

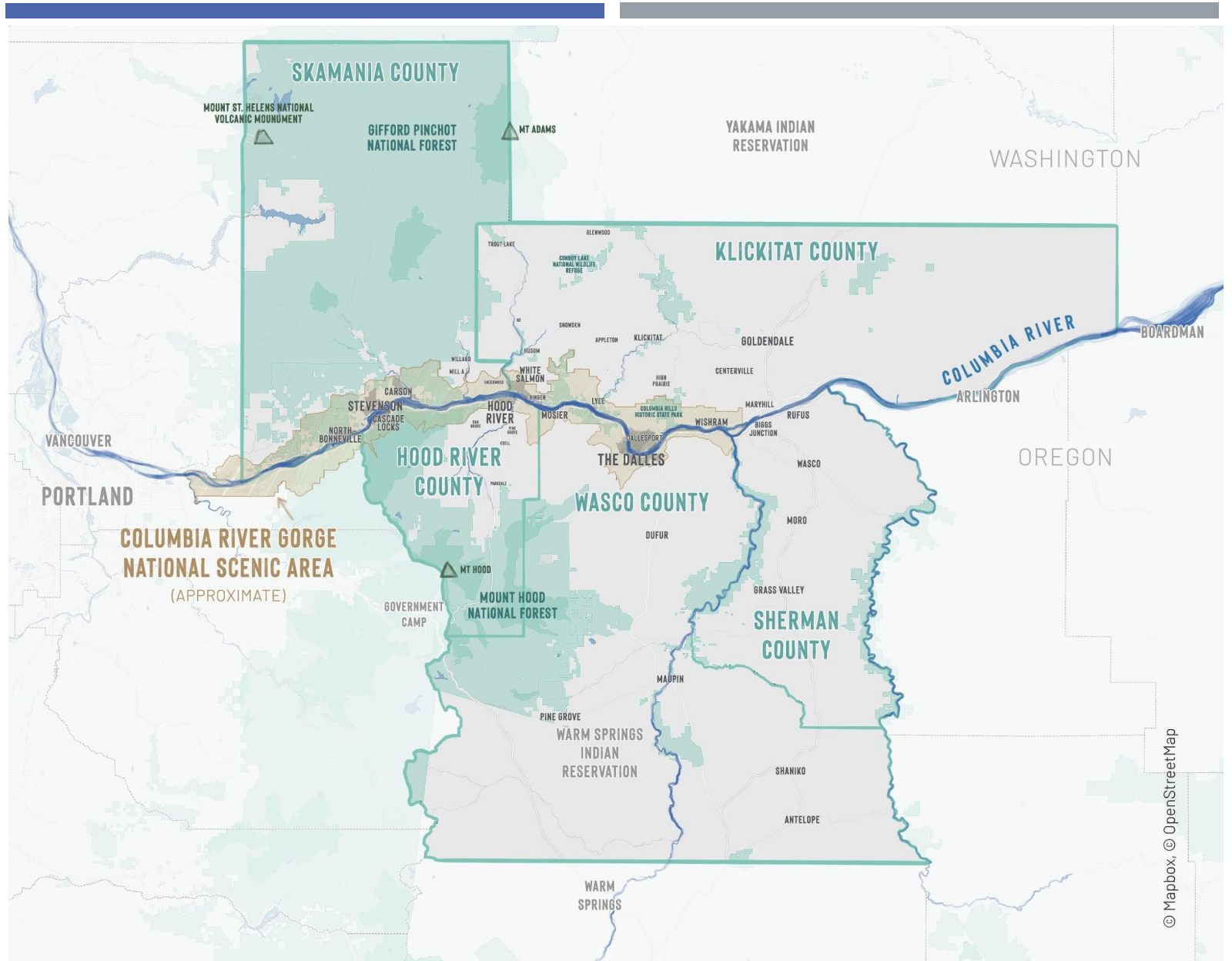


COLUMBIA GORGE ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

**HOOD RIVER, KLICKITAT, SHERMAN,
SKAMANIA, AND WASCO COUNTIES**

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

- **Five counties in two states** sharing a common workforce, geography, and economic development challenges and opportunities.
- Approx. **7,289 square miles**
- The region acts as the **“Center of the Hub”** with direct access to metro areas and the ability to do business on an international scale
- Total Population 87,288 (2020)
- Labor Force Population 43,871 (2020)





KEY INDUSTRIES

- Natural resources and value-added agriculture
- Manufacturing and especially beverage manufacturing
- High tech and especially unmanned systems
- Healthcare
- Utilities and renewable energy
- Arts/ culture/ tourism/ recreation

2022-2027 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY THEMES EXPLORED

Resilience

- The ability to recover quickly from a shock, the ability to withstand a shock, and the ability to avoid the shock altogether. Establishing economic resilience in a local or regional economy requires the ability to anticipate risk, evaluate how that risk can impact key economic assets, and build a responsive capacity.
~ The EDA
- Working with partners to develop an economy where businesses and communities are prepared for and have the resources to anticipate, plan for and respond to economic shocks, such as natural disasters, disease outbreaks, or man-made disruptions.

Equitable Outcomes

- Recognition that not everyone in the region has access to the benefits of a strong regional economy.
- Identify gaps in economic opportunity, barriers to accessing this benefit that may vary by population or community, and ways to support improving outcomes.
- Considering that COVID-19 job losses were greater for women and people of color, considering equitable outcomes as we recover is even more imperative.

