



Date: 10/21/20

To CWEDD Board, Staff, and Interested Parties
From Aniko Drlik-Muehleck and Melissa Graciosa, Institute for Policy Research & Engagement
SUBJECT **OCTOBER 2020 MEETING SUMMARY – IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE**

OVERVIEW

On October 15th, 2020, 20 members of the Cascades West Economic Development District (CWEDD) met to discuss updates to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The October meeting focused on creating updates to the Implementation Structure. A team from the University of Oregon’s Institute for Policy Research & Engagement (IPRE) facilitated the meeting. This was the third of the CWEDD CEDS update meetings.

Meeting Goals & Activities

The meeting had two main goals:

- Develop a shared understanding of how the CEDS is currently used to help inform an implementation structure that will better meet the needs and capacity of CWEDD and its economic development partners
- Brainstorm modifications to the CEDS Implementation Structure

To begin, the IPRE team reviewed the CEDS update project timeline. The IPRE team has begun to make updates to the SWOT and Action Plan chapters based on findings from the CEDS update meetings and data collected through surveys. A full draft of the CEDS is expected in December. Nick Meltzer, from Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) made an additional project announcement that potential changes to the vision and goal statements of the 2020 CEDS will be discussed at the next CWEDD board meeting.

Before diving into discussion about how the CEDS will be used in this next update cycle, the IPRE team reviewed responses to the Action Plan survey that was sent out September 17th, 2020. Next, an IPRE team member presented an overview of the CEDS purpose as described the Economic Development Administration. The meeting was then split into two groups for small group discussions; one group consisted of practitioners and the other was made up of elected officials and staff. Groups discussed how they interact and use the CEDS currently, how they would like to use the CEDS in the next 5 years and additional support and services needed to do so. Small groups returned to the main session to share insights from their break-out rooms.

Next, an IPRE team member reviewed the implementation structure as it is outlined in the 2015-2020 CEDS and shared initial findings from the October survey. IPRE team members facilitated two small group brainstorms on potential changes to the implementation structure focused on ways of supporting regional collaboration, accountability, and leveraging existing capacity. The meeting concluded with small groups returning to the main session and sharing key takeaways from their discussions.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The following sections of this memo summarize the discussion around CEDS use and ideas generated around implementation structure. Note that IPRE will summarize and share responses to the completed October survey prior to the November CEDS Update Meeting, but those responses are not included here since the survey will remain open through the end of October.

CEDS Use

Meeting attendees considered the use and purpose of the CEDS document as outlined by the EDA and compared its intended use to how it has been applied in the CWEDD region. In small groups, meeting attendees discussed the following prompts:

- How do you currently use the CEDS?
- How do you want to use the CEDS in the next five years?
- What support or services will you need in order to accomplish using the CEDS?

Overall, most meeting attendees affirmed that the CEDS is not a central document in their work within economic development. However, there is still energy around this update cycle with a strong desire to use the CEDS to support work that is already being done by practitioners, strengthen regional collaboration, and serve as a reference for aligning other economic development plans.

Current Use

- Prior to this update process, many meeting attendees did not know about or interact with the CEDS.
- Those who have been part of update cycles in the past noted that the CEDS is required by the EDA.
- Those familiar with the CEDS have not used it or been equipped with the tools/capacity to use it.
- The CEDS centralizes useful background information about the region for research purposes.
- A lot of the work that is outlined in the 2015-2020 CEDS document has been carried out by practitioners but has not been driven or aligned with the CEDS itself.

Future Use

- Meeting attendees want to be able to use the CEDS to stimulate and support regional collaboration efforts and increase access to federal funds.
- Local jurisdictions can use the CEDS during the development of their own strategic economic development plans in order to align their goals with broader regional goals, as appropriate.
- Practitioners discussed using the CEDS as a resource for presenting economic development priorities to different jurisdictional bodies.
- The CEDS should support the work that is currently being done by practitioners and create awareness of current economic development efforts.

Support and Services Needed

- Implementation of the CEDS will be supported by a plan that is clear, easy to use, and accessible.
- Meeting attendees agreed that increased awareness of the CEDS would support its use. Several ideas to increase awareness were posed to the group including increased web presence, targeted outreach, or a two-page explanation of what the CEDS is and how it can be applied.

- There is a need for a space, such as a webpage or platform, to share the work that is being done, what services are offered, or announcing existing needs.
- Additional resources for collaborative grant writing could support regional collaboration and avoid competition or duplicated efforts.
- Increased CWEDD staff and/or capacity could better support CEDS implementation.

Implementation Structure

Meeting attendees were asked to consider updates or changes to the implementation structure of the CEDS to improve regional collaboration, accountability, and leverage existing capacity. In small groups, meeting attendees discussed the following prompts:

- Should the working groups be organized by topic, geography, or other?
- Are these the correct topics? (Regional Economic Development Practitioners, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Workforce Development, Rural Development) What needs to be added? Taken away?
- Who should be on these working groups? (# of people, representation across elected officials, practitioners, and business leaders)
- Who is responsible for convening these groups and creating accountability?
- What structure will support communication between the CWEDD board and working groups and ultimately the implementation of the CEDS?

Overall, meeting attendees identified that the obstacles to regional collaboration double as the obstacles to CEDS implementation. Though there was no strong conclusion at the end of this brainstorm, there was a clearly identified need for leadership that can act to convene and coordinate the working groups of the CEDS.

Working Group Organization

- Meeting attendees liked the idea of maintaining the working groups by topic, however working by geography has been the default.
- Topical groups offer practitioners, who are often focused within their geographies, the opportunity to contribute their local knowledge to support regional collaboration.
- Meeting attendees noted suggestions for how to support working groups and keep them accountable for meeting. These suggestions included support from OCWCOG, LCOG, CWEDD, or other economic development groups such as RAIN.
- Meeting attendees identified that CEDS implementation would be more successful if there was a clearly identified convening body that had the appropriate capacity for outreach and regional coordination.

NEXT STEPS

The IPRE team will use the input from this meeting, from the survey, and from CWEDD staff to begin drafting updates to the implementation structure. The next meeting on **Thursday, Nov, 19th 2020 from 9-10:30 am** will primarily address updates to the CEDS implementation structure and metrics.

LIST OF MEETING ATTENDEES

For a full roster of meeting attendees with affiliations and contact information, visit <http://www.ocwcog.org/economic-development/cascades-west-economic-development-district/ceds/>

Attendees

Alysia Rodgers	Jerry Sorte	Matt Michael
Judy Richter	Mary Walston	Heather DeSart
Cindy Perry	Ed Dreistadt	Paul Shuytema
Chris Workman	Melissa Murphy	John Pascone
Corey Wright	Jerry Sorte	
Pat Malone	Jim Lepin	

CWEDD Staff

Justin Peterson
Mike Corwin
Nick Meltzer
Ryan Vogt

IPRE Staff

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