

The background of the entire page is a scenic photograph of a river valley. In the foreground, there are green hills with rows of pink-blossomed trees, likely cherry orchards. A small white church with a steeple and a white barn are visible in the middle ground. The background shows a wide river with a dam or bridge structure in the distance under a clear blue sky. A dark blue vertical bar on the left side of the image contains the main title and subtitle. A dark blue horizontal bar at the bottom right contains the date range.

COLUMBIA GORGE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Hood River, Klickitat, Sherman,
Skamania, and Wasco Counties

SUMMARY Find the full plan at [MCEDD.org](https://www.mcedd.org)

2022-2027

INTRODUCTION



Saul Reynoso

Every five years the region develops the comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) as a guide to understanding the regional economy and crafting goals, strategies and actions to create jobs, raise income levels, diversify the economy, and improve the quality of life.

Economic development planning as implemented through the CEDS successfully serves as a means to engage community leaders, leverage the involvement of the private sector, and establish a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration.

The plan is compiled by Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) and follows the guidelines required by the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). The strategy was developed over seven monthly meetings in 2021 with more than 100 participants throughout the series, including local and tribal governments, regional partners, ports, chambers, legislators, state and federal partners, businesses and individuals.

The strategy also incorporates additional feedback from online surveys and focus groups held with our Latino/a/Hispanic and Native American communities. Throughout this process we explored the themes of **resilience and equitable outcomes** (see sidebar).

What is Resilience?

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) defines resilience as “the ability to recover quickly from a shock, the ability to withstand a shock, and the ability to avoid the shock altogether. Establishing economic resilience in a local or regional economy requires the ability to anticipate risk, evaluate how that risk can impact key economic assets, and build a responsive capacity.”

For the Columbia Gorge, that means working with partners to develop an economy where businesses and communities are prepared for and have the resources to anticipate, plan for and respond to economic shocks, such as natural disasters, disease outbreaks, or man-made disruptions.

What are Equitable Outcomes?

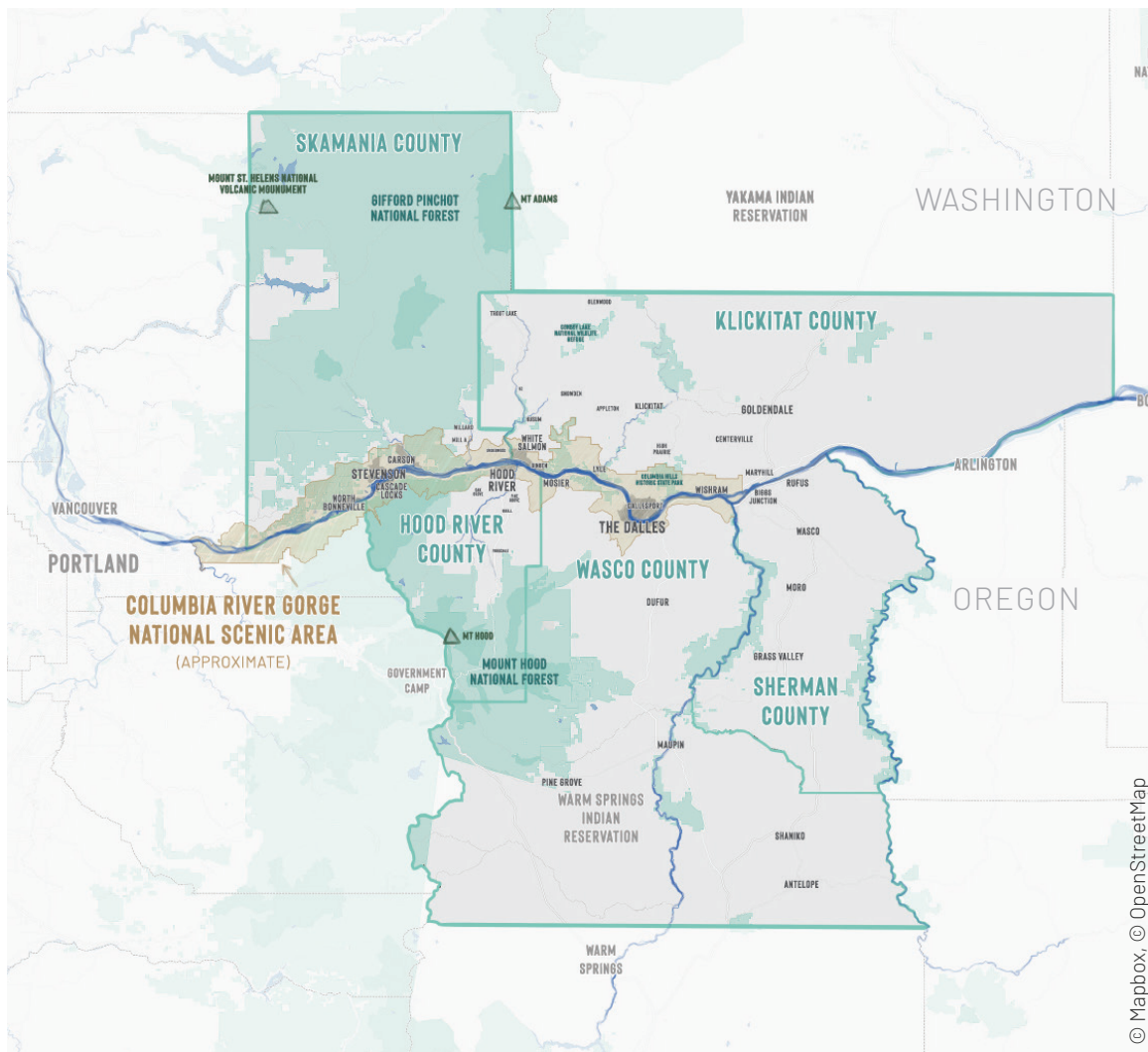
The intention in considering equitable outcomes through this CEDS update is in recognition that not everyone in the region has access to the benefits of a strong regional economy. The CEDS update is an opportunity for MCEDD and regional partners to consider where there are gaps in economic opportunity, barriers to accessing this benefit that may vary by population or community, and ways to support improving outcomes. Considering that COVID-19 job losses were greater for women and people of color, considering equitable outcomes as we recover is even more imperative.

