

EDA Planning Grant Final Report

**Mid-Columbia Economic Development
Award # 07-83-06531**



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PLANNING GRANT FINAL REPORT

Mid-Columbia Economic Development Award # 07-83-06531

This publication was prepared by Mid-Columbia Economic Development District. The statements, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Economic Development Administration.

ABSTRACT

Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) received an Economic Development Administration Planning Grant of \$67,189 for the period April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010. The grant was utilized by MCEDD in supporting its five-county region: Klickitat and Skamania counties in Washington and Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman counties in Oregon.

2009–2010 Scope of Work Summary

- 1) Prepare and maintain the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
 - a. Collect data relevant to the regional economy
 - b. Identify opportunities/issues and define vision/goals for the region
 - c. Create strategies to accomplish goals
 - d. Coordinate activities to implement these strategies
 - e. Create prioritized list of TA and Public Works projects
- 2) Provide assistance for local economic development related activities and act as a liaison between appropriate Oregon, Washington and federal interests
 - a. Create family-wage employment opportunities
 - b. Promote growth, development and retention of businesses and industry within the region
 - c. Support growing industry cluster initiatives, including representative groups in renewable energy (CGBREZ) and technology (Gorge Tech Alliance).
 - d. Continue to coordinate transportation needs to improve inter-city public transportation
 - e. Provide economic development support to counties within the region, filling in gaps and providing services for which they lack the capacity or resources to fill
- 3) Provide technical assistance for grant writing and administration and access to region-wide demographic and statistical data
 - a. Provide monthly updates on grant resources and regional statistics via an electronic newsletter to regional partners
 - b. Maintain resource databases of grant sources
- 4) Work closely with the Economic Development Representative and EDA staff to develop future potential economic development projects

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FINAL REPORT NARRATIVE

Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) received an Economic Development Administration Planning Grant of \$67,189 for the period April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010. This report is to document activities accomplishing the approved scope of work during the entire grant period.

Accomplishments: Prepare and maintain the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

- Collect data relevant to the regional economy
- Identify opportunities/issues and define vision/goals for the region
- Create strategies to accomplish goals
- Coordinate activities to implement these strategies
- Create prioritized list of TA and Public Works projects

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The 2009 CEDS report was approved by the MCEDD Board of Directors and submitted to EDA prior to June 30, 2009. MCEDD activities are geared toward implementing these strategies, many of them described in the following summary of accomplishments. MCEDD takes pride in being the region's primary representative for the Economic Development Administration (EDA). Each year MCEDD creates a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for EDA in collaboration with community representatives throughout the region. This document identifies strategies based on current trends and areas best suited for growth to sustain the region's economy and reduce unemployment. The document includes demographic information specific to the five-county, bi-state region.

In preparation for the CEDS, each of the counties prepares a project priority list of technical assistance and public works projects that need funding. The MCEDD board combines the lists and picks the top five projects in each category for Oregon and Washington. This list serves as an action plan for MCEDD activities. Following development of the list, MCEDD provides information on Economic Development Administration funding and acts as a catalyst to support communities seeking EDA support. This fiscal year we supported the Port of Klickitat, Port of Hood River, Mid-Columbia Council of Governments, City of The Dalles, and Columbia Gorge Community College in applications, travelling with two of those entities to discuss projects with the EDA Investment Review Committee in Seattle.

In addition to focusing on the TA/PW list the Board also updated the strategic vision with seven primary goals:

- Retain and expand existing businesses in the region to enhance the region's established economic base. Create a supportive environment that promotes entrepreneurship and business expansion.
- Attract new business and industry to the region that will provide opportunities for existing residents at family wages.
- Create adequate public infrastructure that will serve key industrial, commercial and residential areas of the region contributing to increased opportunities for employment and expanded property tax base.
- Increase region's access to resources for economic development initiatives.
- Coordinate public transportation needs to improve regional public transportation options for workers, shoppers, students, tourists, and special needs populations.
- Continue to build the economic support structure to grow and sustain our region.
- Work with industry, entrepreneurs, and public entities to ensure a qualified and available workforce and training opportunities to meet rapidly changing needs.

Loan Fund Recapitalization and Access to Capital

During this planning grant reporting period, MCEDD applied for three USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grants and one grant through Washington CTED for a microenterprise program to fund revolving loan programs. The recapitalization efforts focused on counties without a traditional large base for lending through MCEDD's programs. Those with lesser dollar amounts available include Klickitat, Skamania and Sherman counties. Of those three, Klickitat has the least dollars available, being ineligible for National Scenic Area loan funds and Oregon specific lending accounts.

