

MISSION

Facilitating new and existing business growth through leadership and action.

VISION

Cowlitz County is a dynamic and prosperous community in which to live, work, and play.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Proactive
- Advocate
- Collaborate
- Responsive
- Innovate

GOALS

A	B	C	D	E	
Business Recruitment	Business Start-Up Expansion, and Retention	Quality of Place	Workforce	Organizational Leadership	
<i>New businesses choose to locate in Cowlitz County.</i>	<i>Local businesses and entrepreneurs of all sizes are successful and increase revenues, profitability, jobs and investment.</i>	<i>People choose to live, work, and play in Cowlitz County communities.</i>	<i>Cowlitz County businesses have the workforce they need and incumbent and prospective workers have education and training they need.</i>	<i>The CEDC is a catalyst for business and community investment and innovation.</i>	
METRICS BY GOAL					
METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of companies recruited Number of jobs created Average wage Capital invested Increased County assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of start-up businesses Number of business expansions, companies retained, and business closures Number of jobs created, retained, or lost Capital invested in start-ups or business expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new quality of place businesses Number new businesses locating in downtowns \$ invested in community capital improvements \$ in lodging tax revenue Number of next generation leaders engaged in the CEDC's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new workers trained Number of incumbent workers trained and placed Number of jobs created and filled Amount of workforce training dollars leveraged Number of businesses whose training needs are met Number of companies who receive information on workforce and training resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of members by size and type Membership revenue Board diversity reflects the community The community understands the efforts and results of the CEDC
GOAL ANALYSIS					
STRENGTHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road, water, rail, airport Access to international trade channels 24/7 workforce Access to quality education and training resources Local community leaders are business friendly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available infrastructure Available small business development resources LCC's flexible approach to business training Business friendly environment Access to community leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor recreation and community events Lower Columbia College educational opportunities Quality of K-12 schools Growing theater and art community Cost of living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower Columbia College programs Available workforce training funds Strong relationship with workforce development partners Large pool of available 24/7 workers Large pool of underemployed workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive view of economic development Balanced public and private representation on board Diverse business representation on the board Strong public/private collaboration Solid investor base Committed board members
CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some industrial sites not shovel ready Regulatory impediments Lack of local professional/technical skilled workforce Perception that Washington State is too environmentally friendly Lack of awareness about where Cowlitz County is located and the benefits of doing business in Cowlitz County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception that the community has limited support for small businesses Perception about lack of access to investment capital Lack of start-up activity Lack of local workforce to meet expansion needs Unpredictability of permitting process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to recruit professional and technical workers to live here Limited higher-end dining and retail establishments Negative perception of K-12 does not match reality Population does not discretionary resources to support higher-end retail establishment Lack of development of downtown buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low bachelor degree attainment Lack of locally available professional/technical job candidates Lack of access to career and technical training for some K-12 students Difficult for businesses to access training funds Youth leave and don't return Aging workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception that CEDC only helps large and industrial businesses Lack of awareness of CEDC activities and results Aging board Gender diversity of the board does not reflect the community Unclear roles and responsibilities of board members in CEDC activities Lack of financial resources to execute mission
GAP ROOT CAUSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of funding for infrastructure improvements Lack of urban amenities Inadequate supply of workers qualified for professional/technical jobs Lack of county marketing plan Washington is a green-friendly state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most publicity focuses on large businesses Limited awareness of start-up and expansion resources Existing workforce is not adequately skilled for technical jobs Permitting process is not adequately understood or communicated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception that local community won't support higher-end dining and retail Proximity to other urban areas Lack of awareness about quality of schools Limited desirable housing for professional/technical workers High cost of redevelopment and lack of involvement by some property owners Lack of leadership for quality of place initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of place Lack of jobs requiring professional/technical education Advanced education is not valued by the community Lack of awareness about education and training opportunities Limited access to Career and Training Education (CTE) in some communities Requirements of training funds is cumbersome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cowlitz's history has been in the industrial sector Publicity is around high-profile, business recruitment projects Lack of internal systems for tracking activities and reporting results Lack of focused communications Business leadership in the community is largely older males

ACTION PLAN

		2014		2015			2016			2017				
WHAT WILL WE DO		Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
A Business Recruitment	Develop and implement a focused recruitment strategy that includes quality of place businesses.													
	Support efforts to ensure adequate infrastructure and shovel ready sites.													
	Raise awareness of economic development opportunities in Cowlitz County.													
B Business Start-Up Expansion, and Retention	Develop and communicate a coordinated small business development and support strategy.													
	Connect local businesses and start-ups to resources and funding to support their growth.													
	Provide publicity about the success of start-ups and small businesses.													
	Support improvements to the permitting process.													
C Quality of Place	Facilitate development and implementation of a quality of place strategy and initiatives for Cowlitz County communities.													
	Identify resources to support quality of place businesses.													
	Engage businesses, property owners, and the community to support quality of place initiatives and investments.													
	Promote quality of educational resources.													
	Engage the next generation of leaders in quality of place and economic development activities													
D Workforce	Support efforts to develop and strengthen educational, workforce development, and other training assets in Cowlitz County.													
	Educate community about the need for, and availability of, professional and technical training opportunities.													
	Facilitate businesses' access to educational and training resources.													
	Promote workforce strengths and resources in business recruitment, expansion, and start-up efforts													
	Support efforts to secure funding for training for incumbent and prospective workers.													
E Organizational Leadership	Develop internal tracking systems.													
	Develop and implement a CEDC communications strategy													
	Develop and implement a board and staff diversity and succession plan that includes next generation leaders													
	Expand membership base													
	Engage board members in CEDC initiatives													

DEVELOP IMPLEMENT SUSTAIN

RISKS & MITIGATION

Risks	Mitigation
Unable to identify the right leaders to push initiatives forward in a timely manner.	Proactively identify, develop, and/or recruit the right talent.
Failure to identify and engage the next generation of leaders.	Encourage existing leaders to identify and mentor the next generation of leaders.
Lack of overall community engagement in plan.	Engage business and community leaders in communicating and securing engagement from community members.
Community perception that environmental concerns about economic development projects halt progress.	Educate citizens and leaders about the benefits and risks of environmental safeguards of proposed projects.
Environmental policy changes do not support growth.	Proactively engage with legislators and share ideas on balancing environmental stewardship and economic benefits.