Five counties in two states sharing a common workforce, geography, and economic development challenges and opportunities.

This document is only a summary of the strategy for 2022-2027. The full strategy, which also includes data/ demographic analysis, action plans, evaluation metrics and appendices, can be found online at www.mcedd.org.

GEOGRAPHY

MCEDD's region includes five counties bordering the Columbia River Gorge in Oregon and Washington. The region partially encompasses the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. The region is largely rural, although its proximity to the Portland Metro area and abundance of recreational opportunities brings thousands of tourists to the region every year. In total, the area spans 7,289 square miles.



COVID-19 IMPACTS

This strategy was developed as the COVID-19 pandemic continued, necessitating all process meetings be virtual and shifting the picture of our economy.

In early 2021, MCEDD conducted a COVID-19 Economic Needs Assessment to determine local needs and priorities, understand the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, and identify opportunities for future collaboration around these issues. Through interviews, community meetings, and survey responses MCEDD identified several priority goals for recovery, as well as strategies to address them (see sidebar).

RECOVERY PRIORITIES FROM THE COLUMBIA GORGE COVID-19 ECONOMIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT



Small Business Support: Targeted support for small businesses as they recover and grow, with a focus on those most impacted.



Expanded Broadband Capacity: Expand broadband capacity throughout the region to meet the needs of rural residents who lack access to high-speed internet.



Attainable Housing: Work with partners to develop strategies that address housing availability and affordability for the local workforce.



Improved Transportation Networks: Build on the robust Gorge Transit Strategy to improve transportation options and increase access for rural residents.



Accessible Childcare: Work with community partners to address local gaps in childcare and create affordable options that support middle-to-low-income earners.



Workforce Development: Engage partners in industry, workforce development groups, and higher education to develop training programs that build skills for higher wage jobs.



Regional Resilience Planning: Leverage the robust response to the pandemic to build resiliency planning networks to prepare businesses, organizations, and residents for future economic shocks and disruptions.

