

The background is a vibrant green with a fine, woven texture. It features several overlapping circular shapes in various shades of green, creating a sense of depth and movement. The text is centered in a dark green horizontal band.

REGIONAL PROSPERITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Eugene, Springfield, Lane County

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Approved by the Joint Elected Officials on February 26, 2010

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MEETING THE CHALLENGE

The economic challenges of today are pressing and complex. Financial turmoil has rippled throughout the economy impacting households, driving job losses and threatening the viability of large and small businesses. Locally, job loss and unemployment have exceeded state and national averages. Households in our community have felt economic pain and are looking toward a more hopeful economic future.

The challenges are great, but our resources to meet these challenges are equally impressive: a diverse community of vigorous and nimble small businesses; a University that drives economic prosperity and technological innovation; an emerging green business sector that will play a key role in our economic future; and a well educated, trained and motivated workforce.

In response to the economic crisis the Joint Elected Officials came forward with an ambitious set of goals:

By 2020, create 20,000 net new jobs in the chosen economic opportunity areas; reduce the local unemployment rate to, or below the state average; and increase the average wage to or above the state average.

**Transforming ideas into enterprises.
Making the promise of a green economy a reality.
These are the key features of our future economy.**

City of Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy

The Joint Elected Officials (Eugene, Springfield and Lane County) have accepted the leadership challenge to engage the community and focus the region's creativity and resources to bring forward a shared vision of our economic future. It is a vision that meets the pressing economic problems of today while laying the foundation for a sustainable future based on efficient, competitive local business and emerging green innovation and technology.



Photo: Jeff Dimmick

THE SHORT LIST

1. The Business One-Stop

Lane Community College (LCC). With physical locations throughout the County, together with a creatively designed dynamic virtual center, the one-stop provides a well coordinated array of information, and tools assistance. Businesses get the assistance they need with planning, marketing, siting, financing and collaboration all in one location.

2. Innovation Incubators

University of Oregon and the Eugene Chamber of Commerce partner. Incubate innovation by using private and public networks and spaces. Incubation sites should be flexibly configured to meet a wide range of business needs including specialized laboratory space to support technological innovation. Follow the best practices of incubation to identify the top ten to twelve early-stage and growth-ready companies in our region and help them access resources that will grow their businesses.

3. Growing Green

UO, LCC, Eugene. Roll out a major initiative to encourage and support the formation and expansion of green, sustainable enterprises. These efforts will also focus on “greening” existing businesses to enhance performance, efficiency and competitiveness. This will be a coordinated effort focused out of the Business one Stop. Other partners would include The Lane Metro Partnership, The UO Center for Sustainable Business Practices and regional public financing programs.

4. A Learning Community

Lane Workforce Partnership. Active business-to-school partnerships between the business community and local schools will focus on work experience through internships and mentorships to provide young workers-to-be with valuable economic life skills.

5. Integrate Economic Development Goals

Eugene, Springfield and Lane County. Complete Eugene and Springfield work on comprehensive plans including 20 year supply of commercial and industrial lands, fully integrating consideration of economic development goals into these processes.

6. Shared Economic Identity

Travel Lane County. Develop and implement a strategic, coordinated identity campaign that integrates regional themes and is supported by institutions and businesses throughout their communications and messages.

7. High Tech – High Growth – High Green

Lane Metro Partnership, UO. Enterprise development and recruitment efforts are focused on emerging green businesses, technologies, and high job-growth sectors that have strong localized economic fundamentals and will increase local earning power.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE EMERGING ECONOMY

After setting clear goals, elected officials from the region established guiding principles to help shape strategies that align with the assets and values of our region.

Healthy Living

Champion businesses and entrepreneurs that promote a healthy, safe, and clean community while enhancing, protecting, and making wise use of our natural resources.

Ideas to Enterprise

Encourage a culture of entrepreneurship and re-investment into our local community.

Be Prepared

Develop the region's physical, social, educational, and workforce infrastructure to meet the needs of tomorrow.

Local Independence

Promote local businesses and entrepreneurs that lead our area to a higher level of economic independence and resilience.

Regional Identity

Create a stronger economic personality that celebrates our region's attributes and values.



NEXT ECONOMY STRATEGIES

The JEO formed a technical advisory group (TAG) of key business leaders and area partners to develop recommendations on how to move our regional economy forward. The TAG crafted a set of strategies and tactics that could influence economic development and provide a long-term plan for economic recovery and prosperity. The strategies were tested and discussed at a Regional Prosperity Summit held in November 2009. With over 300 participants, the Summit provided broad community input on regional economic development needs and initiatives that government leaders need to advance.

As a result of the work of the TAG and the Summit, the *Regional Prosperity Economic Development Plan* includes six key strategies:

Grow Local Opportunities

Energize a Creative Economy

Invest in Tomorrow's Talent

Provide Basic Business Needs

Identify as a Place to Thrive

Strengthen Key Industries

Tactics that provide a method for implementing each strategy and priority next steps were identified to provide a clear plan for job creation and economic growth.

