

2024

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Prepared for the 2024 Washington State Legislative Session



The following State Legislative Agenda is prepared by the Columbia River Economic Development Council's Policy and Legislation Committee and its partners to inform Southwest Washington legislators on the alignment between proposed policies and projects with the Clark County Comprehensive Economic Development Plan.

Business Attraction and Engagement

- Support state-level leadership and funding for associate development organizations' work in Business Recruitment, Retention/Engagement, & Expansion [State]
 - \$5 million Small Business Innovation Fund (supplemental budget) to bolster business services (addressing needs amplified through the pandemic)
- Renew and preserve state-level business attraction and retention tools that support semiconductor and microelectronics industry manufacturing competitiveness
 - Seek redefinition of "semiconductor manufacturing" by WA Department of Revenue to align with definitions in USG agencies' published CHIPS Act funding opportunities
- Call for more state matching funds to improve Washington's ability to leverage federal grant investment; seek underlined commitment by the Governor's Office for deployment of Strategic Reserve Funds that support economic development

Infrastructure that Facilitates Business Activity

- Support state public works programs designed to help recover and expand businesses including: Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB), Public Works Trust Fund and the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB)
- Protect the TIF for Jobs tool (2021) now activated/under exploration by 10 jurisdictions
- Support the Port of Vancouver's pursuit of design and engineering funding for the Terminal 1 Marketplace, the next phase of the waterfront development project (\$1.5 million)
- Support and protect investments in road and transit infrastructure, maintenance, and services to move people and freight more efficiently [State/Federal]
- Continue to grow knowledge and inform community members on the capacity and infrastructure needed to deliver quality, reliable, affordable utilities to companies; advocate for additional tools that help utilities districts support business-serving utilities infrastructure

- Prioritize Interstate Bridge Replacement (Federal/State) funding and necessary improvements that include more lanes, high-capacity transit, improved freight mobility, seismic support, and dedicated pathways for bicycle and pedestrian traffic --a combination of federal funds and state funds from Washington and Oregon as well as tolls will fund the project
- Support West Camas Slough Bridge widening (\$45 million)

Investment that Fortifies Talent Cultivation

- Support the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' (SBCTC) call for funding for Clean Buildings Act code compliance.
- Continue to address the Special Education Funding Shortfall, taking steps toward full funding.
- Fully fund the Prototypical Model and Staff Allocation Formulas to support a thriving K-12 school district, teacher, student, family ecosystem.
- Support the WSU-Vancouver/WSU-Everett proposed \$2.15 Million ask to stand up a supply chain major within the existing umbrella of business programs
- Renew funding for the state's Child Care Partnership Grant
- [Placeholder for consolidated WA Workforce Association input]