SWOT ANALYSIS & ASSET MAPPING

In no particular order

Strengths / Assets

Scenic Beauty, Recreation, Brand and Tourism Industry
Central Location
Regional Collaboration
Infrastructure
Natural Resources
Human Capital & Entrepreneurial Spirit
Diverse and Growing Industry Sectors
Culture
Availability of Transportation Systems/ Modes

Weaknesses

Regulatory Environment
Disparities Between States
Insufficient and Expensive Housing Stock for Rent and Purchase
Transportation
Infrastructure
Education and Skilled Workforce
Lack of Business Expansion Space
Preparedness
High Poverty Rate/ Economic Disparity

Opportunities

Adjusting Tourism, Expanding Arts and Culture
Connectivity
Synergy Across State Lines
Public Transportation
Leverage Natural Assets
Workforce Development
Growth of Value-Added Ag and Ag Tech Businesses
Quality of Life
Business/ Talent Attraction

Threats

Impacts of Continued Population Growth
Regulations
Housing Shortage Impacts
Infrastructure Limitations
Industry Diversification
Hazards/ Climate Change/ Resilience
Education and Workforce
Water Access and Regulations
Decision Making

REGIONAL VISION & GOALS



VISION

A bi-state Mid-Columbia region with a resilient, thriving, sustainable, rural economy that supports equitable access to diverse business opportunities that act in harmony with the area's unique qualities, values, cultural and natural resources.



Strong Businesses

GOAL STATEMENT

Enhance business innovation, retention and expansion, and entrepreneurship through equitable access to support services and capital, diversifying our industry mix, and enhanced coordination to address barriers to growth and sustainability.

OVERVIEW

Mid-Columbia region has weathered the last several recessions better than the two states as a result of the diversity of businesses in the region. By working to strengthen several diverse industry sectors, our region improves its resiliency towards economic shocks. The future of businesses in the region will only be stronger if we build on our abilities to supporting the development of new businesses through entrepreneurship programs, encourage research and development, foster the growth of existing businesses, focus supports on minority- and women-owned businesses, and continue to diversify our industry sectors. Our key industry sectors include:

Natural Resources and Value-Added Agriculture:

Crop production (cherries, pears, apples, wheat, and grapes) and processing continues to be one of our largest employers and an essential base industry, although wages are generally low. Forest/ wood products, another key base industry, has seen job declines but there is potential for growth from new products and utilization of byproducts. Innovation through value-added products can drive job growth in higher wage areas and bring more value to the region's key agricultural and forest products.

Manufacturing / Beverage Manufacturing:

Manufacturing growth in the region is very strong, especially in beverage manufacturing, and provides higher-wage job opportunities. Supporting business expansion and entrepreneurship is important to this sector.

Tech: Unmanned Systems: The sector includes a focus on unmanned systems as the region is a national leading Unmanned Systems hub driven by a local industry heavy-weight and deep breadth in the local supply chain. The industry is a major job producer with a high average wage and is also the source of much of the innovation in the region. Supporting diversification and continued adaptation in this sector is key.

Healthcare: The region has invested heavily in healthcare from our major hospitals to a number of independent practitioners. Healthcare services remains a top employer throughout the region and represents a diversity of jobs types, including many with high wages. Supporting recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and growth as our population ages is crucial to the regional economy.

Utilities and Renewable Energy: The region is already an important center for utilities and renewable energy production by virtue of the hydropower facilities along the Columbia River, extensive investment into wind development and employment within our utilities. Our natural potential to participate in a broader range of renewables make our region a center for energy generation. Greater development in this sector also improves our regional resilience.

Art/Culture/Tourism/Recreation: Tourism is a primary industry sector by virtue of the number of jobs it provides and growth in the sector, but it does not meet wage goals. This sector encompasses initiatives to invest in the quality of tourism sites and visitor infrastructure, spread visitors around the region, and increase resiliency.