The first application was a \$475,000 request specific to Hood River County in relation to a presidential disaster declaration. The application was denied. Although the need for funding exists, the County did not competitively compete in relation to economic indicators such as unemployment. Additionally, the amount of the request was large in relation to the average funding level.

The second application for new RLF funding was specific to Klickitat County, Washington. The request was for a \$99,000 ARRA USDA-RBEG grant with \$50,000 committed in local matching funds. The commitment of cash matching funds provided a strong showing of support from the County as our partner in this effort. While ARRA funding was not available, the application was rolled into the regular round of funding and the application received favorable review. Final paperwork will be completed in April for funding.

The third application was developed in partnership with Sherman County, Oregon. Sherman County committed \$50,000 in matching funds to support development of a new RLF. Leveraging that match, MCEDD applied for a USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant. We are still awaiting the outcome.

For all of the applications, strong letters of support were provided by government partners and small business owners. With more than a dozen letters of support from private businesses for the three applications, it highlighted a relationship MCEDD enjoys with the region and private businesses. We are particularly proud of this strong showing of support.

To further support our funds, we worked with the Loan Administration Board to request a merger of three of our loan funds through EDA to realize a reduction in administrative expenses. These three loan funds operate under the same RLF plan, have compatible lending areas as they are all fully revolved funds and available in our five-county area, and all are administered by MCEDD staff with direction from the MCEDD Loan Administration Board.



In addition to recapitalization of our own funds, MCEDD manages the Oregon Investment Board and has partnered with the Washington Investment Board to begin looking at recapitalizing those funds. Both Boards and staff are very active in managing the funds and seeking new funding.

MCEDD also added another loan committee member, Scott Clements, to provide broader representation of the region. Scott is experienced in lending, so brings a positive background to the position when reviewing loan fund applications. In addition, he has worked extensively with the tribes, increasing our outreach.

Finally, the MCEDD Board focused this year, on our strategy related to outreach to minority and women-owned businesses for our business lending practices. Basic marketing materials were translated into Spanish and we engaged in a partnership with Nuestra Comunidad Sana to support increasing the level of awareness for Latino business owners to access funds. While going through the process, staff also calculated the fiscal year OIB and MCEDD loan portfolio ratios in relation to demographics based on both the dollar amounts lent and based on the number of loans:

Comparison of FY 2009 Loans to Regional Demographics			
	Region	Portfolio (#)	Portfolio (\$)
Minority	14.35%	27.78%	17.16%
Woman	50.22%	50.00%	64.79%

Calculations for the portfolio exclude government loans. Loans which are classified as both minority- and woman-owned businesses are used in the calculations for both categories

Accomplishments: Provide assistance for local economic development related activities and act as a liaison between appropriate Oregon, Washington and federal interests

- Create family-wage employment opportunities
- Promote growth, development and retention of businesses and industry within the region
- Support growing industry cluster initiatives, including representative groups in renewable energy (CGBREZ) and technology (Gorge Tech Alliance)
- Continue to coordinate transportation needs to improve inter-city public transportation
- Provide economic development support to counties within the region, filling in gaps and providing services for which they lack the capacity or resources to fill

Columbia Gorge Bi-State Renewable Energy Zone

MCEDD worked with members of the five counties to continue development of the Columbia Gorge Bi-State Renewable Energy Zone (CGBREZ). This self-declared zone was created to reduce the region's dependency on federal subsidies, bring economic vitality to the region, establish a national model for energy self-sufficiency, and provide a model of self-reliance for other rural economies in the 21st Century. CGBREZ resolutions have been passed by all five counties, a logo has been developed, and each participating county has passed a collective set of priorities. Monthly CGBREZ meetings provide a forum for county leaders to discuss potential collaborations in renewable energy projects and developments.

Directly through this planning grant, MCEDD has engaged in a regional marketing effort to attract manufacturing and small scale wind development to the region, using the CGBREZ brand. The regional Columbia Gorge collaborative pooled technical and financial resources to develop an exhibit booth in May 2009. With over 8,000 components in each wind turbine, the growing wind industry presents additional economic opportunities which the booth was designed to attract. The booth was designed primarily to connect to component manufacturers for the wind industry and to meet with research and development companies. The first show was at the American Wind Energy Association Windpower (AWEA) 2009 conference in Chicago. This regional partnership between Oregon and Washington in the Columbia River Gorge won a Best of Tradeshow award. It has since been used at the "Powering the Northwest" conference, Goldendale Energy Show, and circulated among the counties for county fairs. The region gathered again in 2010 to prepare for the AWEA conference in Dallas in May 2010. Engaging in this effort, we are acting in partnership with Team Oregon. MCEDD staff worked with the region in this effort to identify available industrial lands, map existing development, and develop a list of incentives for the region.



