columbia Gorge Advanced Technology Center	Columbia Gorge Community	Design, engineer and construct new instructional space on the Indian Creek campus of CGCC to support education and workforce training needs of the region.	\$8,640,000/\$4,320,000

	College		
Gorge Applied Training Center	Mid-Columbia Council of Governments	The Gorge Applied Technology Center will initially focus on applied training for the construction trades. Center will target at risk youth and adults.	\$7,000,000/\$7,000,000
StRUT Facility Upgrades	Mid-Columbia Council of Governments	The Petersburg School facility needs to be rehabilitated for the StRUT computer recycling operations. Needs include HVAC system, water system, floor coverings and other cosmetic work is needed.	\$232,000/\$232,000

<b>Renewable Energy</b>			
<i>Project</i>	<i>Proponent</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Cost/Request</i>
Forest Biomass Collection Facility	Hood River County	This project includes planning for the establishment of a biomass collection facility. This would eliminate slash burning of the County forest. This project includes study and permitting of a small facility on County property.	\$500,000/\$450,000
Wind Generation Facility on State Lands	Hood River County	Hood River County has entered into discussions with several counties and organizations about the possibility of teaming resources to develop one or more community scale wind generation facilities. This study would address both the feasibility of the various organizations forming such a cooperative, associated legal issues, and site specific suitability factors.	\$1,600,000/\$1,600,000
Geothermal Feasibility Study	Skamania EDC	The Skamania County EDC desires to conduct a geothermal feasibility study to evaluate the locations and geography for the drilling of exploration wells. The study should also examine transmission interconnection and potential geothermal electric generation. Included in the study would also be a timeline and budget proposal for the exploration of geothermal potential in Skamania County.	\$100,000/\$100,000

**Other: Recreation**

<i>Project</i>	<i>Proponent</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Cost/Request</i>
Cascade Locks Mountain Bike Trail System	Port of Cascade Locks	The Port of Cascade Locks has worked with the International Mountain Biking Association to prepare a mountain bike feasibility study and a conceptual trail plan. A NEPA study is necessary to move the project forward. The trail will provide regional recreation opportunities and bolster the local and regional economy through increased tourism.	\$170,000/\$100,000
Thompson Park Aquatic Facility	Northern Wasco Parks/ Recreation	Replace the aging pool and facility in The Dalles with an innovative multi-use Aquatic facility, attracting local and regional residents and tourists. Costs are for engineering and construction.	\$10,000,000/\$9,899,000
Port of Cascade Locks Sail Park Expansion	Port of Cascade Locks	The Port is actively working to expand river resources for the sailing industry in Cascade Locks. The permitting is in process to allow for expansion and discussion is underway to enable the project to be used as a mitigation resource for a larger in-river project.	\$1,000,000/\$1,000,000
Giles French RV Park Study	Sherman County	Sherman County is continuing with the process to lease Giles French Park from the Army Corps and develop it into a campground. The current phase will work with a landscape architect to develop a draft plan for approval by the Tribes and initial submittal to the Corps	\$35,000/\$35,000

*Appendix B- MCEDD Board of Directors 2012 Roster/CEDS Committee*

<b>Name</b>	<b>MCEDD Board Representation</b>	<b>Strategy Committee Representation</b>
Joe Abbas	Healthcare	Private-MCMC
Ken Bailey	Agriculture	Private-Orchard View Farms
Bob Benton	Hood River County	Private- Ag
Jan Brending	Cities of Klickitat County	Public- City of Bingen
Barbara Briggs	Consultants/Nonprofits	Private- Briggs Business Consulting
Tonya Brumley	Oregon Chambers	Private- NW Natural
Donna Buckalew-Ness	Washington Chambers	Private- Insitu
Steve Burdick	Oregon Ports	Public- Port of Hood River
Mike Courtney	Oregon Ports	Private- Courtney Insurance
Harold Haake	Retired/Utilities	Private
Rex Johnston	Klickitat County	Public- Klickitat County
Cliff Jett	Cities of Sherman County	Public- City of Rufus
Mary Kramer	Higher Education	Public- CGCC
Gabriel Muro	Minorities	Private- Next Door Inc
Jeff Nicol	Cities of Hood River County	Private- Privacy Ready
Paul Pearce	Skamania County	Public- Skamania County
Robert Proffitt	Workforce	Public- Oregon Employment Dept
Rod Runyon	Wasco County	Public- Wasco County
Dan Spatz	Cities of Wasco County	Public- CGCC
Mike Smith	Sherman County	Private
Don Stevens	Cities of Skamania County	Private- Gorge Delights
Kevin Waters	Washington Ports	Private- Backwoods Brewing
Nancy White	High Tech	Private- Custom Interface

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

You have reached the end of the plan, but not the end of the story. This plan is the starting point for activities described in our goals and strategies. You can track the progress at [www.mcedd.org](http://www.mcedd.org). *In the meantime, we would like to thank those contributing to the development of this plan.*

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With more than 200 participants in sessions to update this plan, thank you to all of our regional partners contributing their time and expertise. A list of partners contributing to this effort can be found at [www.mcedd.org/set.htm](http://www.mcedd.org/set.htm)

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