Strong Businesses Action Strategies

- ✓ Strategy 1: Coordinate marketing efforts to increase awareness of existing business resources, including spaces, lending, technical assistance, and others.
- ✓ Strategy 2: Develop and enhance access to business space.
- ✓ Strategy 3: Further develop and advocate for a local Business Support Network with accessible opportunities for businesses to develop skills and access resources, particularly around innovation and retention, in English and Spanish.
- ✓ Strategy 4: Identify and address barriers and opportunities at the industry-sector level to support industry cluster development with specific focus on target industries listed in the plan.
- ✓ Strategy 5: Attract new businesses.
- ✓ Strategy 6: Increase locally available access to capital for entrepreneurs.
- ✓ Strategy 7: Increase the ease of navigating the financial system.
- ✓ Strategy 8: Increase opportunities for businesses to export products



Robust Workforce

GOAL STATEMENT

Cultivate a talented, multicultural workforce through diverse, family-wage career training aligned with industry needs while providing essential infrastructure supports for workforce participation in each community.

OVERVIEW

The region recognizes the critical role of a qualified workforce in addressing sustained economic growth of the region. In educational attainment, the MCEDD region is keeping pace in the percentage of the population with an Associate's degree, but falls behind in measurements of individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher. The primary avenue to address the need for a skilled workforce is through support to enhance and expand upon existing services, with a long-term vision for developing new resources. Needs include:

Childcare: The lack of childcare access and its importance to robust workforce participation became particularly apparent during COVID-19. Developing more capacity in this area and affordable options is crucial to continued economic growth.

Pre-K to Grade 12: The pre-K-12 system in the region is the primary provider for basic skills development. Strong math and literacy skills developed at an early age can set the trajectory for lifelong success.

Basic Skills Training: Basic skill requirements and the workforce quality for entry level positions needs improvement. With a constantly evolving economy, talent in the region must be able to rapidly adjust to new occupations using transferable skills sets. The region seeks to match the needs of businesses with available skills trainings, and to provide training that focuses on our minority communities.

Higher Education: Local community colleges are responsive to industry's needs with cornerstone programs which have supported the region's economic development initiatives. These programs will continue to play a vital role in workforce adaptation.

Quality Workplaces: With a very low regional unemployment rate, the tight labor market is creating competition for qualified workers. Thus, quality of the workplace becomes paramount for employers to retain and provide growth opportunities for skilled workers.

Bi-State Workforce: As a bi-state area, we share a common workforce and require collective training opportunities and a regional system in Oregon and Washington.



Robust Workforce Action Strategies

- ✓ Strategy 1: Enhance workforce tools to support area employers.
- ✓ Strategy 2: Enhance training opportunities to connect residents with local job opportunities.
- ✓ Strategy 3: Provide career training and services that specifically address bilingual and indigenous workforce needs.
- ✓ Strategy 4: Address childcare needs of employers and workers.
- ✓ Strategy 5: Support strong pre-K to 12 programs throughout the region.
- ✓ Strategy 6: Improve incumbent worker skills; support retooling and upgrading skills.



Resilient Infrastructure

GOAL STATEMENT

Ensure communities and businesses of the Gorge have reliable, resilient access to infrastructure, including attainable housing, high-capacity broadband, sustainable sources of energy, and emergency services, among others, to support future population demands and economic opportunities.

OVERVIEW

Infrastructure, including attainable housing, high-capacity broadband, sustainable sources of energy, and emergency services, among others, is critical to meeting our current needs and supporting future growth driven by our expanding regional economy. Some of these systems have reached or exceeded capacity, while others are facing compliance issues that challenge their operations. Some systems have seen significant investment by local communities to plan for the future. Each of these key infrastructure areas will require innovative approaches to dealing with capacity and resource constraints to build on assets. Below are strategies focusing on each of the key infrastructure areas that incorporate the following principles:

Seek to better understand existing conditions:

Understanding key infrastructure needs, gaps in availability, examples of strategies that have made systems stronger, and barriers to moving projects forward is critical to providing the infrastructure foundation needed to support the region moving forward.

Plan for and facilitate investment in key infrastructure projects:

The successful development of key infrastructure projects supports the regional economy, increases community resilience, and provides opportunities to prepare for the future.

Support project readiness: To meet infrastructure needs in the region, communities will need to match their own resources with outside investment through state and federal programs as well as private funding resources. To achieve this, communities must have the capacity to move from feasibility through planning to increase access to these resources.

