

LANE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

AGENDA

June 10, 2024

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

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88084428017?pwd=Yl0SGJaEY5ZbTzecxlb2teac5uZW5.1>

+1 253 215 8782 US

Meeting ID: 880 8442 8017

Passcode: 7412727

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

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|--|-------|
| 1. Welcome / Introductions / Changes to the Agenda | 11:30 |
| Presenter: Greg Ervin | |
| 2. Public Comment | 11:35 |
| Presenter: Greg Ervin | |
| 3. Comments from Members, Chair, and Staff | 11:40 |
| Presenter: Greg Ervin | |
| 4. Review Minutes from May 13, 2024 | 11:45 |
| Presenter: Greg Ervin | |
| Action Item: Approve minutes. | |
| 5. Bank On Oregon | 11:50 |
| Presenter(s): Nancy Yuill and Erwin Reeves | |
| CEDS Priorities: 2 - Sector Diversification Through Business Development,
3 – Workforce Support, 5 – Rural Vitality | |
| 6. Banking Deserts | 12:00 |
| Presenter(s): Nancy Yuill and Erwin Reeves | |
| CEDS Priorities: 2 - Sector Diversification Through Business Development,
3 – Workforce Support, 5 – Rural Vitality | |
| 7. Cascades West Innovation Hub | 12:20 |
| Presenter(s): Justin Peterson, Cascades West Council of Governments | |
| CEDS Priorities: 1 – Regional Collaboration & Partnerships, 2 - Sector
Diversification Through Business Development, 5 – Rural Vitality | |

8. CEDS Update Scope

12:30

Presenter(s): Justin Peterson, Cascades West Council of Governments
CEDS Priorities: All

Next Meeting Dates:

- July 8, 2024
- August 12, 2024
- September 9, 2024

Upcoming Topics:

- 2026-2030 CEDS Update

June 10, 2024
Lane Economic Committee (LEC)
Agenda Item Summaries

ITEM 5: Bank On Oregon Program Overview and Successes

In Oregon, about 21.6 percent of households do not have adequate access to the financial system. Bank On Oregon aspires to ensure everyone has access to financial solutions that improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities. The added economic stability gained through increased access to financial services benefits the entire state of Oregon. Bank On Oregon brings together consumer advocates, financial education providers, banks and credit unions, state and local government, and community institutions in a voluntary effort to centralize information, ensure quality product offerings, and ease consumer entry into the financial marketplace.

ITEM 6: Banking Deserts in Lane County

The pace of bank branch closures across the United States has [doubled](#) since 2020. While the popularity of online banking has skyrocketed, physical banking still plays an important role for [many consumers](#). For some, including lower-income, rural, older, and disabled individuals, having no or fewer bank branches nearby could disrupt their access to banking services. The same is true for those facing barriers to using online financial services. This lack of access can in turn restrict opportunities to improve their financial health and build wealth.

A banking desert is defined as a [census tract](#) without a physical bank branch within a certain geographic radius from its population center or within the tract itself. That radius is determined by the type of community within which the census tract lies: 2 miles for urban communities, 5 miles for suburban communities, and 10 miles for rural communities.

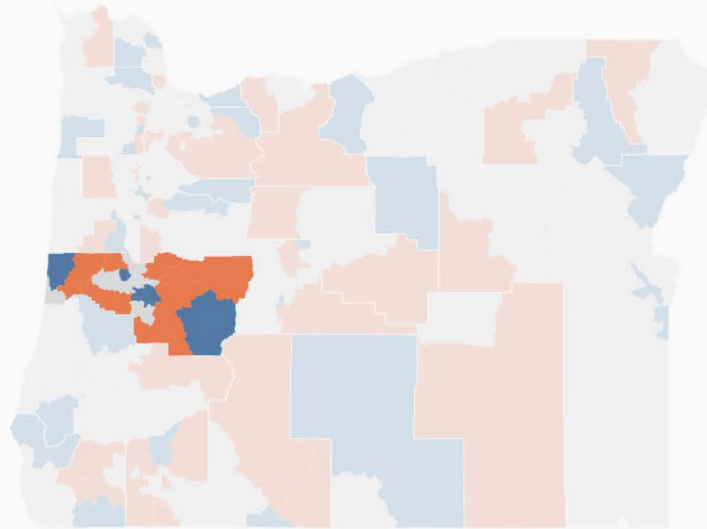
A potential banking desert is defined as a census tract that will become a banking desert if one bank branch closes within a certain radius from its population center or within the tract itself. That radius is 2 miles for urban communities, 5 miles for suburban communities, and 10 miles for rural communities.


