

NW Oregon Economic Resilience

Current State of Resiliency:
Strengths

Not a stranger to economic downturns or significant natural disasters, NW Oregon economic resiliency is a complex adaptive system with steady-state and responsive mechanisms in place. When traditional natural resource-based industries began to decline, local industry invested in new technologies to reach new markets. Major weather events resulting in catastrophic flooding and storm damage have resulted in the development of rapid response emergency protocols and new resiliency in infrastructure. By necessity, economic resiliency is foundational to the NW Oregon’s CEDS, and a basic tenet to the region’s planning and project implementation. Key to this economic resiliency is NW Oregon’s:

- ✚ Strong, Integrated Economic Development Service Delivery System—Local capacity throughout the region is established and experienced, providing on-the-ground business intelligence and support. The civilian response is knowledgeable and engaged. Issues are identified early on and responded in coordination with Col-Pac and the Governor’s NW Oregon Regional Solutions Team.
- ✚ Available Business Development Infrastructure—NW Oregon has available, move-in and building-ready commercial, light industrial and industrial lands. This availability provides NW Oregon with the ability and flexibility to continue to diversify the local and regional economies, while providing in-region options for retaining businesses looking to grow and expand.
- ✚ Future-Based Land Use and Public Infrastructure Development—All new public infrastructure is built to be disaster-resilient and with the capacity to meet 20–40 year demand forecasts. All of NW Oregon’s public entities have established local priorities for infrastructure updating in their Capital Improvement and Comprehensive Land Use Plans.
- ✚ History of Economic Resiliency—During the 2008–2012 Recession, NW Oregon’s counties did not have the same level of business downturn as our metropolitan neighbors. In part, this is because the region’s economy is based on more traditional industries which have the capacity to weather economic change.
- ✚ County Emergency Management Plans Coordinated with Oregon’s Resiliency Plan—In NW Oregon, these plans have already had actual disaster use and are updated following each event with new protocols.



<p>Current State of Resiliency:</p> <p>Vulnerabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ <u>Aging Public Infrastructure</u>—While the region steadily updates and upgrades its water, sewer, waste water and transportation infrastructure, there is still much to do. NW Oregon’s rural infrastructure hasn’t kept pace with the demands and impacts of urban visitation surges. Costs to managing and updating the region’s complex adaptive infrastructure system are great enough that it will take decades to complete the improvements. The upside is that development on vacant properties is paying for bringing in upgraded utilities, a protection for new business activity. ✚ <u>Labor Shortages</u>—Lack of workers is already limiting expansion and development of North Coast fish processors and staffing restaurants and retail in the visitor industry. Trucking and the construction trades, two vital industries to NW Oregon’s economic sustainability, are losing workers to retirement. ✚ <u>Lack of Housing for the NW Oregon Workforce</u>—While this issue is currently being addressed, it remains a vulnerability for the region. Particularly in the event of a major natural disaster that displaces workers and their families. Studies have shown that following major disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, many displaced residents never return.
<p>Enhancing NW Oregon’s Economic Resiliency:</p> <p>Steady-State Measures to Make the Regional Economy More Resilient</p>	<p>Activities outlined in NW Oregon’s CEDS Action Plan are not only designed to grow and diversify the economy, they are also designed to make the region more resistant to economic upheaval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Clustering development around industry hubs such as the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center in Scappoose. This hub is bringing in additional business development, adding innovative technology, and providing local jobs for workers currently commuting outside the county—all critical to long-term economic sustainability. ✚ Updating public infrastructure and land use—Success stories: Relocating the Vernonia Schools to a new school campus to higher ground, following the devastating 2007 flood—A \$40 million project that involved Federal, State, County, local, private and non-profit sectors and private fundraising. Rehabilitation of the Port of Garibaldi’s wharf, following the same storm. An \$8 million project, the wharf is now fully leased out, generating new revenues for the commercial fishing fleet, local business owners, and bringing in new visitor industry activity. Preserving a vibrant downtown retail core, the City of Tillamook has designated high flood zone areas for mobile retail activity such as food cart pods. ✚ Increasing workforce training—Clatsop Community College and Small Business Development Center is coordinating an apprenticeship program with local employers and high school youth, with the goal of adding more skilled workers into the labor force. This apprenticeship program will be rolled out to the other counties in NW Oregon over the next three years. Tillamook Bay Community College is working with local companies such



	<p>as the Tillamook Creamery, and with the Port of Tillamook Bay to provide certified truck driving training, to replace drivers lost to retirement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Expanding public-private partnership for funding new business development. In Scappoose, the land owner is underwriting some of the infrastructure developmental costs of the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center. In Astoria, public-private partnerships are being explored for developing the Port’s East Mooring basin. ✚ Addressing the workforce housing shortages. Housing assessment studies have been completed in Columbia and Tillamook counties, with Clatsop County’s housing assessment to be completed by the end of 2018.
<p>Enhancing NW Oregon’s Economic Resiliency:</p> <p>Responsive Measures to Make the Region</p>	<p>Responsive measures are those that ensure the region’s recovery needs will be met following an economic or natural disaster. NW Oregon’s CEDS Action Plan specifically calls out the role of Col-Pac in coordinating a regional response. Actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Bringing together local emergency management staff to identify critical paths and efficiencies for coordinating services across jurisdictions and establish lines of communication. ✚ Identifying and plan for Emergency Response and Recovery Hubs, which will provide after-disaster services and housing for displaced residents, giving them a reason for remaining in the County. ✚ Identifying priority road improvements to ensure emergency response and access to employment areas by resident workers. ✚ Planning for better utilization of existing public facilities for use following a major natural disaster.