There are five Action Plans within Resilient Infrastructure:



Water/Wastewater



Housing



Broadband



Energy



Transportation

Water/ Wastewater Action Strategies

- ✓ Strategy 1: Plan for and facilitate investment in water and wastewater projects that enhance the Gorge community, economy, resiliency, and address growing demand.
- ✓ Strategy 2: Support innovative products and practices in the region to foster continued access to water resources as snow melt and precipitation reduces.
- ✓ Strategy 3: Increase access to state and federal resources to support infrastructure development

Housing Action Strategies

- ✓ Strategy 1: Increase awareness and understanding of housing market conditions in the Gorge.
- ✓ Strategy 2: Develop innovative strategies to support increasing attainable housing production in the Gorge.
- ✓ Strategy 3: Enhance communication and coordination across the region to support housing development.

Broadband Action Strategies

- ✓ Strategy 1: Support addressing middle and last mile telecommunications infrastructure gaps.
- ✓ Strategy 2: Support investments into a fully redundant network.
- ✓ Strategy 3: Advocate for and pursue funding through federal and state funding programs.
- ✓ Strategy 4: Increase adoption and use of existing broadband infrastructure.

Energy Action Strategies

- ✓ Strategy 1: Leverage state requirements for 100% renewable energy generation to support investment in our region and increase resiliency of our local energy system.
- ✓ Strategy 2: Support investments that keep critical facilities and communities powered during disruptive events.
- ✓ Strategy 3: Encourage investment in energy conservation for homes and businesses to reduce costs, reduce grid constraints, and increase regional competitiveness.
- ✓ Strategy 4: Support the needs of the Native American community to connect the in-lieu sites to electricity and/or supplies of propane for heat.

Transportation Action Strategies

- ✓ Strategy 1: Coordinate transportation priorities and investments and align planning efforts among regional partners to support the Mid-Columbia's economies and communities.
- ✓ Strategy 2: Support enhancements to regional air, water and rail infrastructure for cargo and passenger transport (locals and visitors).
- ✓ Strategy 3: Improve safety for all users of regional and local transportation networks.
- ✓ Strategy 4: Increase capacity of regional transportation network with efficient and accessible bi-state transit options.
- ✓ Strategy 5: Increase equitable access to transit options among underserved populations, including to Native American in-lieu sites.
- ✓ Strategy 6: Provide safe and complete facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- ✓ Strategy 7: Invest in resiliency for the region to mitigate, adapt and plan for extreme weather, natural and human-caused disasters.



Powerful Regional Collaboration

GOAL STATEMENT

Effectively collaborate and advocate as a bi-state region to leverage the economic assets of the Columbia River Gorge to reach our goals for strong businesses, a robust workforce, and resilient infrastructure.

OVERVIEW

A culture of collaboration and strong existing networks were identified as regional strengths in the SWOT analysis. This goal presents opportunities to build on those strengths to help the region meet the three prior goals noted in the CEDS: **strong businesses, a robust workforce, and resilient infrastructure**. Working together as partners to advocate for the region will increase our success, allow us to reach higher, and bring additional resources into our communities to support addressing key challenges and leveraging opportunities.

Powerful Regional Collaboration Action Strategies

- ✓ Strategy 1: Strengthen information gathering and sharing to advocate for community projects and policy issues.
- ✓ Strategy 2: Build on existing collaborative groups.
- ✓ Strategy 3: Increase capacity for a regional advocacy role.