[Link to Mapping Tool](#)

Oregon

In 2023, **6%** of census tracts in Oregon **were banking deserts** and **5% could become a desert** if a branch closes. The banking deserts are 27% rural, 63% suburban, and 11% urban, and 16% **also have limited access to broadband**. Residents are majority Black, majority Latinx, or majority Indigenous in 2% of banking deserts and 2% of potential banking deserts. Explore the map for details about your area.

Hint: If the map stops displaying, hover over where it last displayed, then click the home button  on the map taskbar to reset the view.



 Banking Desert  Potential Desert  2+ Branches

Dashboard last updated December 2023.

Notes: Desert status is as of June 30 for 2023 and as of December 31 for all other years. Demographic data are as of 2020. Census tracts filled in with white have 2020 decennial census populations of zero and are excluded from the data.

ITEM 7: Cascades West Innovation Hub

Cascades West Council of Governments was awarded a \$120,000 grant to be the lead organization for the **Cascades West Innovation Hub** serving Benton, Lane, Lincoln, and Linn Counties. As a key strategy of [Oregon's 10-Year Innovation Plan](#), this grant funding enhances the coordination of services and resources to maximize support for innovation-based entrepreneurs, as well as fosters a culture of innovation throughout Oregon. Regional Innovation Hubs are specifically focused on supporting the growth and development of high-growth, scalable, innovation-based companies primarily focused on science and technology.

ITEM 8: Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) Scope

This item is an update on the scope of work related to development of the next CEDs.

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

May 13, 2024
11:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Ervin; Chair (City of Cottage Grove / Government), Anne Fifield; Vice Chair (City of Eugene), Faye Stewart (Community Development and Public Works Director, City of Cottage Grove), Mark Bodie; (Business/Finance), Paul Berger; (Business), Larissa Ennis (University of Oregon), Nicole Desch; (Collaborative Economic Development Oregon for Lane Workforce Partnership), Chantelle Meyer; (Florence Economic Development), Kari Westlund; (Travel Lane County), Allie Camp; (City of Springfield / Government), Matt Michel; (City of Veneta / Government).

GUESTS: Jacob Thode; (City of Veneta)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeremy Caudle; (City of Lowell / Government), Ashley Espinoza; (Lane Workforce Partnership) Mike Eyster; (LCC), Jake Clifton; (Business) Cindy Perry; (Business / Labor).

STAFF: Denise Walters (LCOG staff), Sandra Easdale (LCOG Staff)

1. Welcome/Introductions / Changes to the Agenda

Chair Ervin called the LEC meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. Introductions were made, and a quorum was established. There were no changes to the agenda.

2. Public Comment

Chair Ervin called for public comment. There were no comments from the public.

3. Comments from the Members, Chair, & Staff

It was announced that Larissa Ennis would be calling into the meeting later. It was announced that a meeting had occurred to discuss the Holiday Fire 5-year recovery plan and broadband accessibility.

4. Review Minutes from April 6, 2024 (Agenda title corrected by Ms. Waters to April 8, 2024)

MOTION: Mr. Berger moved, and Chair Ervin stated he heard a second, to approve the April 8, 2024 LEC meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update

Ms. Walters introduced this item as a work session for members to share strategy and priorities among member agencies. She shared her screen as the members provided their top priority projects, issues, needs, and opportunities for 2026-2030. Members were also invited to identify different or additional interests and priorities.

Mr. Berger acknowledged his daytime role in high tech and bio-tech business development activities but wanted to recognize that as a food bank volunteer, he realized there is a clear need for jobs and housing in the community.

Ms. Westlund stated that Travel Lane County and its travel industry colleagues had priorities that align to CEDS' Priority One and were also interested in potential projects that intercepted housing and improving the quality of life with travel and tourism activities. She announced a travel industry consortium would fund the development of a 10-year *Destination Master Plan*.

Chair Ervin referred to Ms. Westlund's 10-year plan and agreed that there are projects that can include cultural elements with a public private partnership focus. He referred to a study in Cottage Grove to incentivize lot owners to upgrade their properties for rental housing across the board from single to multifamily housing, that would include an investigation of Section 8 bottlenecks. He lauded Mr. Stewart's land development work to attract additional industry that would lead to increased workforce development. He said the City of Cottage Grove was also interested in pursuing a public private partnership to develop an indoor Event Center.

Ms. Meyer echoed housing availability project needs. She announced a \$1.9M housing infrastructure project in Florence. She added that an additional priority was developing childcare options as there was a large childcare deficit in Florence. She suggested that projects and strategies include Lane Community College (LCC) as they had a large presence in rural Lane County with both Florence and Cottage Grove having LCC Centers and LCC would offer a BA degree in nursing beginning this year.

Vice Chair Fifield agreed that housing continues to be a priority and was also a sticking point to the success of workforce development. She said she was especially interested in large lot development for housing. She agreed that CEDS language should support opportunities for community colleges.