COVID-19 IMPACTS



CHALLENGES

In no particular order

Weaknesses

Regulatory Environment

Disparities
Between States

Insufficient and Expensive Housing Stock
for Rent and Purchase ←

Transportation ←

Infrastructure ←

Education and Skilled Workforce

Lack of Business Expansion Space

Preparedness ←

High Poverty Rate/ Economic Disparity ←

Threats

Impacts of Continued Population Growth ←

Regulations

Housing Shortage Impacts ←

Infrastructure Limitations ←

Industry Diversification

Hazards/ Climate Change/ Resilience ←

Education and Workforce

Water Access and Regulations ←

Decision Making

OPPORTUNITIES

In no particular order

Strengths / Assets

Scenic Beauty, Recreation, Brand and Tourism Industry



Central Location

Regional Collaboration

Infrastructure

Natural Resources



Human Capital & Entrepreneurial Spirit

Diverse and Growing Industry Sectors



Culture



Availability of Transportation Systems/ Modes



Opportunities

Adjusting Tourism, Expanding Arts and Culture



Connectivity

Synergy Across State Lines

Public Transportation



Leverage Natural Assets



Workforce Development



Growth of Value-Added Ag and Ag Tech Businesses



Quality of Life



Business/ Talent Attraction

REGIONAL VISION

A bi-state Mid-Columbia region with a resilient, thriving, sustainable, rural economy that supports equitable access to diverse business opportunities that act in harmony with the area's unique qualities, values, cultural and natural resources.

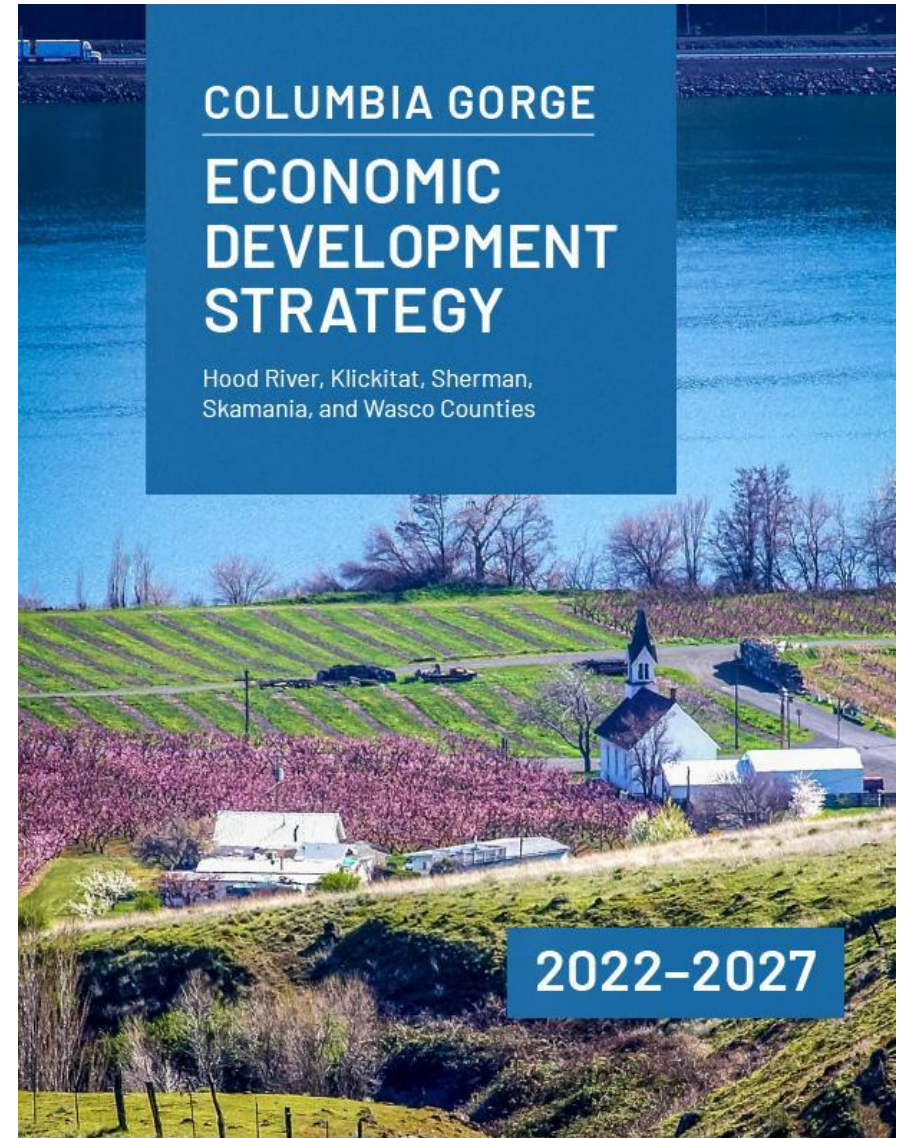
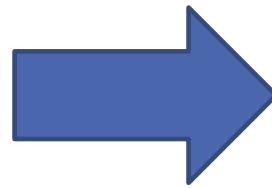
FOUR GOAL AREAS

Strong Businesses
Robust Workforce
Resilient Infrastructure
Powerful Collaboration

FOR MORE
INFORMATION

GorgeEconomy.org

Or linked from the
Strategy section under
MCEDD.org



THANK YOU!

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