2024 Regional Priority Rank (Washington)

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>Reasoning</i>
1	Port of Skamania	<p><u>Cascades Business Park</u> Cascades Business Park is one of the few large remaining industrial sites in the Columbia River Gorge NSA that's within a one-hour drive of Portland. A market and feasibility study done in 2021 concluded that the business park could employ 379 people with an average salary of \$56,000. Commercial/light industrial buildings are needed to provide local employment. Roadway through industrial park will be completed and dedicated to the City of North Bonneville in 2024. The 2023-25 WA State Capital Budget includes \$1 million for infrastructure extensions to building construction sites. Funds are needed to construct commercial/industrial buildings.</p>	<p>Opens development in an otherwise severely land-constrained county. Addresses opportunities for key industry sectors.</p>
2	Klickitat County	<p><u>Goldendale Pumped Storage Hydro</u> Project is a proposed \$2 billion+ pumped-hydro energy storage project. Using existing pumping infrastructure from an old aluminum smelting facility, the closed-loop system would include three variable-speed reversible pump-turbines for a total generating capacity of 1200 MW and a total pumping capacity of 1552 MW. The project would provide a range of services to the grid to support reliability and resilience in addition to specifically balancing variable wind generation. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) released the Final Environmental Impact Statement in February 2024. The project is in final design and engineering with construction estimated to start in 2027.</p>	<p>Key industry sector impact and potential to open huge economic development opportunities regionally. Adds resiliency to the region.</p>
3	City of Stevenson	<p><u>Cascade Ave Improvement</u> The condition of the existing water and sewer mains on Cascade Avenue pose health and sanitation concerns. The sewer line along Cascade avenue is undersized for existing users. The waterline is AC pipe installed over 50 years ago. The project will replace the waterline with ductile iron and increase the sewer line to handle existing and future flows. Design is anticipated for 2024 with construction in 2025. It is currently being funded by a Public Works Board grant/loan package. The addition of decorative street lights to increase safety along the city's waterfront and match the look and feel of the rest of the city's Downtown area is dependent upon additional funding being secured.</p>	<p>Water/wastewater is a key infrastructure need outlined in the CEDS. Addresses key business needs. Adds resiliency to the region.</p>
4	Port of Klickitat-Industrial Park Development	<p><u>Dallesport Industrial Park -Rail Project</u> The Port of Klickitat is seeking funds to restore and presence the existing rail spur to bring it to operable condition. \$1.3 million needed (estimate). <u>Bingen Point Business Park</u> Task 1: BPBP Improvement: Fill BPBP Lots 1-9 to provide 5 additional acres of shovel ready condition property for development. \$6.2 million needed (estimate). Task 2: Flex Building: Construction of a 15,000 sq. ft. flex building. \$4.4 million needed (estimate). Task 3: Marina Park Boat and Car Parking: Pave boat and car parking area at Marina Park and Boat Launch in Bingen. \$660k needed (estimate).</p>	<p>Addresses opportunities for key industry sectors and encourages development in an economically distressed area.</p>

2024 Regional Priority Rank (Washington)

5	Skamania PUD	<p><u>Skamania County Water System Upgrades</u> <u>Carson Water Treatment:</u> This project includes final design and construction of a new 1 million gallon per day (MGD) drinking water treatment plant to serve the community of Carson. Project components include a pressurized membrane filter treatment system, clear well, finished water pumps, chemical storage tanks, on-site electric (chlorine) generation system and emergency generator in a 5,000 sq ft building. The pre-design report was finalized in 2022. Skamania PUD is looking for funding to cover the \$5.95M project</p> <p><u>Underwood Reservoir:</u> This project includes final design and construction of a new 250,000-gallon welded steel water tank in Pressure Zone 3 in the unincorporated community of Underwood. The project will ensure clean, safe drinking water and allow for continued community growth. The pre-design report was finalized in 2022. Skamania PUD is looking for funding to cover the \$1.75M project.</p>	Water/wastewater is a key infrastructure need outlined in the CEDS. Opens opportunities for development. Adds resiliency to the region.
6	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport	<p><u>Aviation Maintenance Training Facility</u> Project would include construction of a multi-use flex space and utilities expansion in airport business park. Airport has tenant identified to use the flex-space for Columbia Gorge Community College’s aviation mechanic training program.</p>	Address key business, industry sector needs. Increase industrial land availability. Encourages development in an economically distressed area.
7	Skamania County	<p><u>Wind River Road Stabilization</u> The County will be resurfacing the road and improving the roadside, ADA, and traffic safety elements. The County is currently seeking an engineer for the preliminary engineering phase.</p>	Key infrastructure need. Resilience issue. Impact to key industry sectors.
8	Klickitat Valley Health Hospital District	<p><u>KVH Building Addition</u> KVH is seeking funding for an addition of 12,000 square feet for a new acute care unit, surgery department and long-term care unit, and 12,000 square feet of shell space for future growth.</p>	Addresses key business, industry sector and resilience needs; opportunity for job creation.
9	City of White Salmon	<p><u>Youth/ Early Childcare Center</u> Repurpose an existing facility to become a new home for the WAGAP youth center and expand the services to include early childcare. Cost estimate factors anticipated building improvements that could be needed. Planning already funded via grant and city funds. \$1 million needed.</p>	Child Care as key workforce need.
10	City of North Bonneville	<p><u>City of North Bonneville Lift Station Replacement</u> The City’s lift station #3 continues to need constant maintenance and patching to function without the funds for complete replacement. Lift station #4 is also in need of upgrades, but priority is on #3. Continues to be high priority. The City is working on water and sewer rate studies.</p>	Water/wastewater is a key infrastructure need outlined in the CEDS. Adds resiliency to the region.