Mr. Berger asked if Senator Wyden and the federal EDA would be interested in the development of a large, well thought out pilot program, perhaps employing 25 to 30 people. Chair Ervin asked if there was a chart indicating current EDA funding priorities.

Vice Chair Fifield replied she was not aware of an EDA priorities chart. She recalled that during COVID, the EDA was extremely flexible in its funding, even funding a mountain bike park. She said there was a political element to its process and that currently, EDA funds seemed to be awarded to universities such as the large grant that OSU received. She suggested that business diversification may be a key project, with a focus on innovation hubs.

Mr. Michel stated he would also appreciate an EDA funding chart because Veneta did not have research staffing resources, and he looked to others for information about where the City of Veneta was a fit for strategies and projects. He mentioned an interest in collaborating with the City of Eugene on a West Eugene-Veneta housing project. He added that he would like to learn more about Cascades West Economic Development District strategies as well.

Ms. Ennis arrived at the meeting at 12:01 pm. She said that bio-engineering research work is accelerating. Mr. Berger asked if the UO was investigating establishing a Center for Prevention Sciences, with federal research dollars. He added that this could be an interest area for a School of Education, if not attractive for biotech research. He clarified that prevention sciences study behavioral sciences, human services, and social services but could also include IT tech.

Chair Ervin asked Mr. Berger about Ag Engineering or other agricultural development work. Mr. Berger stated that the Mohawk School District developed their farm and he deferred to Ms. Ennis regarding UO work relating to urban farming, boutique farming and the like. Chair Ervin stated his interest in determining whether a timber harvest environmental review may be warranted to determine if prior restraints restricting timber harvests still exist. Mr. Berger replied that this concept may be aligned with

biomass studies. Ms. Ennis deferred to colleagues at the OSU Ag Science, as it was not a priority of UO given the strength in this field at OSU.

Ms. Westlund suggested that a review of timber harvest restrictions would be challenging and would need to include a review of carbon impacts involved in cutting, building, and replanting. She advised that it be recognized as a political issue and the facts would have to be very straightforward in any public information campaign.

Mr. Michel mentioned a climate resilience update also included incorporating equity into economic development, workforce, and broadband accessibility activities, and that he would provide the link for Ms. Walters to distribute. He inquired about mass timber issues and projects. Ms. Ennis referred to an EDA grant for the Tallwood Design Institute relating to a mass timber lab, and indicated it was a partnership with the Port of Portland.

Vice Chair Fifield asked for clarification about *place-based workforce training*. Mr. Michael replied that was a program of employer driven place-based workforce development. Vice Chair Fifield said there were positive experiences with place-based work.

Ms. Camp stated that the CEDS priorities for the City of Springfield were related to increasing the tax base in the next 5 to 15 years. She said the projects being developed were those which garner community support to increase the tax base. She cited the Glenwood Master Plan as an example, whereby 30 acres would be designated as an urban renewal district. She added that keeping downtown Springfield healthy remains a priority, as does supporting larger industries including timber and medical.

Chair Ervin asked for clarification about what an *incentive area* was. Ms. Camp replied that could refer to areas of new development, such as sports zones. She added that there was also a focus on getting Springfield's land use code updated to meet the demands of medical services wishing to co-locate in Springfield near Riverbend Hospital.

Chair Ervin asked if the City of Springfield was looking for denser development. Ms. Camp replied yes, they are still seeing subdivision development, but they were looking for additional business development without adding pressure on current infrastructure.

Chair Ervin asked how the City of Springfield deals with the historic nature of downtown. Ms. Camp replied that downtown development has slowed down with no large requests for renovations or challenges. She opined that the current market conditions are not supporting large developments.

Mr. Berger commented on the development costs of construction projects in Eugene and Springfield being comparable, but Eugene developers continued to earn more from their development.

Ms. Desch stated that the City of Toledo was interested in recruiting high wage employers for the community in addition to supporting new entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Chair Irvin asked if there were any projects or strategies relating to mentorship programs within school systems. Mr. Berger replied that he was a mentor at a Eugene middle-school and was not aware of mentorship programs in high school. He stated his middle school mentorship is only 30 minutes weekly and opined that workforce development should include an education mentorship program.

Ms. Desch credited Connected Lane County assisting with mentorship needs and lauded its collaboration with Lane ESD. She stated she would like to see regular industry presentations in the classroom.

Ms. Ennis stated OSU Extension services still exist, 4H is expanding, and LCC is assisting. She added that it was difficult for rural areas to receive the benefit of Connected Lane County.

Ms. Ennis announced that a program called CORMIC was a microfluid technology hub related to the semiconductor industry. She added OSU and the UO were collaborating, and she dropped information about CORMIC in the chat box.

Vice Chair Fifield added that CORMIC is an EDA funded project and was a very big deal with NVIDIA as a major partner. She added that the project was at the forefront of a global trend.