Collectively, we move towards that which we believe to be true. If we believe we will be able to reap prosperity in this region, decrease unemployment, increase median income, we are encouraged and hopeful that we will move in that direction.

Jon Ruiz, Eugene City Manager



Photo: Rachell Coe

1. GROW LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES

Our region is an excellent environment to foster the start-up and growth of new enterprises. Exciting opportunities lie ahead in market segments where our advantages are clear: Green Business, Clean Tech, Software, Health, and Advanced Manufacturing. Building the success and competitiveness of local businesses is a fundamental strategy to create quality jobs as we move our economy forward. As a region, our mission is to foster an environment that nurtures this culture of enterprise and provides a welcome home for targeted key industries.

Tactic 1.1

Coordinate public capital and finance networks within the region to facilitate business access to needed funding for continued operation and growth.

Tactic 1.2

Develop or strengthen peer-to-peer support networks for businesses of any type (start-up, existing, large, small, etc) to enhance skill development, mentoring, and problem solving.

Tactic 1.3

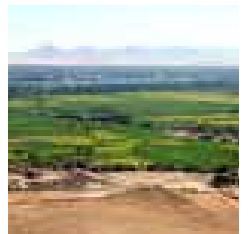
Assist businesses with site development or expansion by streamlining the permitting process.

Tactic 1.4

Provide direction to the Metro Partnership to pursue targeted industry opportunities.

Tactic 1.5

Promote a "Buy Local" program that keeps money flowing locally while also seeking traded sector opportunities that bring new investments to the area.



Priority Next Step

The Business One-Stop

With physical locations throughout the county, together with a creatively designed, dynamic virtual center, the one-stop provides a well coordinated array of information, tools and assistance. Businesses get the assistance they need with planning, marketing, siting, financing and collaboration all in one location.



Members of our communities are in need. Housing prices have fallen and we've seen unprecedented levels of unemployment. Those with jobs are not seeing the growth opportunities once available through their employers. We need economic development policies that address these concerns and we need to work together to create an economy that provides those good jobs now.

Pete Sorenson, Lane County Commissioner



2. ENERGIZE A CREATIVE ECONOMY

Lane County continues to be an ideal launching point for entrepreneurs and creative businesses. This has been a fundamental part of our economic heritage and will be key element of our strategy as we move into the next economy. Our region is primed for growth in software, University technology transfer and emerging green business. Directing resources to support the formation and expansion of these and other entrepreneurial business is a prime focus of this plan.

Tactic 2.1

Increase investment capital by leveraging such groups as the Willamette Angel Conference (WAC), the Southern Willamette Angel Network (formerly Lane Venture Forum), the Oregon Entrepreneurs Network (OEN), and the investor relations programs led by the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce.

Tactic 2.2

Expand the partnership with University of Oregon and Oregon State University in bringing new technologies and innovations to market and promoting sustainable practices.

Tactic 2.3

Improve the deal flow for investors by accelerating start-ups that are growth-ready.

Tactic 2.4

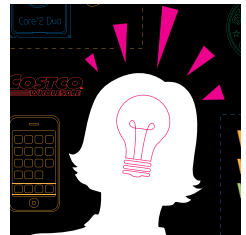
Provide educational opportunities and support services for entrepreneurs to increase their skills.

Tactic 2.5

Support the expansion of sustainable businesses that work toward building economies that are green, local, and fair.

Tactic 2.6

Encourage the formation and expansion of creative and technology based ventures by providing well configured and flexible incubator spaces.



Priority Next Steps:

Innovation Incubators

Incubate innovation by using private and public networks and spaces. Incubation sites should be flexibly configured to meet a wide range of business needs including specialized laboratory space to support technological innovation. Follow the best practices of incubation to identify the top ten to twelve early-stage and growth-ready companies in our region and help them access resources that will grow their businesses.

Growing Green

Roll out a major initiative to encourage and support the formation and expansion of green, sustainable enterprises. These efforts will also focus on “greening” existing businesses to enhance performance, efficiency and competitiveness. This will be a coordinated effort focused out of the Business One Stop. Other partners would include The Lane Metro Partnership, The UO Center for Sustainable Business Practices and regional public financing programs.



Photo: Richard Sweet

A talented workforce is the key to our region's economic success. Building programs, partnerships and a regional culture that values learning and entrepreneurial spirit and creativity will help us grow, and attract innovative talent to our region.

Richard Lariviere,

University of Oregon President, from his keynote address at the Regional Prosperity Summit



3. INVEST IN TOMORROW'S TALENT

Investing in future human capital is critical to a sustainable future. As the region's economy becomes more and more knowledge- and innovation-based, we must equip today and tomorrow's workers with the skills and attitudes for economic success. Creating and maintaining a competitive workforce that meets emerging industry needs will stimulate business development and highlight the region's vitality and appeal.

Tactic 3.1

Partner with local educational systems to prepare local residents with work readiness skills, including basic math and literacy skills, necessary for success in all occupations.