2024 Regional Priority Rank (Oregon)

Rank	Sponsor	Project	Reasoning
1	Hood River-White Salmon Bridge Authority; Port of Casacde Locks	<p><u>Interstate Bridges</u></p> <p><u>Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge Replacement:</u> The existing bridge is nearly 90 years old, structurally obsolete and seismically deficient. A new bridge is needed to improve and ensure multi-modal transportation of people and goods across the Columbia River between the communities of Bingen and White Salmon in Washington, and Hood River in Oregon. Total project cost estimate: \$520M. Approximately \$420 million in State and Federal grants will be needed.</p> <p><u>Port of Cascade Locks Bridge of the Gods Strengthening and Safety Improvements:</u> This project includes the maintenance and seismic strengthening of the Bridge of the Gods, with an allocated budget of \$12 million. Additionally, it encompasses resiliency and safety measures, such as the creation of a safe pathway for pedestrians and cyclists, with an estimated budget of \$80 million.</p>	Core transportation connection. Resilience issue. Impact to key industry sectors.
2	Hood River, Sherman, and Wasco Counties, City of Hood River	<p><u>Housing</u></p> <p><u>Hood River:</u> Development of the 780 Rand Road Housing Development project for affordable housing as well as additional land acquisition for affordable and attainable housing development in the City of Hood River and Hood River County. Total project cost estimate: \$54M with \$35.9M still needed.</p> <p><u>Sherman:</u> The housing stock in Sherman County is lacking the quantity and quality necessary for new employees to find a place to live in the County. Sherman County has created four incentive programs to encourage the construction of new housing or the rehabilitation of existing housing. The County continues to look for creative ideas that would solve the housing issues. The County is also working to explore additional opportunities for a senior living facility in Moro or Wasco to support aging in place in the County.</p> <p><u>Wasco:</u> Housing prices have continued to be unaffordable for many in Wasco County and supply is not meeting current needs. This has hindered employees seeking to come to Wasco County have hindered businesses' ability to grow. Better understanding this need and supporting community partners in opportunities to address it will impact access to a robust workforce moving forward.</p>	Addressing housing constraints is a priority strategy for the CEDS
3	Wasco County, Mid-Columbia Center for Living	<p><u>Resolution Center</u></p> <p>Resolution Center: Wasco County and Mid-Columbia Center for Living are defining a new approach to behavioral health services at a comprehensive behavioral health campus in Wasco County. The campus will include a 16-bed Residential Treatment Facility (RTF), a 16-bed Secure Residential Treatment Facility (SRTF), a 16-bed Substance Use Disorder Residential Treatment Facility (SUD), a 6-8 chair Crisis Stabilization Center, an expansion of the existing Consumer Drop-In Center, and an expansion of the existing Psychosocial Rehabilitative Office. This partnership project will enhance a regional service array for care, save a significant amount of taxpayer money and create new jobs for local professionals with an emphasis on culturally competent care. This project has \$17,500,000 committed and is seeking an additional \$36,000,000 to support a full build out of the three phases.</p>	Workforce supports, job creation.
4	Columbia Gorge ESD	<p><u>Columbia Gorge Early Learning Center</u></p> <p>Columbia Gorge Education Service District (ESD), Columbia Gorge Community College, North Wasco County School District, and other public partners propose to renovate former Chenoweth Middle School into a regional early learning center to address a severe shortage of affordable, high-quality childcare. The early learning center will serve as a practicum site for CGCC's Early Childhood Education Training program, provide 200 new childcare slots for children ranging from 0-5 and after school care to support workforce participation. Partners have secured \$2.2 million toward an estimated \$20 million total project cost. The project has a pending \$500,000 request to EPA for asbestos removal and plans to submit \$14 million in state, federal and philanthropic requests in the coming year.</p>	Childcare needs (costs, lack of access) is a priority strategy in the CEDS. Addresses support for workforce participation.