CGBREZ- Miland Walling with AWEA president

For work in developing this unique partnership, MCEDD won the 2010 Outstanding Special District Program Achievement award, presented by the Special Districts Association of Oregon at their annual conference in February. The award recognizes innovative projects and programs, outstanding safety, public information, public involvement in a district decision making process, and outstanding achievement. Paul Pearce, Skamania County Commissioner stated in response to the award, "As one of the counties partnering on the formation of CGBREZ, we view it as a way to engage in a regional dialogue and create additional opportunities for job creation."



Mobility Management and Gorge TransLink

During the reporting period for this planning grant, MCEDD has hired a Mobility Manager to focus on regional transportation issues. MCEDD's Mobility Manager worked closely with regional transportation providers from Hood River, Sherman, Wasco, Klickitat and Skamania counties, to assess the type of services passengers receive, ridership data, costs associated with services, funding needs, technology improvements and areas for potential coordination. MCEDD's goal is to enhance current transportation systems by improving coordination to deliver services efficiently and respond to additional community needs by implementing complementary services. Following assessment, the Mobility Manager has engaged in the following:

- Organizing a working group to develop a concept for bicycle and pedestrian usage of the Port of Hood River Non-Motorized Bridge Crossing utilizing shuttles
- Creating an Employer Transportation Resource Manual
- Developing a matrix of Transportation Resources
- Serving on multiple taskforce to address and coordinate veterans transportation issues
- Hosting Gorge TransLink meetings with the five public providers
- Generating a social media policy, regional map, and updated website
- Researching scheduling software
- Initiating discussions between Oregon and Washington departments of transportation to discuss bi-state funding to enhance coordination between our transit systems

Transportation Summit

During this reporting period, MCEDD in partnership with several regional agencies have formed a steering committee to plan logistics for the upcoming 2010 Columbia Gorge Transportation Summit. The steering committee has met monthly and focused its efforts on developing the event's vision and goals, target date and site, budget and fundraising goals, speaker detail list and collective marketing plan under the Future Forum Transportation Brand with Columbia Gorge Commission. The main focus of the Summit is on collaborative efforts, cross pollination of ideas and implementation of

transportation options to support the regional economy. We have engaged with the University of Oregon LiveMove program to provide support in facilitation and moderation of the Summit.

The Summit will be hosted in April 2010. MCEDD anticipates the outcome of the Summit will lead to improved regional transportation coordination and the development of vanpool and rideshare programs which will increase regional access to employment, healthcare, education and training.

Broadband

Broadband is a critical issue affecting the development of our rural area. Although there are multiple technical solutions to provide broadband capacity, there is a high cost associated with any solution. Therefore, particularly for remote and rural areas, federal financial resources are often necessary to reach outlying households. MCEDD provides a regional coordinating mechanism and as such, when federal financial resources became available through ARRA, MCEDD was positioned to support regional ARRA applications.

MCEDD acted as the fiscal agent for the Oregon Business Cooperative to develop a business plan for feasibility of statewide wi-max deployment. Detailed engineering/infrastructure plans and GIS mapping were initially completed for the Wasco, Sherman and Hood River County areas which constitute the pilot area to help in determining statewide feasibility. The consultant continued work towards a statewide plan including engineering, further mapping, cultivation of support for a larger scale project grant application as well as a separate plan for a smaller service area focused on Hood River, Wasco and Sherman County on behalf of QLife. Funding was sought through USDA RBEG, Community Connect Grant, and ARRA funds for BIP/BTOP. A final business plan was developed under the Greenwire business model, but was changed to a focus on middle-mile applications rather than complete border-to-border coverage to provide a feasible model for implementation.

MCEDD will also be hosting the 2010 Oregon Connections Telecommunications conference through this planning grant. The MCEDD Board agreed to act as the host and provide logistical support for the conference, recognizing the importance of showcasing our region and establishing an opportunity for our region to participate in the conference. We developed a booth for the 2009 conference to provide an overview of our region and our telecommunications structure. (Jessica served on the panel). Two MCEDD staff members currently serve on the advisory committee for the 2010 conference.