Tactic 3.2

Convene industry-interests panels to design and evaluate curricula to ensure that local training programs meet industry needs.

Tactic 3.3

Attract entrepreneurial and innovative talent by building a culture that values learning, the entrepreneurial spirit, acceptance, diversity, and creativity.

Tactic 3.4

Connect basic skills training programs (e.g. G.E.D. preparation and English as a Second Language) to post-secondary certificate or degree programs.

Economic recovery and our very future, depends on a strong, healthy education system. We are proud of the quality of students produced in our metro area and we must continue to creatively focus on developing our future workforce right here at home.

Sid Leiken, Springfield Mayor

Tactic 3.5

Partner with industry and education to encourage investment in training opportunities for young people, such as internships and work experience opportunities.

Tactic 3.6

Support the local recognition of Career Readiness Certificates, a state-wide testing and credentialing initiative to enhance workforce readiness.

Priority Next Step A Learning Community

Active business-to-school partnerships between the business community and local schools will focus on work experience through internships and mentorships to provide young workers-to-be with valuable economic life skills.



4. PROVIDE BASIC BUSINESS NEEDS

We must meet the basic infrastructure and siting needs of business in order to encourage development, expansion and job creation. This means taking actions to strengthen the links between land use planning, transportation, infrastructure investments and economic development goals.

Tactic 4.1

Inventory and evaluate underdeveloped space in an effort to assist business re-locations in a timely fashion.

Tactic 4.2

Promote and build on the region's transportation, distribution and logistics advantages.

Tactic 4.3

Continue to work with property and business owners to expand, upgrade and construct state-of-the-art facilities.

Tactic 4.4

Streamline the regulatory processes to assist with site selection and development.

Priority Next Step

Integrate Economic Development Goals

Complete Eugene and Springfield work on comprehensive plans including 20 year supply of commercial and industrial lands, fully integrating consideration of economic development goals into these processes.



5. IDENTIFY AS A PLACE TO THRIVE

We are a region of western adventurers and business pioneers, of natural wonders and green innovations, of world-class track and field and world-renown microbrews and wineries. Our region will promote itself as the place to be - where businesses grow green and where green businesses come to grow. A strategic long-term campaign will create and genuinely communicate an identity that raises awareness, generates excitement, and highlights the opportunity and spectacular nature of the region.

Tactic 5.1

Partner with local business and economic development organizations to communicate our economic identity and successes, both internally and externally.

Tactic 5.2

Promote the region's strong willingness and ability to mentor and coach entrepreneurs and businesses, and recognize the successes that grow from within this network.

Tactic 5.3

Promote and celebrate the region's creative people who find success and create bridges for them to contribute back to our community.

Tactic 5.4

Promote the region's natural and cultural resources to enhance cultural tourism.

Tactic 5.5

Build on local enthusiasm and support for outdoor activities like track and field (Track Town USA), environmental quality, and sustainability.

Tactic 5.6

Market economic development efforts in conjunction with other branding efforts.

Priority Next Steps

Shared Economic Identity

Develop and implement a strategic, coordinated identity campaign that integrates regional themes and is supported by institutions and businesses throughout their communications and messages.

Urban Vitality

As we foster a creative economy, dynamic urban centers are an important asset. Eugene, Springfield and many of the smaller communities in the region, recognize the importance of supporting and enhancing vitality in their city centers. Building downtowns as places to live, work and play will support the retention and expansion of the existing business community and be a significant asset to attract new investment.

The Cities of Eugene and Springfield will continue to enhance their efforts to promote downtown vitality through development and redevelopment. Other cities in the region should also look for opportunities to enhance core commercial and downtown areas as part of their economic development strategies.

6. STRENGTHEN KEY INDUSTRIES

Our best economic engine for job creation will continue to be the growth and expansion of existing local business. This work will focus on the region's traditional strengths in Transportation/Manufacturing, Wood Manufacturing, Health Care, and Construction.

This strategy is also focused on developing an innovative culture to support emerging opportunities within for our regional economy:

- Clean Tech / Renewable Energy
- Health/Wellness
- Advanced Manufacturing (technologically rich, innovative manufacturing)
- Software
- Biomedical

Tactic 6.1

Identify strategies to address unique site and logistical needs of existing and emerging industries.

Tactic 6.2

Develop associations or networks among targeted cluster businesses for innovative networking, information-sharing and to provide opportunities for business growth.

Tactic 6.3

Pursue opportunities to expand and recruit businesses, ideas, and entrepreneurs into our region that can enhance our existing businesses and community.

Priority Next Steps

High Tech – High Growth – High Green

Enterprise development and recruitment efforts are focused on emerging green businesses, technologies, and high job-growth sectors that have strong localized economic fundamentals and will increase local earning power.

United Efforts

Create a Regional Prosperity Council that acts as the guiding coalition for the implementation of the regional strategy and initiates and oversees an ongoing conversation on topics such as demographic shifts, applications of emerging technologies and best practices in supporting the strategy.

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