The group paused to thank Ms. Walters for her work. Ms. Walters advised that she would follow up with individual members as she refines the spreadsheet responses. Ms. Walters stated there were 38 items on the spreadsheet.

Mr. Miche opined a key was to leverage infrastructure projects with workforce strategies. Vice Chair Fifield said a key may also be tech hub projects and that if she were at EDA that is what she would be advocating. Mr. Michael affirmed EDA grant information is readily available and that he would share the EDA link in the chat box. He added that he believed it was clear that the grants leveraged workforce development, street improvements and health services enhancements.

Ms. Meyer suggested looking for strategy and project opportunities along other highway corridors in addition to I-5. She mentioned that Florence was just outside a semiconductor grant parameter, missing inclusion by 50 miles, even with an I-26 connection to I-5.

Vice Chair Fifield suggested that telecommunications and broadband connectivity was a clear benefit of the Florence area. Ms. Meyer agreed, stating that that benefit led Florence to collaborate with Lane County for industrial development that would benefit from the undersea cables.

Ms. Meyer added that there are options for airport development, but nothing was currently planned, and they do have Enterprise Zones. She stated that there are plans for a South Coast Innovation Hub, but she was unsure of the current staff contact for that project.

Ms. Westlund asked about the Eugene Airport Master Plan. Vice Chair Fifield suggested that it also be placed on CEDS priority list.

Chair Ervin thanked members for their participation. He announced June 10 as the next meeting. Ms. Walters stated that BankOn Oregon would be on the agenda, and the meeting would include a discussion about a federal research study regarding banking deserts in Lane County.

Ms. Easdale stated she had included a link in the chat box relating to climate resiliency. She forecasted a meeting in October that would include agencies and individuals to discuss the SEDS, its results over the last five years, and the work for the next five years. She announced that LCOG would be staffing the Cascade West Economic Development District and appreciated the information discussed today.

6. Adjournment

Chair Ervin adjourned the meeting at 12:23 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Pam Berria, LCOG)



Priority Area 1: Regional Collaboration & Partnerships

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

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

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



Priority Area 1: Regional Collaboration & Partnerships, cont.

Approaches, cont.

What will guide regional economic development?

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

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

Implementation Ideas, cont.

How can the strategies be implemented?

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

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

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

Develop local recovery ordinance model language that jurisdictions can adopt.



Priority Area 1: Regional Collaboration & Partnerships, cont.

Indicators

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

Equity & Inclusion: Representativeness of CWEDD Board & Working Groups

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

Key Partners

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

Key Considerations

Equity & Inclusion

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

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

Resilience

How will these strategies build regional resilience?

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

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



Priority Area 2: Sector Diversification Through Business Development

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

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

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



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

Approaches, cont.

What will guide regional economic development?

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

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

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

Implementation Ideas, cont.

How can the strategies be implemented?

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

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

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

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

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



Priority Area 2: Sector Diversification Through Business Development

Indicators

Collaboration: Presence of referrals between business support providers

Equity & Inclusion: Representativeness of business owner demographics

Resilience: Presence of continuity of operations plans

Key Partners

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

Key Considerations

Regional Collaboration

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

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

Equity & Inclusion

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

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

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

Resilience

How will these strategies build regional resilience?

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

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

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

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



Priority Area 3: Infrastructure Resilience

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

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

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





Priority Area 3: Infrastructure Resilience, cont.

Indicators

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

Equity & Inclusion: Presence of projects explicitly considering equity

Resilience: Presence of projects explicitly considering resilience and redundancy

Key Partners

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

Key Considerations

Regional Collaboration

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

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

Equity & Inclusion

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

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

Resilience

How will these strategies build regional resilience?

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

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

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

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



Priority Area 4: Workforce Support

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

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

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



Priority Area 4: Workforce Support, cont.

Indicators

Collaboration: Level of coordination between EDOs and WIBs

Equity & Inclusion: Percentage of cost-burdened households

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

Key Partners

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

Key Considerations

Regional Collaboration

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

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

Equity & Inclusion

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

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

Resilience

How will these strategies build regional resilience?

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

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

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

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



Priority Area 5: Rural Vitality

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

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

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



Priority Area 5: Rural Vitality, cont.

Indicators

Collaboration: Presence of multi-jurisdictional projects in rural areas

Equity & Inclusion: Access to health and education services

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

Key Partners

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

Key Considerations

Regional Collaboration

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

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

Equity & Inclusion

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

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

Resilience

How will these strategies build regional resilience?

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

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

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

LANE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE - 2024

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* These positions are appointed by their respective elected bodies.

** This position is selected by the LCOG Board as the unspecified jurisdiction per Article III, Section 2 of the Bylaws.

Changes are indicated in Bold

Last updated: 4/1/2024