



2018-2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CLARK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

WHAT IS IT?

Leaders representing cities, ports, education institutions, downtown associations, chambers and businesses across Clark County created the CREDC Economic Development Strategy over a nine-month period. The Plan is a “playbook” for all of Clark County to grow the local economy. It is a document that aligns goals, objectives and actions to achieve the following community vision:

THE VISION

Clark County is one of the most inclusive, healthy, and amenity-rich communities in the country. With a continued focus to grow a diverse base of community-minded employers, talent (inside and outside the region) sees greater opportunity here than anywhere else in the country.

GOAL 1: EXPAND THE EXISTING BUSINESS BASE

The most efficient way to grow the economic base is to support the existing companies by understanding, and resolving, their barriers to growth and supply chain needs. CREDC and its partners will focus strategic efforts on the following industries within the county to grow and diversify the economy:

- Computer and Electronics
- Clean Tech
- Software
- Metals and Machinery
- Life Sciences

Objective 1.1 *Become Industry Experts*

Objective 1.2 *Strategically Market Industry Clusters*

Objective 1.3 *Build a Startup Ecosystem*

GOAL 2: SUPPORT PEOPLE

Talent is the number one asset and driver for businesses in deciding where to expand and grow. A community that easily attracts talent has a significant competitive advantage for a robust economy. For communities to thrive, they must build and maintain a safe and welcoming environment for all residents. CREDC and county partners will work toward equity in all aspects of economic development endeavors by focusing on access and eliminating barriers to opportunities.

Objective 2.1 *Foster Skills Development*

Objective 2.2 *Prepare Youth for Economic Opportunity*

Objective 2.3 *Launch a Brain Gain Initiative*

Objective 2.4 *Promote an Ethical and Socially Just Society Through an Intentional Commitment to Inclusion, Equity and Diversity*

GOAL 3: CREATE PLACE

A livable community through a healthy Main Street, traditional downtown or town centers in suburbs is important for employers to be able to attract and keep talent. CREDC and county partners will work with each community to define and actively grow distinct places unique to their values.

Objective 3.1 *Each Community Creates a Placemaking Strategy*

Objective 3.2 *Embrace Economic Opportunity in Our Urban Center*

Objective 3.3 *CREDC Tells the Story of Place*

Objective 3.4 *Make Employment Areas Desired by Industry Clusters Shovel Ready*

Objective 3.5 *Determine All Transportation Needs on a Regional Level that Specifically Support Economic Development*

These goals will be achieved by implementing focused actions with clear roles, responsibilities and deadlines for completion over a five-year timeframe (2018-2023). The Strategy and Action Plan can be found here: credc.org/strategic-initiatives

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

The Plan engages partners across the county from numerous organizations to grow the economy and foster equity. It takes everyone to achieve the vision; some ideas are listed below.

Businesses: Join companies already leading the way to expand internship offerings and other career connected learning opportunities for students in partnership with local school districts. Build your future workforce and help students gain the critical skills they need to thrive.

Cities: Discover and embrace your unique qualities. Encourage new development of brew pubs, coffee shops, transit, bike lanes and housing to attract new talent to the area.

Entrepreneurs: Help build the startup ecosystem as a mentor and “connector” to welcome and support growing companies within Clark County through targeted events.

Residents: Become an “ambassador” for Clark County. Find out why Clark County is a great place for business through the Community Performance Indicator with fast facts and messages to share.

A sincere **thank you** to our dedicated Steering Committee who spent extensive time each month throughout 2017 to create, refine, and thoroughly review every step of this Plan:

Jeanne Bennett, Workforce SW Washington
Michelle Erickson, Umpqua Bank
Eric Holmes, City of Vancouver
Carolyn Long, WSU Vancouver
Mel Netzhammer, WSU Vancouver
Julie Olson, Clark County
David Ripp, Port of Camas-Washougal
Jeff Swanson, City of Battle Ground
Casey Wyckoff, LSW Architects
Wayne Yeh, WaferTech

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