Finally, MCEDD has been involved in broadband activities with our Washington counties in coordination with Washington State University



Horizons program. We supported them in the development of an initial telecommunications learning conference which will be held in April.

Business Assistance

One of MCEDD's most successful economic development strategies in supporting the creation of family wage jobs is the revolving loan fund programs. Under the planning grant, we have strengthened relationships with local businesses, chambers of commerce, nonprofits focusing on the needs of small businesses, the Mid-Columbia Microenterprise Referral Program, and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Eric Nerdin, MCEDD Loan Fund Manager, now sits on the SBDC Advisory Committee and is an active participant in that committee.

A unique opportunity available to our region for business assistance which is managed by MCEDD is the Oregon Investment Board. MCEDD has provided administration for the program which offers grants and loans in the National Scenic Area. All of the OIB programs are geared towards job creation, supported an increasing tax base for the region, focusing particularly on traded sector, and promoting economic development that matches the regional advantages and interacts cooperatively with the environment.

Finally, the MCEDD region enjoys an opportunity for businesses to seek financing through Angel Investment. MCEDD, with the Small Business Development Center, began discussions with Hood River Economic Development to consider expansion of the Gorge Angel PubTalks. The first PubTalk outside of Hood River occurred in November in The Dalles. MCEDD has also been working with the Small Business Development Center, Hood River County Economic Development and the Oregon Entrepreneur Network to increase support and access for entrepreneurs in the region through the second Gorge Angel Conference. The second Angel conference will be held in April 2010. Three companies will present pitches for a grand prize provided by the Gorge Angel Investor Network (GAIN). Through the OIB, MCEDD supported the conference in sponsorship support. The growth of an active angel investor network is essential for providing an alternative source of capital and expertise for entrepreneurs.

Gorge Technology Alliance

The Gorge Technology Alliance contracts with MCEDD to provide project management assistance for the organization. In 2009, the Board initiated development of an organizational Sustainability Plan to improve its ability to promote the Gorge's technology business sector. MCEDD staff assisted the Board in obtaining a grant from the Oregon Investment Board and a USDA Rural Development Rural Business Enterprise Grant to help fund this work. Original research on the growth of the regional tech sector has been compiled into a White Paper and was followed by development of a financial plan, work plan and marketing materials.



MCEDD staff also assisted the Board in securing a grant from Google for a Technology Education Program. The youth portion, developed in partnership with the Columbia Gorge Robotics Club, purchased robotics kits and supported the development of a Gorge robotics program. The adult portion will bring four expert speakers in technological innovations to address Gorge audiences in a Leading Edge of Technology Series. The first of those two happened in January and March 2010 with a presentation of Green Technologies by Bill Wiehl, Energy Czar for Google, and a presentation of agricultural technologies by Clark Seavert with OSU extension.

MCEDD staff has been working consistently with the Gorge Technology Alliance (GTA) on monthly educational programs and conducting programs in conjunction with the Software Association of Oregon (SAO). This year, the GTA made a number of significant strides with MCEDD's assistance.



Wasco Economic Development

Since 2008, Wasco County has contracted with MCEDD to provide economic development services to the County. Through this service MCEDD staff:

- Participated in the Oregon Solutions process for the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center and completed a business plan to help the museum achieve sustainability
- Assisted several local projects in applying for funding, including a well for the Wasco County Fairgrounds and restrooms at Dufur Park
- Worked with the Economic Development Commission (ECC) on identification and completion of projects intended to support and develop the County's economy, including a PubTalk event in The Dalles in November to foster entrepreneurship
- Developed a business siting guide
- Provided referrals and followed business leads
- Contacting property owners with industrially zoned sites in the County to get them listed in Oregon Prospector
- Conducted a tour of the County for the EDC and County Court to validate and provide coordination for the Needs and Issues process

Sherman Economic Development

Since 2005, Sherman County has contracted with MCEDD to provide economic development services. MCEDD has assisted in collaborative efforts between the county and cities and also between these entities and the new racetrack in Grass Valley. MCEDD has also:

- Initiated a business retention program
- Worked to develop industrial and recreational areas in the City of Rufus
- Completed a business plan for a local nonprofit
- Developed a wind farm driving tour of the County

Accomplishments: Provide technical assistance for grant writing and administration and access to region-wide demographic and statistical data

- Provide monthly updates on grant resources and regional statistics via an electronic newsletter to regional partners
- Maintain resource databases of grant sources

Grant Administration

MCEDD offers resources to the region in the administration of federal grants: assisting in environmental assessments, record keeping, labor standards compliance, and reporting. We retain qualified staff; providing pooled technical assistance for small communities without the capacity to administer grants with state and federal requirements. Currently, we are engaging with communities facing needs related to federal labor standards compliance for ARRA-funded projects.