2024 Regional Priority Rank (Oregon)

5	City of Hood River	<p><u>Hood River Elevated Sewer Line</u> The existing elevated sewer main on the south side of the interstate is very old, exposed and there is no means to divert or stop the flow if there is a break on the main, with potentially catastrophic environmental costs. This project will install a lift station and re-route the sewer line. Total project cost estimate: \$6.7M with \$6.4M still needed.</p>	Water/wastewater is a key infrastructure need outlined in the CEDS. Addresses key business needs. Adds resiliency to the region.
6	City of Grass Valley	<p><u>Wastewater Project</u> The City of Grass Valley is researching construction of a municipal wastewater system. The council hired an engineer to do a feasibility study in 2021 and that study is complete and has been presented to the community for feedback. The City submitted a successful FY24 Congressionally Directed Spending Request for a portion of project costs and a CWSRF program application in December of 2023. The City is moving forward with a request for additional planning funding and conducting additional community outreach while planning to submit to the state for CDBG funding in the fall of 2024 as the final funding resource for the project. Estimated project cost is just over \$6 million.</p>	Water/wastewater is a key infrastructure need outlined in the CEDS. Opens opportunities for development. Adds resiliency to the region.
7	Port of Hood River	<p><u>Lot 1</u> Lot 1 is the largest remaining light industrial property in Hood River. A significant infrastructure investment- specifically, water, sewer, and public streets - is necessary to prepare the site for industrial development to meet long term job creation and economic development goals of the community. Focus will be construction of roundabout at North Second Street and Riverside Drive. Total project cost estimate: \$5.2 million.</p>	Addresses opportunities for key industry sectors.
8	City of Maupin	<p><u>Water System Improvements:</u> The City's water source is a spring that feeds into the system with a single, above ground 6" pipe that is 40 years old. The cost estimate for needed improvements in the City's 2022 Waster System Master Plan in 2022 was approximately \$10 million. Additionally, the City has identified a leak in their reservoir that has been temporarily addressed but needs a long term repair. The City will focus on priority improvements related to the reservoir, water distribution, safety of the drinking water, and fire protection. Estimated cost for these priorities is \$4.2 million and the City will be further refining the scope for this first phase of improvements needed and seeking funding from Safe Drinking Water RLF and USDA Rural Development.</p>	Water/wastewater is a key infrastructure need outlined in the CEDS. Adds resiliency to the region.
9	Port of Cascade Locks	<p><u>Marine Park Cruise Line Dock Shore Power Infrastructure</u> The initiative involves identifying and securing funding for the construction of shore power infrastructure to support the American Cruise Line Dock, scheduled to commence construction in the spring of 2025. This infrastructure is expected to foster job creation, generate revenue for the city, reduce diesel and CO2 emissions by up to 80% and 66% respectively, and contribute to a cleaner maritime ecosystem. Moreover, it will help diminish noise pollution, thereby enhancing the quality of life for the local community.</p>	Addresses opportunities for key industry sectors.
10	City of Moro	<p><u>New Primary Municipal Well</u> City of Moro is completing a feasibility study for a new primary municipal well. A backup water source would help to ensure clean/adequate water supplies for sanitation, and fire suppression efforts during a natural hazard/grid down scenario. A new well will facilitate future commercial and residential growth. Progress towards project includes obtaining a new Water System Master Plan to replace the 1999 survey.</p>	Water/wastewater is a key infrastructure need outlined in the CEDS. Adds resiliency to the region.

View the full strategy, which also includes data/demographic analysis, action plans, evaluation metrics and appendices online at www.mcedd.org.



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