During this granting period, MCEDD completed administration for two Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects: an emergency services building in Cascade Locks, Oregon and a fire hall/community center in the High Prairie community outside of Lyle, Washington. We also began administration of multiple ARRA-funded projects.

High Prairie Fire Hall and Community Center

The High Prairie Fire Hall and Community Center completed construction. Washington Community Trade and Economic Development Department initially awarded Klickitat County a \$389,000 Community Development Block Grant in 2006. With MCEDD's assistance, the Fire District was able to secure \$211,000 in additional funding. The station includes vehicle bays for the fire department, a community center, and bathrooms.



Cascade Locks Fire Station

The Cascade Locks Fire Station successfully completed construction of a new fire station at 100 SE WaNaPa Street. Oregon Economic and Community Development Department awarded the City of Cascade Locks a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant in 2006. This funding was used to construct a new station to replace the existing station which was structurally unsound and too small to hold all of the City's emergency vehicles. Final grant administration aspects will be complete in FY 2009/2010. Major support was provided by Finance and Operations Manager, Sherry Wickert, in monitoring labor standards, including monthly interviews with an individual representing each trade, review of certified payroll reports, and working with contractors to address shortages. She developed a highly regarded tracking system that supports an ease in state monitoring of the project.



City of The Dalles Safe Drinking Water

City of The Dalles received funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 from the Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund for their Terminal Reservoir project, an approximately \$8.2 million project. MCEDD engaged in an intergovernmental agreement to provide labor standards administration and ensure compliance with ARRA requirements. The project is scheduled to begin in April 2010.

Oregon Department of Energy

In partnership with the Association of Oregon Economic Development Districts, MCEDD is working with the Oregon Department of Energy to provide grant administration services. Currently, anticipating working with seven projects. Three of those are underway with the Hood River County School District.

Grant Resources:

In addition to providing grant administration, MCEDD acts as a regional clearinghouse for information on grants and actively participates in local economic development granting agencies such as Mount Hood Economic Alliance and the Oregon and Washington Investment Boards. As staff, we began working with the National Scenic Area Bi-State Advisory Council to update the management plans for the Washington and Oregon Investment Boards and their loan and grant programs. MCEDD also invested in GrantStation to provide a tool for searching for new grant opportunities.

Newsletter and Statistics

MCEDD produces a monthly newsletter for the region with notes of upcoming events, relevant statistics, information on grant opportunities, and information about MCEDD programs. These are distributed to an email list of over 700 individuals and posted to our website for viewing. MCEDD staff also continues to maintain the existing website (www.mcedd.org) which is updated with current regional labor information and regional demographic data. MCEDD also produces a monthly newsletter

MCEDD also continues to work cooperatively with workforce development organizations in Washington and Oregon, maintaining a listserv for workforce and economic development partners. We worked with the University of Oregon this year to transfer maintenance of the e-group to their server.

Grant Writing:

MCEDD is a regional clearinghouse for information on grants and actively participates in local economic development granting agencies such as Mount Hood Economic Alliance and the Oregon and Washington Investment Boards. MCEDD also invested in GrantStation to provide a tool for searching for new grant opportunities. Grant services have included this year:

Discovery Center

The Oregon Solutions process for the Discovery Center was convened to help the financially-stretched facility. MCEDD staff assisted the Discovery Center in obtaining an Oregon Investment Board grant to help fund the process and participated in the meetings. Through MCEDD's involvement with Wasco County Economic Development, staff was contracted to pull together the pieces of a business plan for the Discovery Center and pledged further grant writing assistance.

The Dalles Urban Renewal

MCEDD's Loan Fund Manager renewed services to provide support for The Dalles Urban Renewal program. This year he worked with applicants including the Wonderworks Children's Museum.

Oregon Investment Board

MCEDD provides grant writing and administration support for the Oregon Investment Board, coordinating both their grant and loan programs. Through the Oregon Investment Board, funding is available for economic development related purposes for businesses and organizations within the National Scenic Area on the Oregon side of the river. Since its inception, the Oregon Investment Board has awarded more than \$1.4 million in grants and more than \$4.5 million in loans. These projects have resulted in businesses creating or retaining more than 300 jobs. OIB funds have leveraged more than \$10,000,000 in private investment and \$11,000,000 in public investment.

Accomplishments: Work closely with the Economic Development Representative and EDA staff to develop future potential economic development projects

MCEDD enjoys an ongoing relationship with the EDA staff and particularly our local representatives. Our local EDR has been a tremendous resource for economic development activities in our region with a visit to primary areas in our region during his initial tour: viewing the active clusters, industrial zoned properties, aluminum facilities that were seeking reutilization, the regional airport and community college, and more. In a second tour of the region, he met with critical stakeholders and viewed projects at the Columbia Gorge Community College and the Columbia Gorge regional airport.

Projects

MCEDD supports communities exploring options for EDA funding, focusing on the regional priorities established in our CEDS. MCEDD supported applications through the various stages, many of which are ongoing since last planning grant:

- Columbia Gorge Community College Workforce Training Center: A LEED certified building that would house portions of the Renewable Energy Training program
- Hood River Economic Development Action Plan
- The Dalles Marine Terminal: Reconnecting the community with the river, utilizing existing EDA investment, and creating opportunities for business expansion and tourism.
- Port of Hood River: Infrastructure and waterfront expansion
- Port of Klickitat Industrial Park expansion
- Columbia Gorge Regional Airport: Industrial expansion

OEDD Association

MCEDD supported the Oregon Economic Development District Association through development and maintenance of a website (<http://www.oedd.org>). We also maintained the OEDD listserv to facilitate communication among members and worked with the University of Oregon to transfer the site for improved technical support. Staff also participates in discussions with the Association as it serves to improve our district through the networking between District staff, dissemination of legislative information, updates and contacts, ability to compete for statewide contracts, collective marketing opportunities, and peer learning and capacity building

WEDD Association

The Washington Economic Development District Association is in the early stages of establishment and MCEDD staff has been attending meetings to provide perspective from the Oregon experience, offer advice, and engage with our Washington partners.

Conclusions

The EDA planning grant for the period April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010 was essential to the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) region to coordinate economic development activities. The region has struggled through downturns in the economy after one of our major industry partners, Northwest Aluminum closed its doors. However, over the past few years with the assistance of activities undertaken through the planning grant, MCEDD has supported a diversification of the regional economy that has helped temper the current national economic downturn. This year, The Dalles site of the Northwest Aluminum plant is in the process of being prepared for new development, opening up more than 100 acres of industrial property. The Goldendale plant is being heavily marketed, particularly for renewable energy uses. The traditional economic base of agriculture, timber, and metals manufacturing is being augmented by high technology, tourism, small business entrepreneurs, and renewable energy. We still continue to face high unemployment throughout the region and underemployment in some areas, but with the assistance of EDA are offering proactive solutions with our partners to promote economic development.

All areas of the scope of work have been addressed. Significant accomplishments have been achieved in each area, and work will continue as we move forward in this next year with EDA support of our new planning grant. With the assistance from EDA, MCEDD continues to grow and is increasing the amount of assistance and impact in this five-county region. The administrative support provided by this planning grant is vital to our region. MCEDD is the regional entity that brings together other partners to enable all of us to work together toward common goals.

APPRECIATION

MCEDD would like to thank the Economic Development Administration for supporting the development of our five counties. We would also like to thank our partners providing financial support in this effort:

Counties:

Hood River County
Sherman County
Wasco County
Klickitat County
Skamania County

Cities:

City of Antelope
City of Dufur
City of Maupin
City of Mosier
City of Shaniko
City of The Dalles
City of Stevenson
City of Hood River
City of Cascade Locks
City of North Bonneville

Ports:

Port of Hood River
Port of The Dalles
Port of Klickitat
Port of Skamania
Port of Cascade Locks

Other Partner Funding Sources:

Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Oregon Investment Board
U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development
Sherman County Economic Development
Wasco County Economic Development Commission
Columbia Gorge Community College
Columbia Gorge Economic Development Association
Gorge Technology Alliance and member businesses
Oregon Business Development Department
Washington Community Trade and Economic Development
Ford Family Foundation
Oregon Department of Energy
Oregon Department of Transportation
Washington Department of Transportation
Hood River County Transportation District
Mid-Columbia Council of Governments
Transportation Summit: Insitu, Northwest Natural, CenturyLink, Mt Hood Meadows, VPSI
Pacific Power
enXco
Travel Oregon